

Bringing Up Children

(Ephesians 6:4)

A. Preliminary thoughts.

1. Children are a blessing, not a curse (**PSA 127:3-5**) and a society that ignores this in trouble from internal chaos and demographic shifts which represent value shifts also.
2. Children need to know that they are dearly loved by parents, safe and secure from danger. Obedience and proper character development are enhanced by these, and our Heavenly Father thus provokes us to love and good works. **1JO 4:16-19; 2CO 5:14-15.**
3. Child abuse is horrible when it exploits or maims the body or the mind but beware of subjective definitions of abuse: wicked children deem Vitamin N (No) abuse while pseudo-science does not deem genital mutilation/gender reassignment surgery abuse.
4. Child beating is not child abuse since “beat” simply means “to strike repeatedly.” One could “beat” a child with a wet noodle and that would hardly be abuse. Nor would it help.
5. Biblical instruction on child training, including child discipline, is neither outdated nor radical. There are modern professional child/family psychologists who affirm the same methods and back it up with data. Consider Dr. James Dobson, Dr. John Rosemond.
6. Children are male or female and are not genetically homosexual or racist. Respect this and don’t confound their development with pseudo-science or bad parenting which warps their image of themselves from God.
7. Children are to be raised by parents in trust for God Who desires a godly seed (**MAL 2:15; PSA 144:11-12**) and godliness is profitable in all things in this life (**1TI 4:8**) since it teaches charity and boundaries by “love thy neighbour as thyself” (**GAL 5:14 c/w ROM 13:10**) and so maximizes positive human interactions.
8. Jesus Christ is the ultimate model of childhood development. **LUK 2:51-52.**

B. bring up: a. To bring into a higher position; to elevate, raise, rear, build up; to raise to a point or amount, etc. b. To rear from childhood; to educate, breed.

1. This implies that “bringing up” of a child is to raise him from out of a lower state of character to a higher state which one has already attained to, since “bring” means, “To cause to come along with oneself.”
 - a. This is obviously hindered if the parent is not of a higher character, still thinking and acting like a child (an increasing problem in our culture: kidults). Maturity means putting away childish things. **1CO 13:11.**
 - b. Such an effort would be like *the blind leading the blind*. **LUK 6:39.**
2. The children of Israel were “...**brought up** out of the land of Egypt...” (**EXO 33:1**), out of their bondage. Parents need to lead their children out of the bondage of their natural inclinations and imaginations. **GEN 8:21; PRO 22:15.**
 - a. Children will not develop good character without proper guidance. **PRO 29:15.**
 - b. They will not choose healthy diets or habits by nature (**ISA 7:16**) and capitulation to their poor choices generally produces children with unnecessary health trouble and self-destructive traits.
 - c. They will be oppressive by nature. **ISA 3:12.**
 - d. They will assume their demands should not meet with resistance and they will manipulate weak parents accordingly. **1KI 1:6; 1SAM 3:13.**
 - e. Parents should think of themselves as noble liberators who are loosing the child from the grip of a monster called Sin Nature and driving that beast away.
3. In **EPH 6:4**, Paul lays the onus upon fathers. c/w **ISA 38:19; MAL 4:5-6.**
 - a. This underscores the importance of having an engaged father in the home.
 - b. Mothers have critical roles also. **PRO 1:8.**

4. **EPH 6:4** contrasts provoking children to wrath and bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
 - a. provoke: To incite or urge (a person or animal) to some act or to do something; to stimulate to action; to excite, rouse, stir up, spur on.
 - b. nurture: Breeding, upbringing, training, education (received or possessed by one).
b. Moral training or discipline. [O.E.D. cites **EPH 6:4** here].
 - c. admonition: The action of admonishing (putting in mind of duties); authoritative counsel; warning, implied reproof.
 - d. Common sense tells you that children who are tyrannically beaten into compliance or are as demeaned as Jonathan was by Saul (**1SAM 20:30-34**) are likely going to react defensively, angrily. Such parenting is the sin of no "...natural affection..." (**2TI 3:3**). God's children are precious to Him. **ISA 43:4; MAL 3:17**.
 - e. Parents may provoke their children to wrath by *not* bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. A child learns from the school of hard knocks the realities his parents should have taught him and ends up bitter and hateful.
 - f. Parents may provoke their children to wrath by being not themselves regulated by the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and this breeds frustrated anger. NOTE: children will note, inventory and be ready to chamber every bit of "double-standard" ammunition you provide them.
 - g. For some children, bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord is the very thing that provokes them to wrath, not because the model is wrong but rather the child thinks he is God Whose will is sovereign. Do not fall for this form of idolatry, and administer the antidote early. **PRO 13:24**.

- C. Training has precedence over teaching, especially in very young children. A relatively non-academic parent with good values can reasonably train a child to have good character. Do not idolize education, ignorance or indifference.
 1. NOTE: You will train your child, positively or negatively. This is unavoidable, and you don't need to train him to be a fool since that comes naturally. **PRO 22:15**.
 2. Children are to be trained up in the way they should go (**PRO 22:6**), the ways of God.
 3. train: III. 5. To treat or manipulate so as to bring to the proper or desired form; *spec.* in Gardening, to manage (a plant or a branch) so as to cause it to grow in some desired form or direction... 6. To subject to discipline and instruction for the purpose of forming character and developing the powers of, or of making proficient in some occupation...
 - a. O.E.D. cites **PRO 22:6** as an example of this definition.
 - b. Training a sapling is wiser than trying to train a seventeen-year-old oak tree. Don't let the season of hope slip by. **PRO 19:18**.
 - c. Training is *manipulating*. Make sure that you are the manipulator!
 - d. Do not be conned into thinking that you must wait until your child can intelligently dialogue and reason before you begin to train that child in acceptable behavior by positive and negative enforcement. **PRO 13:24**.
 4. Critical principle: positively reward good behavior, never bad behavior. This is basic. **1PE 2:13-14; 1CO 11:17, 22**.
 - a. Praise good behavior and you may expect more good behavior. **MAT 18:3-4**.
 - b. Be wary of praising naturally good looks or talents lest you encourage vanity. **2SAM 14:25; PRO 11:22**.
 - c. It is positive *effort* that should be praised or rewarded. Prizes go to victors, bread to workers. **1CO 9:24; 2TH 3:10**.
 - d. Children need to know the instructive value of losing, of equal opportunity rather than equal outcome. Real life does not give everyone the same trophy.

5. Effective training is realized in two ways:
 1. A positive aspect of bringing children to maturity through good example and advice.
 2. A negative aspect of enforcing order when there is unwillingness to cooperate with parental rule.
- D. The mark of a godly man is that he "...ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity" (**1TI 3:4**).
 1. Mind that "rule" in the home is given to the parent before all others.
 2. rule: *trans.* To control, guide, direct, exercise sway or influence over (a person, his actions, life, etc.).
 3. control: *trans.* To check or verify, and hence to regulate... To exercise restraint or direction upon the free action of; to hold sway over, exercise power or authority over; to dominate, command.
 - a. command: Simple sense. *trans.* To order, enjoin, bid with authority or influence. Properly said of persons, but also *fig.* of things.
 - b. Consider Abraham, the man of faith and friend of God. **GEN 18:19**.
 4. regulate: *trans.* To control, govern, or direct by rule or regulations; to subject to guidance or restrictions; to adapt to circumstances or surroundings.
 5. subjection: Phr. *in, into, to, unto, under subjection*: in, into, under the dominion or control of a superior power.
 6. gravity: Grave, weighty, or serious character or nature; importance, seriousness.
 - a. There is a time and season for all things. **ECC 3:1-14**.
 - b. But life is not all about mirth and frivolous entertainment. **ECC 7:2-6**.
 7. Mind how that *rule* involves restraining free action. Example:
 - a. The Scripture does not specifically say, "Children shall not scream at the top of their lungs whenever they feel like it (especially in the home or supermarket)."
 - b. But permitting screaming for the sake of screaming is not training a child *in the way in which he should go*. **PRO 17:1; 1TH 4:11; 2TH 3:12; 1PE 3:4**.
 - c. There is a time and place for less restraint: outdoors if it is not robbing others of their own peace and quiet.
 - d. But there are obviously places besides the home or supermarket where unrestrained activity or noise are not appropriate: church, funeral, hospital, doctor's waiting room, courtroom, etc.
 - e. Train children's restraint for the other venues by beginning in the home. Virtually everything of genuine value in life begins in the home.
- E. Remember, you will train your children one way or another. But will you train them in the way they *should* go, as **PRO 22:6** commands?
 1. For example, consider training a small child not to touch something.
 - a. You can keep it within his reach and train him not to touch it by punishing him if he touches it. This obviously does not apply to very dangerous things, especially for a very little child.
 - (1) This teaches him to obey the command not to touch.
 - (2) This teaches him to restrain himself even in the presence of a forbidden object that is accessible.
 - (3) This prepares him for the real world, where things are well within the reach of little children. Likewise it prepares the child for adult life where actions have consequences.
 - (4) Hint: Retailers are not putting things within a child's reach to encourage them in self-restraint or self-denial.

- b. You can put it beyond his reach.
 - (1) This teaches him that is off-limits only if it is out of reach.
 - (2) This does not teach him to respect your command not to touch.
 - (3) This does not prepare him for the real world, where things are well within the reach of little children. Likewise, it does not prepare the child for adult life where actions have consequences.
 - c. A general principle to train into children is that if it doesn't belong to them, it is not theirs to touch or access without permission. This teaches the boundary of respect for other's property.
2. Consider how you are training when you allow a child to get his way by persistent whining. It is the unjust judge who rules thus. **LUK 18:5.**
- a. Tolerating whining is training a child in conduct which God opposes.
 - (1) whine: To utter a low somewhat shrill protracted sound or cry, usually expressive of pain or distress; to cry in a subdued plaintive tone... 2. To utter complaints in a low querulous tone; to complain in a feeble, mean, or undignified way.
 - (2) murmur: To make, produce, or emit a low continuous sound... 2. To complain or repine in low muttered tones; to give vent to an inarticulate discontent, to grumble.
 - (3) See **1CO 10:10; PHIL 2:14; JUDE 1:16.**
 - b. You are training the child that persistent begging and whining pay off.
 - c. The way to end persistent whining is not by rewarding it, but by punishment. If whining occurs when a child is ill, consider circumstances. If it occurs otherwise, demand that it stop immediately and punish if it doesn't. This gives a child a space of repentance. c/w **REV 2:21.**
 - d. Remember, the parent is the one that is supposed be doing the manipulating, not the child!
 - e. Children's concerns should be by respectful entreaty (pleading), not whining. **1TI 5:1.**
 - f. Learn to distinguish between a child's possibly genuine complaint or plea for attention and whining to manipulate you to bend to the child's will.
3. What lesson is a child learning who is given everything he wants when he wants it? Do not be surprised if such a child grows up to be impatient, lazy, in debt.
4. How are you training a child when you do everything for him or let him abandon a task without finishing it? Do not be surprised if he grows up shirking responsibility. You trained him that way.

F. Verbal communication plays an important role in training children.

- 1. Words may build or destroy. **PRO 18:21.**
- 2. Parents (especially the father) are to be managers initiating productivity and creativity. Instruction should be:
 - a. *clear*. Is the instruction expressed as a wish or a command? As a child develops positive patterns, less instruction should be needed.
 - b. *well-defined and within the child's comprehension and ability to perform*.
 - (1) Time limits may be helpful because time passes slowly for a child.
 - (2) A timer or a suitable analog kitchen clock can help even little children gain a perspective on time: "...when the big hand points to ---, you should be all done."
 - c. *certain*. Do not train your child to respond only to increased volume of command. Deliberately delayed obedience should be considered disobedience.

NUM 14:40-43; PSA 119:60.

3. Here are five types of parents that fail in verbal leadership.
 - a. *The dishonest parent.* This one doesn't check for results when a command is given. He doesn't mean what he says.
 - b. *The threatening parent.* This one is really offering choices. Is not sitting still for an hour worth more than what Mom or Dad threatened would happen?
 - c. *The exploding parent.* This one merely throws tantrums, causing the child to focus more on the parent's reaction than on the ethic of his own behavior.
 - d. *The disinterested or silent parent.* "Do what you want, just don't bother me." This parent is really telling the child that he/she doesn't really care about him.
 - e. *The gutless parent.* This parent caves in when verbal instruction does not produce obedience in the child and so does not follow up with punishment.
4. Verbal communication is limited in its ability to shape the child's character.
 - a. Very small children are unable to process verbal instruction but they can understand the stimuli of touch and pain.
 - b. Even in children that can understand verbal instruction, that verbal instruction will not drive their inherent foolishness and rebellion away. That will require the use of the rod. **PRO 22:15.**
5. Do you thrive spiritually when God tells you He loves you in spite of yourself? Make sure you tell your children that they are precious to you and your expectations for them are born out of love for them.
 - a. Do not by your words leave your child with the impression that they are beyond redemption or worthless.
 - b. Sometimes a conscience-provoking communication from the parent can be an effective motivator of positive humility and change in a child: "I'm disappointed in you. You could have done much better."
6. There is a time and place for verbal rebuke in the love-driven program. **REV 3:19.**
 - a. Verbal rebuke stands between a wrong done and a painful consequence. It faces the effects of the wrong, points out the dangers and consequences of the present trend and cites an alternative. **GEN 4:6-7.**
 - b. Steer between the extremes of **1KI 1:6** and **EPH 6:4a.**
 - c. Correction must rebuild rather than ruin. Don't let situations go unattended until they become critical and then explode.
 - d. Weigh the contents, circumstances and consequences of a rebuke.
 - (1) A rebuke should not be an adult temper tantrum. Even Jesus Christ's treatment of the moneychangers was a meditated one. **JOH 2:15.**
 - (2) A rebuke should not threaten a child's standing, dignity or right to try again. **COL 3:21.**
 - e. Sometimes love will be tough and not be perceived for what it is. **PSA 141:5 c/w 2CO 2:4.**

- G. The book of Proverbs is eminently important in training children. Refer to it regularly. It was written by the second-wisest man that ever lived (Solomon) and validated by the wisest of all, Jesus Christ. **MAT 12:42.**
1. The O.T. portrays the highest level of development as wisdom whereas the N.T. portrays it as Christlikeness.
 2. To attain unto Christ is to attain unto wisdom, for in Him "...are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (**COL 2:3**).
 3. It has been said that wisdom is the "...capacity of judgment which grows in the spiritual depths of a human being permitting him to use his knowledge, abilities and opportunities in

a way designed by God to be fulfilling and satisfying.”

(Gordon Macdonald, *The Effective Father*, p. 185).

4. Training involves repeated exposure to instruction and experiences until they become ingrained and automatic.
 - a. In a word, this is the development of habits.
 - b. Children are trained to develop habits like orderliness or rising early and reflexes such as vindictiveness or peaceableness.
 - c. Good values need to be trained into a child and blessings should be evaluated in spiritual and relational terms rather than simply material terms.
5. An important area of child training is that of discipline, i.e., making oneself do or endure something tedious or difficult.
 - a. Discipline enlarges a child's capacity to endure or produce.
 - b. Discipline is deliberate stress introduced to stretch the capacity for performance. An example of this might be encouraging a child to run a little further after exhaustion.
 - c. Children should be exposed to fatigue, inconvenience and frustration.
 - (1) Life is not always a convenient or painless experience.
 - (2) Children should learn that feelings do not govern life. If permitted, feelings will limit an individual to subpar performance.
 - (3) Examples of such exposure: walk in the cold, don't procrastinate, do chores even if feeling subpar.
6. Solomon explained that true wisdom, though an enabler of success and prosperity in this world, is superior to material advantage. **PRO 8:10-11 c/w LUK 12:15.**
 - a. Do not smother children with material stuff, especially when such is a reward for bad behavior or habits. You don't want to train a child that life revolves around himself and stuff.
 - b. An empty cardboard box can be filled with imagination.

H. Here is a list of things that need to be trained into children.

1. Train the fear of God. **ECC 12:13; HEB 12:28-29.**
 - a. The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom. **PRO 1:7; 9:10.**
 - b. The fear of God is to hate evil. **PRO 8:13.**
 - c. The fear of God should be greater than the fear of anything else. **ISA 8:13; LUK 12:4-5; EXO 1:17.**
 - d. Teach them the omniscience and justice of God, that nothing escapes His sight and there will be an exposure and judgment in due time. **1TI 5:24-25; HEB 4:12-13; 1CO 4:5.**
 - e. Teach them of accountability to God and judgment to come, that this world and life are not the end of the story. **MAT 12:36; ACT 17:30-31; MAT 25:31-46.**
 - f. Prepare them to meet God. **1JO 2:28.**
 - g. The fear of God promotes right priorities: God, Others, Self.
 - h. The fear of God is the chief reason for doing right since the most important question is “What will God think of or do to me if I do wrong?”
 - i. The fear of God yields benefits now. **PRO 22:4.**
2. Train the supreme priority of God and His righteousness. **MAT 6:33.**
 - a. Show and teach them that what is best for man's soul should rule over other concerns. **HEB 11:24-26 c/w 2PE 2:6-8.**
 - b. Godliness never really loses. **1TI 4:7-9.**
 - c. Life is more than possessions. **LUK 12:15.**
3. Train the value of reading over viewing, especially the reading of Scripture. **2TI 3:15-17.**

- a. Reading demands knowledge of words and grammar. Viewing demands little input or processing and triggers the dopamine effect without rational thought.
 - b. Good books expand knowledge and imagination: you form the images in your mind that are described in the text rather than let someone else's images rule your thoughts.
4. Train the worship of God. **JOH 4:23-24**.
 - a. By your own fear of God and devotion to Him, train your child that the awesome Creator and Judge of the universe is to be publicly praised regardless of trouble. **ACT 16:25**.
 - b. Show and teach your child that church worship is necessary, highly prioritized and an introduction to eternity. **PSA 78:4; 84:10; 122:1; EPH 3:21**.
 - c. Don't expect your child to highly value God's house if you play fast and loose with your devotion and duty to it.
5. Train obedience and submission to legitimate authority. **EPH 6:1-3; ROM 13:1-2**.
 - a. Show them and teach them to not revile rulers, starting with you. **EXO 21:17; 22:28; ACT 23:5; 2PE 2:10**.
 - b. Show them and teach them that church officers are legitimate authorities. **HEB 13:17**.
6. Train the value of labor and merit against idleness and handouts. **PRO 19:15; ECC 2:24; 3:22; GAL 6:4; 2TH 3:10-12**.
 - a. Life is not all rest and play and work comes first. **HEB 4:4; JOH 9:4**.
 - b. "Feats before treats. Chores before stores."
7. Train wisdom. They must learn to apply knowledge and understanding. **PRO 4:7-8**.
 - a. There is a world of information but an island of wisdom and this is discernment. **PRO 14:15; 15:2, 14; ECC 7:11-12; 10:10**.
 - b. The greatest wisdom is not found in Solomon or Aristotle but Jesus Christ. **EPH 5:14-17; COL 2:3**.
8. Train selflessness, that they are not the center of life. **2TI 3:2; ACT 20:35; GAL 6:3**.
9. Train humility and thankfulness, not pride. **1PE 5:5-6; 1TH 5:18**.
10. Train self-motivation, that they should be diligent and dutiful without oversight. **PRO 6:6-8; PHIL 2:12**.
11. Train independence, that they should not follow the herd of swine off the cliff, and that they should plow their own field. **ROM 12:2; 1CO 15:33; GEN 2:24; PRO 29:25**.
12. Train enthusiasm, to live godly with great zeal and spirit. **ECC 9:10; ROM 12:11; COL 3:23-24; GAL 4:18**.
13. Train discipline, that they should learn the value of denying themselves and pushing on in spite of weariness. **1CO 9:24-27; TIT 2:12; 2SAM 23:9-10; JDG 8:4**.
14. Train honesty, that they learn the value of a good name and to own up to fault rather than resort to hiding, blame-shifting, counter-accusing, false expediency, etc. **PRO 12:22; 22:1; ROM 12:17 ct/w GEN 3:12; 1SAM 15:21-24**.
15. Train patience, that they learn that rewards and goals should be "learned and earned" and immediate gratification is not to be expected in everything. **PSA 37:7; ECC 7:8; PRO 20:21; ROM 2:7; 1PE 2:20**.
16. Train friendliness, that they learn to relate well to others and choose good companions. **PRO 18:24; 27:10, 17; PSA 119:63; 1CO 15:33**.
17. Train orderliness, that there is a time and place for everything and orderliness saves time. **1CO 14:40; EPH 5:16**.
18. Train resilience, that they do what is right in spite of uncertainty. **ECC 9:11**.
19. Train courage and positivity, especially in doing right. **HEB 13:6; PHIL 4:13**.

- I. Bringing up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord includes training by punishment, which is the painful consequence of a misdeed.
1. Initial observations.
 - a. This is an area of child-training which can be both a challenge to the wisdom of men and also of your faith.
 - b. Dr. Benjamin Spock (pro-abortion pediatrician) integrated the philosophies of Sigmund Freud and John Dewey into his errant views on child-training: “John Dewey and Freud said that kids don’t have to be disciplined into adulthood but can direct themselves toward adulthood by following their own will.”
 - c. Scripture is the ultimate child psychology book from the ultimate Parent, God. The wise will exalt its wisdom to the rejection of contrary wisdom of men. We are not wiser than God. **PSA 119:128; JAM 1:5; PRO 9:9.**
 - d. Beware of the error of results-oriented reasoning. **NUM 20:7-12.**
 - (1) Parents may reject Scripture’s commands and produce a compliant child. But this is little more than betting against the odds of making it through a minefield without following a detailed map of where the mines are.
 - (2) If results are the determinant of method then electro-shock therapy, marijuana or brain surgery might be proper ways to produce a compliant child.
 2. Punishment comes in two forms: natural and artificial.
 - a. Natural punishment is the obvious consequence of wrongdoing such as loss or injury.
 - (1) Example: A child through wilful neglect or a foul mood ruins his favorite possession. Parents do well to not haste to replace the object.
 - (2) Example: A child insists on playing with forbidden things and ends up with an injury.
 - (3) Parents do wrong to shield children from all potentials for consequential punishment. Where there is not an obviously debilitating consequence to a misdeed, sometimes it is wise to let the child feel the sting of his own actions.
 - (4) Consider how God thus teaches us. **PRO 1:29-31.**
 - b. Artificial punishment is a devised means of punishment to help a child associate pain, disappointment or hardship with wrongdoing.
 - (1) This may take the form of lost privileges or imposed duty.
 - (2) This may take the form of *beating* (infliction of repeated blows): a Biblical directive for the shaping of a child’s character.
 - (3) Every misdeed need not be dealt with by beating/spanking but rebellion should meet with the rod of correction. Discern between ignorant disobedience and presumptuous disobedience. **LUK 12:47-48.**
 - (4) Children will NOT outgrow rebellion. **PRO 22:15; 19:18.**
 - (6) The Law of Moses dealt severely with the stubborn, rebellious child who had been properly trained. **DEU 21:18.**
 - (7) Home life is imperiled if one member is set on rebellion. A parting of ways may be the only solution and this may cause circumstances which prompt repentance. **LUK 15:11-32.**
 - (8) Parents of adolescents who are wanting independence by rebellion should be aware of three stages: wanting liberation to do things their own way, being finally given the liberty to pursue their own way, expecting the parent to subsidize their emancipated folly.

- AA. Beware of giving in to the last one: if they are so wise and mature to be independent, they can surely figure out how to truly be independent. Let thy name become Ivermectin.
- BB. Keep to the code: reward good behavior, not bad behavior.
3. When the time comes for artificial punishment, particularly beating, consider:
 - a. Is the punishment for the good of the child or is it just the volcanic reaction of a parent frustrated by his/her own irresponsibility, irritability, etc.?
 - b. Is it taking frustrations with your spouse out on the child?
 - c. Is it taking frustrations out on someone too small to retaliate YET?
 4. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child and is to be driven out by the rod. **PRO 22:15.**
 - a. foolishness: The quality or condition of being foolish.
 - b. foolish: Fool-like; wanting in sense or judgment.
 - c. fool: *n.* One deficient in judgement or sense, one who acts or behaves stupidly, a silly person, a simpleton. (In Biblical use applied to vicious or impious persons.).
 - d. rod: A straight, slender shoot or wand, growing upon or cut from a tree, bush, etc. 2. An instrument of punishment, either one straight stick, or a bundle of twigs bound together. *to spare the rod*, etc.
 - e. Don't be wiser than God and try to purge foolishness from the child's heart by overlooking it, pacifying it, buying it off, etc.
 5. Parents who cannot bring themselves to "rod" a child for folly (especially defiance) because they love the child too much actually love themselves too much and hate the child. **PRO 13:24.**
 6. Child-beating is scriptural. Do not be cowed by the world into perverting the very language of Scripture to satisfy current social fads. **PRO 23:13-14.**
 - a. beat: To strike repeatedly; to strike with repeated blows.
 - b. The short-term pain of loving correction with the rod will save the child from much greater pain in the future (and save the parents much pain also).
 - c. Sparing is for *obedient* children. **MAL 3:17.**
 7. The rod is an instrument of *chastening*. **PRO 13:24.**
 - a. chasten: To inflict disciplinary or corrective punishment on; to visit with affliction for the purpose of moral improvement; to correct, discipline, chastise.
 - b. The purpose for chastening a child is to teach him that irresponsible actions have painful consequences.
 - c. Training a child to associate punishment with transgression trains him to understand the justice of God and the chastisement of Christ for our sins. **ISA 53:5.**
 - d. If a child is always shielded from the consequences of misbehavior, he will not be prepared for adult life.
 - e. If a child does not consider the pain of his chastening grievous, he may not be getting the appropriate measure of chastening. **HEB 12:11.**
 - f. The rod should produce real tears/crying (**PRO 19:18**) and most any parent can tell when the tears/crying are phony.
 8. The rod of chastening is a tool of instruction for the child to impart wisdom to him. **PRO 29:15.**
 - a. The object of training a child is to impart wisdom since wisdom will direct the child in the way which he *should go* and so bring his life to its fullest potential. **PRO 4:7-13.**
 - b. Two things are needed to impart wisdom: the rod and reproof.
 - (1) reprove: To reject. 2. To express disapproval of (conduct, actions, beliefs, etc.); to censure, condemn. 3. To reprehend, rebuke, blame, chide, or find

- fault with (a person).
- (2) The application of the rod without a notion of disapproval of conduct being conveyed along with it leaves a child in bewildered pain, not wiser.
9. Establish sound disciplinary patterns when the child is young. **PRO 13:24.**
- a. betimes: At an early time, period, or season; early in the year; early in life.
 - b. Early correction will likely see a gradual reduction of beatings, but late starters are likely to see the opposite (and likely never see the same positive results).
 - c. Very small children will not understand verbal rebuke or reasoning, but they will understand physical pain.
 - (1) Associating pain with dangerous behavior or misbehavior is the best way to help them know what is wrong.
 - (2) Repeat the word “no” during the punishment which reinforces to the child what that word means.
 - (3) Over time, verbal rebuke can be effective in warning about a wrong or a danger.
10. Do not resort to anger or shouting to get action. Use action to get action!
- a. Some parents repeat their instructions with increasing loudness until they reach an exploding point when they finally take action. This trains the child:
 - (1) to recognize that point of action and obey only then.
 - (2) that he has several chances to disobey.
 - (3) to think that screaming is an acceptable way to enforce one's will.
 - b. Parents err when they assume their explosive anger secured the obedience.
 - c. On the contrary, what secured the obedience was the fact that the child had learned to recognize the point of action.
 - d. While anger may be revealed in punishing a child, it should not be the punishment in and of itself and it should be controlled.
 - e. Adult screaming and frustration produce a disrespect in the mind of the child because he perceives your inability to control him or yourself.
 - (1) Children will test your leadership to see if it is worthy of respect.
 - (2) Children respect strength and courage as is evident in the characters they select as heroes.
 - (3) Children will test to see if the rules hold.
 - (4) Children feel more secure in an environment where the rights of others and their rights are protected.
 - f. Adult anger and frustration can also turn the event into a personal vendetta rather than training the child for his own good.
 - g. If a child is allowed to harass a parent for a prolonged period of time, the result can be explosive. This is a major cause of child abuse.
11. Do not let the child's tears dissuade you from administering appropriate discipline. **PRO 19:18.**
12. Give consideration to sickness or fatigue when a child's conduct is less than sterling but avoid using those things as excuses for a child's intolerable behavior.
13. The chastening parent is to be *reverenced* (**HEB 12:9**). Do not allow a child to express contempt for your rule and discipline. It is just as important to train *attitudes* as it is to train *actions*.
14. Here are some guidelines for effective punishment.
- a. Don't lose control. **EPH 6:4.**
 - b. Be consistent. This helps the child know exactly what behavior will not be tolerated.

- c. Match the punishment to the person. The level of punishment appropriate to a nine-year-old would not be appropriate to a three-year-old.
- d. Match the punishment to the misdeed. Childish slip-ups are one thing. Rebellion is a different story.
- e. Do not let a child take advantage of your concerns about punishing in public. Promise the child that the rod will be administered upon returning home and then keep the promise.
- f. Be thorough. Make an impression upon the child. Make it hurt.
- g. Do not lose sight of the objective of chastening.
 - (1) Chastisement should be for the benefit of the child rather than a venting of your frustrations.
 - (2) The objective of discipline is to correct and direct the child, not to make him think that he cannot do anything right. **COL 3:21.**
- h. Have a beginning and an end.
 - a. Begin by explaining the reason for the punishment.
 - b. End with complete forgiveness and restoration. Affection after punishment shows that the behavior, not the child, was detested. You thus train the child to understand God's mercy. **PSA 103:8-14.**
- i. Remember, discipline of children and imposing restraints upon them can save them from hell in this life caused by their own folly or being unprepared for life in a real world of laws, civil powers, bosses, rules, rewards and punishments. **PRO 23:13-14.**
- j. Be careful to not allow a child to develop a pattern of always apologizing his way out of punishment. Know your child and be sensitive to trends.
- k. Parents should agree on their punishment policy and share in its application lest one parent be deemed the ogre.
- l. Do not be a pushover or your children will ignore what you say. **GEN 19:14.**
- m. The disciplined child brings rest and delight. **PRO 29:17 c/w HEB 12:11.**

Recommended Reading

Dare To Discipline by Dr. James Dobson

The Strong-Willed Child by Dr. James Dobson

Bringing Up Boys by Dr. James Dobson