

Biblical Childrearing Methods of Admonition

May 28th, 2000 - Brett Baker

- Children are a gracious gift.
- Children are to be taught *what* to believe.
- Childrearing has eternal consequences
- There is a season for childrearing
- Principles and methods are not the same thing

❖ Introduction

After laying the foundation for disciplining our children, we now will discuss some of the things to consider doing when it becomes time to administer the discipline.

As we come to this portion of our discussion on disciplining our children, we must remember that which has come before this and we should be students of the Word. The Scriptures are very thorough on this topic and there are no excuses for not knowing these things. We also have from the Word a promise that God has made the world in such a way that we will reap a harvest from that which we sow. We cannot sow bad seed and expect to have a bountiful crop. Nor should we even consider yielding a poor crop after planting faithful seeds.

📖 **Galatians 6:7** - *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.*

❖ Evaluate Yourself

Galatians 6:1

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

- Although this verse directly addresses the reproof of a brother, before you can administer discipline in a manner that pleases God, you must remove specks from your own eyes and be spiritual. This means that if you have waited to the point of being angry or frustrated, then you are unqualified to provide loving, judicial discipline. First confess and repent of your own sin before you attempt to drive it from your children.

❖ Identify the Sin

- Sometimes this can be one of the most difficult aspects of administering discipline. However, it is also one of the most central steps. Take time to determine exactly what is the sin behind the behavior.
- Explain clearly to your children that their particular behavior is something that is not tolerated. Also explain to them that they should remember your laws and God's laws by being self-governed. Forgetting is not an excuse for sin; it is another sin altogether needing confession and repentance.
- Once you have identified the sin, use the name for the sin consistently. For example in our home we call casual grumbling, whining and outright grumbling we call complaining. The most common sins to be identified are complaining, disrespect, disobedience, self-centeredness, lying, covetousness, tale bearing, and self-righteousness.

❖ Evaluate Your Child

Psalm 103:13-14

¹³ As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him. ¹⁴ For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

- Give some consideration as to whether you have created a situation that might have sent unclear messages to the children or if you have tempted them to sin by forgetting their weaknesses. Just as our Father in heaven knows our frame, so too godly parents will seek to understand how discipline is best administered to each child and appropriate for good instruction.
- Part of considering the frame of your children will to match the discipline and the offense with the age or frame of the child. Some children require more firm discipline and others not so firm. If you are dealing with a six month old, your discipline should look much different that with a sixteen year old. Frequently, this is a very difficult task.
- The discipline of older children or teenagers should transform as they get older. As young children, your discipline imposes *artificial* consequences of sin (pain on their bottoms). However as the children grow older, your discipline should begin to impose the *genuine* consequence of sin. The true consequence of lying is that you will be deemed untrustworthy. If you steal or break something, you must seek restitution. If you disrespect your mother, then you should be called to perform some of her work (to her approval). You should link the true consequence to the sin and avoid arbitrary discipline (e.g. being grounded for lying has no connection).

❖ Find a Suitable Location

- After you have completed the preliminary evaluation of the situation and your child, you should find a location that is appropriate in many ways; you should ensure that your application of discipline would not humiliate the child or expose

your family to undue scrutiny.

❖ **The Discipline Should Be Quick and Painful**

Ecclesiastes 8:11

11 Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

- .. Clearly this verse is teaching a principal regarding punishment in the civil realm. However, it is also instructive for us in the realm of the family. Frequently, you will find yourselves in situations where it is not possible to exercise discipline promptly yet it is crucial that the application of discipline be connected with the sin of the child. Very early on, this is extremely important just so that they associate the pain with the action. Later, perhaps when they can speak, you can add a little bit of slack to the time between the infraction and discipline but even so, it should be obvious that fellowship has been broken.
- .. Notice also that the scriptures declare in many places that discipline and punishment have deterrent value. Your other family members are trained when you faithfully administer discipline. This is not to say that you discipline your children by humiliating them in front of siblings or their friends. But typically, other family members know what is generally going on and will probably tend to sit up straighter at dinner.
- .. You might also distinguish between corporal discipline and the types of discipline that are not a result of a sin but are used to train and build a character of discipline. Frequently this involves labor or abstaining from something but is intended to teach and build godly character.

❖ **Apply the Word of God**

- .. If we remember that we are always teaching our children, then you can teach your children submission to the Word of God and also its commandments by reading the scriptures to your children and applying them to the particular situation.

❖ **Children Should Confess Their Sin**

- .. Do not confuse your children's sorrow over their situation with being penitent for the sin. Being sorry can occur simply because you are in an unpleasant situation that you would rather be out of. Rather, you should have your children confess with their mouths their desire to be forgiven of the specific sin identified earlier. Confession of sin means that we are saying the same thing about our sin that God does. We are acknowledging our actions as sin and agreeing with God's assessment.

❖ **Declare Their Justification**

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. NKJV

- .. After they have confessed their sin and sought forgiveness make it very clear and evident that forgiveness has been granted. The younger children should know that they have been cleansed of the sin, that the sin no longer stands against them and that the issue is now over. With older children, the consequences of the sin may be longer lasting.

❖ **Pray For Sanctification**

- .. Since you are the sanctification program for your children and it is God who sanctifies, you should seek to acknowledge His sovereignty and dominion over all events especially the administering of discipline. As the children see you submitting to the Word of the Lord and to Him in prayer, they will be learning obedience, submission and authority by watching you.

❖ **Manifest the Restoration of Fellowship**

- .. A child that has been disciplined well will need comforting. When they request fond attention and comfort, provide in a swift genuine manner. Once you have reached this point, never withhold fellowship or delay the restoration. It is possible that further discipline is necessary if there is no desire on the part of the child to be comforted or restored. This is a difficult decision but if you have sought diligently to pour on the fellowship and affection between episodes of discipline, the children will crave the restoration.

❖ **Bury Their Sin**

- .. Once all of these steps have been implemented, the sin of the child should be forgotten never to be resurrected again. Although this is not primarily a cognitive effort, if this is done faithfully, it will be virtually impossible to remember all of the times you have gone through this. Certainly, if the sin reoccurs, you will go through the same steps each time until they are self-governed by the Spirit of God manifesting the fruit of self-control and tenderness toward His commandments. But, we should ensure that we never dig up past sins as though they were still standing against them; this would be teaching a lie about our heavenly Father.