

OUR CHILDREN AND DISCIPLINE

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I have just completed an assignment for another publication on the Bible and its teaching on the disciplining of children. We thought it good that some of this material be submitted to our readers in this article. I had stressed that children must have the discipline obtained in: authority, Bible-based love, parental presence, religious instruction, physical punishment, and parental example.

Our word *discipline* is rooted in the word *disciple*—a learner, student, follower, pupil. We, for example, are followers of the Lord. We are his pupils, students, followers. We are, then disciplined ones. Discipline is involved in good order in all of society—we must be disciplined ones, in terms in civil law, or we have chaos. Workers must be disciplined regarding their labor and attention to duty, or the productivity will not be there. In the church, in society, on the job, and **IN THE HOME**, discipline is required. Regarding the latter, the Lord has said enough about the role and duties of parents, and the need children have for training, etc. (Eph. 5:22-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; Tit. 2:3-5), for us to know how much discipline is needed. For the well-being of the child, the discipline must be there. If it is not, then the child will grow up **UNDISCIPLINED**, and the home, school, the job, and society itself will have to pay bitterly for it.

Naturally, when we speak of the disciplining of children, the responsibility rests in the home. We parents brought them into the world, and it is our responsibility, not the world's, and not the church's. Early on, God taught parents that the home is to be a classroom (Deu. 6:6-9). Some parents will lose their souls over this very matter. They were not teachers of their children, either morally or spiritually, except that in defaulting, they were teachers of the wrong things.

Every value the child receives, from the earliest, he obtains from the parents. Attitudes, priorities, moral concepts, friendships to be cultivated and avoided, respect for all authority, preciousness of his/her own influence, etc., must be given the children by parents, and **EARLY!** It begins when the child comes home from the hospital, right after birth. The environment should have been in the home already, before the child arrives.

On the matter of discipline, Solomon stresses the use of the chastening rod. He states that such is useful in driving foolishness from the heart of the child (Pro. 22:15). He also adds that the parent who loves the child will give him that discipline, **and that if the parents does not do so, he does not really love the child** (Pro. 13:24). But that type discipline is only one part of it—but it **IS** a part of it. There are several areas of discipline, as we noted in our first paragraph. But the point is that the discipline is needed, is required, and God expects it to be ministered.

The most critical factor in it all is that the whole range of discipline is needed **NOW**. If it is not done **NOW**, with the accumulated good effect over the years of the child's upbringing, it probably will not be done **AT ALL!** Indeed, to **WAIT** means that finally it is **TOO LATE**. Parents, it is critical. The souls of your children are involved, and your own souls are involved, also. How are you doing in this area?~

Deceased