

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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Discipline in the

Home

By Irven Lee

Children do not have the ability at birth to understand the language of their parents. We all realize this, but we should also understand that these little people do not know the commonly accepted rules of etiquette, nor do they recognize property rights. Each child seems to assume that anything he finds and likes belongs to him. Only gradually does he learn that some things are his and that other things are the property of others. The innocent child does not, of course, have any sense of discernment between what is morally right and what is wrong. Because of parental failure to guide or train the children many young people never come to have a definite code of morals or sensitive consciences to guide them in the way of righteousness.

While many are not trained to discern between good and evil, they could have been trained. They are as capable of developing faith, godliness, and spiritual wisdom as they are of developing physical skills and language skills from people about them. Some parents take an interest in helping their children to develop the ability to earn a living but not much concern to teach them how to live. There are many who are skilled in athletics, music, and in various aspects of business that are as ignorant of spiritual values as the brute beast from the jungle (**2 Pet. 2:12, KJV**). That which is most important is lacking.

Parents must have the respect of their children or they cannot convey the value of their own knowledge and experience to them. Love, instruction, personal attention, and the proper example from parents can go a long way toward obtaining this respect. To make their word authoritative, the

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chastening rod is recommended by the word of God. This is not physical or mental abuse, but it is not always pleasant to the one who is disciplined or to the one who is administering it. Even the Lord chastens those He loves.

"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which

are exercised thereby" (**Heb. 12:5-11**).

We may not be able to identify the occasions when the loving heavenly Father is chastening us. Our complaining bitter attitude toward things that are beyond our control will not help. Fortunate children whose fathers love them enough to use the rod at the proper time and in the proper way grow up with special respect for their parents. Those undisciplined children cannot be pleased. No undisciplined child is ever a happy child. He is not self disciplined nor is he pleasant and cooperative in disposition. Is this not true of the unrestrained children you know? Love suggests the use of the rod, but not to the unreasonable point of abuse (**Prov. 13:24; Col. 3:20, 21**). There is the very useful form of discipline that yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness (**Eph. 6:4; Prov. 13:24**).

The punishment the child receives from his parents should be adequate to bring his will into subjection. Impulsively hitting the child may only aggravate the rebellious attitude. Conquer the rebel and be consistent, and there will not need to be a constant running battle. A good man should have

his children in subjection with all gravity (1 Tim. 3:4, 5). There is some "know how" involved in proper discipline. Children are small for a few years so all parents should develop a skill in the use of effective discipline. Obedience is one of the greatest lessons to be taught, and here is where discipline in the home comes into its place of very great importance. An adult can buffet his own body and bring it into subjection, but a child lacks the depth of understanding to discipline himself, so his parents provide wise and effective discipline until he is trained and mature enough to see the need to control his own fleshly nature.

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Effects of No Church Discipline

By Irvn Lee

Failure to carry out any command of God is a serious failure. The New Testament emphasizes the duties of the individual, but there are certain responsibilities assigned to groups of Christians (churches) because we are to work together as a family or body under Christ, our Chief Shepherd (Rom 16:16; Titus 1:5; 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Pet 5:1-5).

1) No Discipline Causes Men

To Be Lost: -- God does not want any to perish because every soul is precious to Him (Matt 16:26; 2 Pet 3:9). If a brother sins, he endangers his own soul. Any Christian near him should seek to convert or restore him to God (James 5:19,20; Gal 6:1). If efforts of this type fail, the important task of rescuing this one from perishing falls upon the church (1 Cor 5). Let every member be aware of the fact that the effort is to save the sinner as well as to protect the reputation of the church (1 Cor 5:4-8). We must admonish the sinner as a brother because we are interested in his spiritual welfare. We want him to be ashamed of his sinful way, so we withdraw from him (2 Thess. 3:6,14,15).

2) No Discipline Allows Leaven's Wickedness To Enter

The Lump: -- The church at Corinth was "puffed up" with its own wisdom rather than depending on the counsel of God concerning the member who was a fornicator. Allowing one couple to live in violation of the law was a way of letting the leaven of wickedness to enter the "lump." It was true then as it is now that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1

Cor 5:6-8). If the church closes its eyes to one case, there will likely soon be another and then others.

3) No Discipline Will Keep Men From Enduring Sound

Doctrine: -- Timothy was charged to "preach, reprove, rebuke and exhort" in an urgent way, if he would push off the day when they would not endure sound doctrine (2 Tim 4:1-5). The mouths of those who speak unsound doctrine should be stopped but who will do this, if the people like the perverted pattern? (Titus 1:10-14; 2 Pet 2:1-3). Timothy was urged to be forceful and faithful in his preaching, and the churches were taught to mark, avoid and reject false teachers. They were to purge out the leaven of wickedness and disorder to avoid the evil day when they would not endure sound doctrine (Rom 16:17,18; Acts 20:29-31; Gal 1:6-10).

4) No Discipline Encourages The Worldly: -- If a church looks the other way and refuses to notice when more and more members become ungodly, that church will become a gathering place for the worldly. It will also lose the respect of the community. Its zeal for Christ will vanish, so it will fall into the

same condition that had come to Israel when Isaiah and Jeremiah lived. God was displeased with a church that tolerated doctrine and practices that were contrary to His Will (Rev 2:14,15).