

How Do I Discipline My Kids?

Message 02 of the series "Helpline"

I. God disciplines His children because He loves us.

"My child, don't reject the LORD's discipline, and don't be upset when he corrects you. For the LORD corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights." Proverbs 3:11-12 (NLT)

II. If we love our children, we will discipline them.

"Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children. Those who love their children care enough to discipline them." Proverbs 13:24 (NLT)

- a. Discipline trains a child's mind or character through consequences and punishments in order to change an undesirable behavior or to teach a life lesson.

"Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him." Proverbs 22:15 (NIV)

"Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)

- b. Discipline is NOT the same as retribution - using punishment to get revenge or maintain control.

"Dear friends, never take revenge." Romans 12:19 (NLT)

- c. We are NOT raising our kids to be like everyone else, we are training them to be godly.

"Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come." 1 Timothy 4:8 (NLT)

"The father of godly children has cause for joy. What a pleasure to have children who are wise." Proverbs 23:24 (NLT)

- d. We should NOT expect our kids to like it when we discipline them.

"No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way." Hebrews 12:11 (NLT)

- e. There are NO perfect parents who always handle discipline the right way.

"For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness." Hebrews 12:10 (NLT)

- f. We will face painful consequences if we don't discipline our children.

"Discipline your children while there is hope. Otherwise you will ruin their lives." Proverbs 19:18 (NLT)

"Wise discipline imparts wisdom; spoiled adolescents embarrass their parents." Proverbs 29:15 (MSG)

III. Seven Keys to Effective Parental Discipline:

- a. We must communicate our expectations clearly.

- b. We must set appropriate boundaries and consequences.

- c. We must reinforce biblical values through repetition.

"And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up." Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NLT)

- d. We must NEVER discipline in anger.

"...man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires." James 1:20 (NIV)

- e. We must be consistent.

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord." Ephesians 6:4 (NLT)

- f. We must discipline as a unified team with our spouses (and ex-spouses).

- g. We must allow our children to experience struggles and face consequences.

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." James 1:2-4 (NIV)

IV. Three Reminders to Encourage Parents:

- a. God will help us.

“Yet I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; O my God, do not delay.”
Psalm 40:17 (NIV)

- b. We can help each other.

“Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives.” Colossians 3:16 (NLT)

“These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children....”

Titus 2:4 (NLT)

- c. It's never too late to start doing the right thing or to start again.

“The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning.” Lamentations 3:22-23 (NLT)

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Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. Read Hebrews 12:5-11. The Bible says that God disciplines His children. What does this mean? Why does He do it? Have you experienced God's discipline in your life? What happened? How did it impact you?
2. While having coffee with a friend one morning you notice that her 3-year-old daughter is very demanding. In fact, when the mother tells her daughter to be quiet so she can have a conversation with you, the child screams at the top of her lungs “NO! You be quiet!” With tears in her eyes, the friend turns to you looking embarrassed and defeated and says, “I don't know how to handle her.” What do you say to your friend?
3. Discuss the difference between discipline and retribution.
Discipline: “training of the mind or character through consequences in order to change an undesirable behavior or to teach a life lesson.”
Retribution: “using punishment in order to get revenge or maintain control.” Retribution belittles rather than motivates.
4. Read Proverbs 19:18 and 29:15. What happens if we refuse to discipline our kids?
5. When can you add grace and mercy into your discipline? How much is too much?
6. Read Proverbs 22:6. How important is it to know what you are ‘training’ your kids for? What guidelines do you have established in your home that are directing your children towards being a mature follower of Jesus Christ?
7. Connect groups are a great place to find help and encouragement as a parent or grandparent. Are you part of a connect group? If not, be sure to sign up for Discover Connect Groups through the church office.

Resources:

The New Dare to Discipline, by Dr. James Dobson, Tyndale House, 1992

Getting the Best of Your Kids Before They Get the Best of You, by Dr. Kevin Lehman, Harvest House, 1992

Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours, by Dr. Kevin Leman, Revell, 2009

Raising Christians Not Just Children, by Florence Littaur, Thomas Nelson, 1998

Raising Respectful Children in a Disrespectful World by Jill Rigby, Howard Books, 2006

Focus on the Family website: focusonthefamily.com

Family Life Today website: familylifetoday.com

Quotation:

Discipline your children, and they will give you peace of mind and will make your heart glad. – Proverbs 29:17