



Parenting

Biblical Principles

2012 Parenting Seminar | Aron Osborne

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I. INTRODUCTION

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.”
Proverbs 22:6

II. OUR CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM GOD

“Behold children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward, Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate. “ Psalm 127:3-5

III. OUR PARENTING IS “IN THE LORD”

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”
Ephesians 6:1-4

“Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”
Colossians 3:18-21

A. Parents are under authority

“As a parent, you have authority because God calls you to be an authority in your child’s life. You have the authority to act on behalf of God. As a father or mother, you do not exercise rule over your jurisdiction, but over God’s. You act at his command. You discharge a duty that he has given. You may not try to shape the lives of your children as pleases you, but as pleases him...

Understanding this simple principle enables you to think clearly about your task. If you are God’s agent in this task of providing essential training and instruction in the Lord, then you, too, are a person under authority. You and your child are in the same boat. You are both under God’s authority. You

have differing roles, but the same Master.”¹

B. Fathers don't exasperate

- Unreasonable Standards
- Inconsistent Discipline
- Harsh Responses
- Self Righteous Training or Instruction

IV. OUR CALL IS TO NOURISH, DISCIPLINE, AND INSTRUCT

A. Nourish - “bring them up”

- “Let them be fondly cherished...deal gently with them.” John Calvin
- “Rear them tenderly” William Hendrickson
- “Love should be the silver thread that runs through all your conduct.” (JC Ryle, Duties of Parents, pg. 4)

B. Discipline – “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”

1. Discipline begins with teaching our children about God's authority

“Embracing God's plan for authority is necessary to understanding the world God has made. One of the first places children encounter authority is in their parents. God has commanded parents to govern their children, and for children to obey their parents. As we teach them to understand authority and submission, we are preparing them to obey God by living obediently and joyfully under all the authorities God has given. Unfortunately, the dominant culture we live in has rejected God's plan for authority. One of the dangers we can fall into is to insist that our children obey without ever helping them picture the world in such a way that their obedience makes sense.”²

2. Discipline is loving.
3. Discipline involves restraining sinful behavior and promoting God's standards.
4. Discipline begins with reproof and instruction.

¹ Ted Tripp, *Shepherding a Child's Heart* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995), 28-29.

² Tedd Tripp, Embracing God's Plan for Authority, The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood website.

“It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” Hebrews 12:7-8

“...the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.” Proverbs 3:12

5. Discipline includes reproof

“A fool despises his father’s instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is prudent.” Proverbs 15:5

6. Discipline must be consistent

- Discipline for:
 - Sinful outbursts
 - Acts of unkindness
 - Direct disobedience
 - Transgression of clearly communicated standards
- Instruction precedes discipline and makes it effective (more to come on this)
- Every time of discipline is a gospel opportunity, given in age appropriate doses
- “The central focus of parenting is the gospel. You need to direct not simply the behavior of your children, but the attitudes of their hearts. You need to show them not just the “what” of their sin and failure, but the “why”...You must help them see that God works from the inside out.”³
- “Your concern is to unmask your child’s sin, helping him to understand how it reflects a heart that has strayed. That leads to the cross of Christ. It underscores the need for a Savior. It provides opportunities to show the glories of God who sent his Son to change hearts and free people enslaved to sin.”⁴

C. Instruct – “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”

1. Toward A Godward Orientation

- Knowledge of His Word
- Knowledge of the Gospel

³ Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*, Shepherd Press, Second Edition, 2005, pg.xxi

⁴ *ibid*, pg 6.

- Love and obey God
- 2. Toward a Parental Orientation
 - Receiving instruction and discipline
 - Honoring Dad and Mom
- 3. Towards a Respect for Others
 - Honoring Adults and those in Authority
 - Kindness toward other children

V. OUR TRAINING SHOULD BE AGE APPROPRIATE

Guidelines for Issues of Training: Due to developmental differences expectations may need to vary widely from child to child.

A. 9 – 2 years:

- Basic issues of self control
- Learning boundaries set by Mom and Dad
- Few but consistent areas (remember, don't exasperate ☺)

B. 2 years - 3 years:

- Lots of training
- Learning to receive instruction respectfully.
 - “Look at Mommy’s eyes when I speak to you.”
 - Respond to clear instruction with a “Yes daddy”, or a “Yes mommy”
 - Training them to give honorable attention when instructing
 - Establishing timely response
- Coming when called
- Responding to no
- Learning to say please/thank you
- Changing attitude when adjusted
- Respect for adults and adult environment
- Kindness to others
- Greeting adults
- Work on whining

C. 3-4 years

- Don't grow weary in doing good (all of the above)
- More Training
- Practice of worship/prayer/basic gospel
- Simple biblical instruction (Gospel centered instruction on issues like sin, God, and who Jesus is).

- Consistent discipline

D. 4-5 years

- Don't grow weary in doing good (all of the above)
- More training
- More instruction on issues of the gospel, the heart, sin, and how Jesus makes a way for us to be forgiven
- More developed conversations on issues of the heart

VI. TRAINING

- **Proverbs 22:6**

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

- **Ephesians 6:4**

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

A. Who are we training?

- Sinners

- Folly is bound up in the heart of a child... Proverbs 22:15a
- “Remember children are born with a decided bias towards evil, and therefore if you let them choose for themselves, they are certain to choose wrong.... If, then, you would deal wisely with your child, you must not leave him to the guidance of his own will. Think for him, judge for him, act for him, just as you would for one weak and blind; but for pity's sake, give him not up to his own wayward tastes and inclinations.”⁵

- Immature and Dependent

- “He gives your children a mind that will receive impressions like moist clay. He gives them a disposition at the starting-point of life to believe what you tell them, and to take for granted what you advise them, and to trust your word rather than a stranger's. He gives you, in short, a golden opportunity of doing them good. See that the opportunity be not neglected, and thrown away.”⁶

- Future Parents and Disciplers

“Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the

⁵ J.C. Ryle, *The Duties of Parents* (Conrad, MT: Triangle Press, 1997), 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

land to which you are going over, to possess it, that you may fear the LORD you God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long." Deuteronomy 6:1-2

B. How Do We Train our Children to Obey?

1. Model/demonstrate/example
2. Review/remind/repeat outside the boundaries of temptation
3. Clearly communicate expectations and standards
4. Boundaries should be reasonable
5. Words should be specific, clear and defined
 - Don't touch this.
 - Put your toys away, into the basket.
 - No.
 - Please do not go into this room.
6. Encourage, praise obedience

"Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." Ephesians 4:29

- Make a big deal out of obedience and progress.
 - Look for grace at work.
7. Correct behaviors and attitudes that are not biblical (discuss preferences later)

C. Training Requires that we:

1. Distinguish Between Principle vs. Practice
 - Principle
 - Love your God
 - Love your neighbor
 - Do not lie
 - Do not covet
 - Do not steal
 - Children obey your parents
 - Practice
 - Bed time/Sleeping habits
 - Feeding habits/ scheduling issues

- Schooling
- Types of toys, styles of music, only one hour of videos a day

2. Understand the Central Importance of the Heart

- The Heart Leads to Behavior
- Behavior Reveals the Heart

3. Recommended Areas to Train

- Responding to “no”
- Changing attitude when adjusted
- Looking in the eyes:
- Temper tantrums
- Sitting quietly
- Greeting adults
- Practice of worship/prayer
- Kindness to other children
- Coming when called
- Learning to say please/thank you
- Respect for adults and adult environment. (Not interrupting adults) -“Come into the room with your eyes and ears first, not your mouth”

“Behold children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward, Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.”
Psalms 127:3-5

VII. DISCIPLINE

“It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”
Hebrews 12:7-11

A. Reproof

B. Physical Discipline

C. Forfeiting Privileges

D. Isolating Offenders

E. Don't Make Spiritual Exercises Punitive

VIII. THE ROD

“The Rod is a parent, in faith toward God and faithfulness toward his or her children, undertaking the responsibility of careful, timely, measured and controlled use of physical punishment to underscore the importance of obeying God, thus rescuing the child from continuing in his foolishness until death.”⁷

- “Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.” Proverbs 13:24
- “Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death.” Proverbs 19:18
- “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.” Proverbs 22: 15
- “Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol.” Proverbs 23: 13-14
- “The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.” Proverbs 29:15

A. The Rod Is: ⁸

1. A Parental Exercise
2. An Act of Faith
3. A Responsibility
4. A Physical Punishment
5. A Rescue Mission

B. The Rod Is Not:

“If you do find yourself more upset because your child has sinned against you than you are because he sinned against God, you must quickly and prayerfully get your

⁷ Ted Tripp, *Shepherding a Child's Heart* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995), 130.

⁸This entire section is taken directly from *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, Tedd Tripp. See pages 131-134.

heart in such a state that personal desires are temporarily set aside. You must be willing to lay aside your personal rights and forgive your child's offense against you so that you may focus on fulfilling your parental obligations to him. Only then can you discipline your child with the assurance that your passion is not unholy anger."⁹

- Not the Right to an Unbridled Temper
- Not Venting (Anger) "Frustration"
- Not Retribution

IX. SPANKING

A. Is to be Given With a Right Motive

- Love God/ Obey God
- Love the child

B. Is on the Basis of Clear, Prior and Understood Instructions

- For clear disobedience and persistent defiance
- Disobedience: when instruction and training have made the standards clear enough to enforce
- Defiance

C. Administered by the Father when he is Present

- Servant hood
- Support/ Reinforces Mother's Authority

D. Is Given in Private

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother." Matthew 18:15

1. Should be Given as Soon as Possible After the Offense
 - So child won't forget. The discipline must be connected with the offense.
 - Avoids guilt
 - Prevents confusion
2. Clarify the Issue
 - What they did

⁹ Lou Priolo, *The Heart of Anger* (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1997), 33.

- Why the spanking
 - “I love you and when you disobey, God commands me to love you by teaching you wisdom. When we disobey god’s ways, there are consequences.”
 - What is the specific sin issue?
 - "The Bible says....and you’ve been taught...."
 - "Daddy/ Mommy said...."
 - "If you disobey (mommy and daddy), you disobey God"
 - Helping them to see their need for Jesus: “Can you stop without the Lord’s help?”
3. Is to be Administered Calmly and With Self-Control
 4. Followed by Affection/Hug (but not yet completed)
 5. Reconciliation
 - Acknowledge that they have sinned. “I was wrong”
 - Identify the sin by its biblical name. “I was angry, selfish, etc...”
 - Identify the biblical behavior to demonstrate a commitment to change. “I should have asked and not hit my brother”
 - Ask daddy/mommy for forgiveness for disobedience/violating standards. Make sure they are asking for forgiveness for their sins
 - Commit to go to all offended parties and ask for forgiveness. (Make this a part of the process of reconciliation with God)
 - Ask for forgiveness from God (Prayer, see below)
 - Encourage them to trust the gospel and ask Jesus for faith to trust and obey him.
 6. Involves Prayer
 - "Father, will you please forgive me for..." - (specific behavior and heart attitude)
 - Specific repentance: Help them to see the issue clearly. "I was wrong; I'm sorry."
 - Confession of Need for a Savior
 - Thank Jesus for coming and dying on the Cross. Ask for the Spirit’s help to believe in the gospel, and receive power to change. (I cannot change myself; I need You.)
 7. Requires Assurance

- Forgiveness
- Love
- Acceptance

8. Is Followed With Affection

- Express Gratefulness
- Affirm Reconciliation
- Commend for Receiving Correction

9. Is Concluded When the Child is Reconciled

- Comforted
- Peaceful
- Affectionate
- Communicating

10. May Require Follow-through

- Humbly and respectfully ask other offended party(s) for forgiveness
- Obey violated command or principle

11. May Include a Follow-up Assignment

NOTE: Bible study, memorization and prayer should not be introduced as “punishment”, but as a means of renewing the mind and changing the heart in order to bear godly fruit.

X. Biblical Parenting Ages 0-5

A. Parental Sanctification

B. Many Times Our Struggle With Parenting Reveals Sin Issues in Our Own Lives

1. Anger
2. Unbelief
3. Self-pity
4. Impatience/self righteousness

“We must not expect all things at once. We must remember what children are, and teach them as they are able to bear. Their minds are like a lump of metal—not to be forged and made useful at once, but only by a succession of little blows.”¹⁰

5. Arrogance
6. Other

¹⁰ J.C. Ryle, *The Duties of Parents* (Conrad, MT: Triangle Press, 1997), 5.

C. Biblical Parenting is Bringing the Life-Transforming Grace to Bear Upon Your Children, Through the Resources God Provides with a view beyond the immediate

D. Remember God's Goal: Christ formed in you and your children:

"...my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!"
Galatians. 4:19

"Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me."
Colossians. 1:28-29

E. Remember God's Promises

"Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it."
I Thessalonians 5:23-24

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"
Romans 8:28-30

RECOMMENDED READING

The Duties of Parents – J.C. Ryle

God, Marriage, and Family – Andreas Kostenberger

Proverbs (and related commentaries – Derek Kidner, Charles Bridges)

Shepherding A Child's Heart – Tedd Tripp

Instructing A Child's Heart – Tedd Tripp

Teach Them Diligently – Lou Priolo

For Discussion, Evaluation and Application

1. Where do you see evidences of God's transforming grace in your life and the lives of your children?
2. Why is an understanding of the gospel so important to a proper foundation and motivation for training our children?
3. As you consider the child training just received, would it be a heartfelt conviction for both you and your spouse that your child training and instruction is rooted in the application of Scripture?
4. Fathers, ask your wives to evaluate your leadership in: (a) training your children (b) fellowship with other parents (c) evaluating your marriage and parenting (d) loving her
5. Ladies, ask your husbands to evaluate your submission to their leadership.
6. Which aspects of your training process could use improvement? What will you do to bring about lasting change? Describe any changes in your understanding of the relationship between training and discipline.
7. Describe the difference between principle and practice. Are there any adjustments that you need to make in applying this to your parenting, or to your observations about others?
8. Which aspect(s) of your spanking process could use improvement? Please explain. What steps will you take to begin a process of lasting change?
9. What specific sin has been frequently exposed in your heart as you have pursued the process of training your children?
10. With whom will you regularly discuss the things that God has spoken to you through this material for the purpose of fellowship, prayer, encouragement and accountability?
11. What are your top two or three prayer requests for yourself as a parent, desiring to train your children for the glory of God and for their good?
12. What are your top two or three prayers requests for your children as you pursue the wonderful privilege of "training them up in the way they should go"?

NOTES