

# The Facts of Life & Parenting: PARENTS, KINGS, & RODS

Hebrews 12:1-13

## REVIEW

- *WHERE DO BABIES COME FROM?* Children are a possession of God, entrusted to the care of parents. Therefore, parents must learn what God says about how they are raised.
- *WHY DO CHILDREN DISOBEY?* While different answers have been given to this most important question, the answer is as old as Adam and Eve: Children are disobedient because they are conceived sinners.
- *WHAT IS THE ULTIMATE GOAL FOR CORRECTING A CHILD'S MISBEHAVIOR?* Your goal for your children is not ultimately that they obey you, but that they obey God from the heart (Ephesians 6:4).
- Being made in the image of God means that parents are to speak to their children in ways only that are helpful for building them up according to their needs. The speech of parents is to include encouragement, exhortation, warning, rebuke, and teaching God's Word (Ted Tripp, *Shepherding a Child's Heart* [a highly recommended and helpful resource!]).

## I. THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF DISCIPLINING DISOBEDIENT CHILDREN

discipline – can have the meaning of instruct; such as instruction with words or example (cf. Deut.8:2-5). But it also has the meaning of “chastening.” A parent disciplines with words of instruction (PROPHET). A parent is also to discipline with correction that is painful (KING).

- A. The goal of discipline is not to leave a bruise. The goal is not to vent your anger and frustration on somebody smaller than you. The goal of discipline is not to teach your child “Who’s the boss” nor is it to “put them in their place.” The ultimate goal of discipline is not even so that your children will listen to you.
- B. The ultimate goal of parental discipline is so that your children obey God from the heart (Proverbs 4:23; Ephesians 6:4).
- C. Disciplining your child so that they obey parental demands can be done by anybody, Christian and non-Christian.

## II. THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF PARENTAL DISCIPLINE IS *IMPOSSIBLE* (if you try doing it in your own strength)! (Phil.4:13)

- A. “Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1).
- B. Only God can give your children a new heart, discipline CANNOT (Deut.30:6; Prov.4:23; 23:19; Psalm 119:11; Eph.6:4).

HEART - the control center of a person (Proverbs 4:23 [well spring of life]). The heart determines the emotions, thoughts, will, and a person's relationship to God. Because the heart is the control center of a person, it reveals their true nature (Prov.27:19; Matt.12:33-35).

### C. Discipline and self-esteem:

1. The self-esteem our culture envies is really a veiled form of pride and is a result of the postmodern rejection of truth.
2. A person will have a proper sense of self-worth only after they have humbled themselves before God (1 Peter 5:6).
3. Ironically, the only way you can give your children a true sense of their worth and dignity is by disciplining them when they are wrong and pointing them to the cross of Jesus Christ! What greater sense of worth could a person have than to know that they are loved by the One true God? Self-worth does not come from what we think, how we feel, or what we have accomplished. It comes from the accomplishment of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:1-11).

### **III. DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL GAME PLAN FOR DISCIPLINE**

- A. When a child disobeys, the parent's job as a prophet now turns to the office of judge or king. Prophets declare God's Word and kings uphold it by administering discipline.
- B. The parental resource for declaring God's Word is the Bible. The parent's source for discipline is the rod (Prov.10:13; 13:24; 19:18; 23:13,14; 29:15,17; cf. Deut.21:18).
1. In the Scriptures, the rod signifies the authority of a person to uphold the Law. It was the instrument of a judge or a king (Psalm 2:9; 45:6).
2. Rods were used to shepherd people/sheep in the right direction (Psalm 23:4; Micah 7:14).
- C. Biblical discipline of children is both an act of love AND it is painful (**Heb.12:7-11**).
- ✓ *If your discipline of your children is not done in love and if it is not painful, then it is unbiblical.*
  - ✓ *If your discipline of your children is not for God's glory then it is unbiblical.*
  - ✓ *If you do not discipline your children, then you are not showing love to them (Prov.13:24). The parent is deceived who says, "I don't use methods of discipline that are painful because I love my children too much."*
- D. Please realize that if your parents abused you physically, their abuse does not exempt you from the God-given responsibility of disciplining your children. Just because your parents dealt with you unbiblically does not give you the right to turn around and act unbiblically toward your children (cf. Matt.5:38,39).
- E. All discipline must have the goal of turning the hearts of children toward their parents and toward their father in heaven. The parental discipline of children is to serve the same purpose as God's disciplining His covenant children (**Hebrews 12:11**).

### **QUESTIONS FOR SABBATH DISCUSSION & MEDITATION:**

*Take what you have learned this morning and make it into a prayer for yourself, your family, the church and/or your nation. Remember that prayer consists in Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication (Feel free to use the outline for praying).*

*What does it mean to be made in the image of God? How is this related to parenting?*

*What is the ultimate goal of disciplining disobedient children?*

*Why is the ultimate goal of parental discipline IMPOSSIBLE? Is this something you are keenly aware of? Does this, or how should this, affect upon your prayer life?*

*What is wrong with our society's emphasis upon self-esteem?*

*What is the significance of the "rod" in Scripture?*

*Discipline is both an act of \_\_\_\_\_ and it is also \_\_\_\_\_ (Heb.12:7-11).*

*How could you use this sermon to offer practical and helpful advice to frazzled parents who are your relatives, friends, co-workers, etc.?*

*Parents, what do you need to change in your home to be disciplining your children biblically?*

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Prepared by Pastor Aaron Goerner (2/17/2002). See Dt.33:8-10; Ezra 7:10; Malachi 2:7; Acts 17:11; Col.1:28,29; 1 Tim.4:12-16.  
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