

## ***Shepherding A Child's Heart***

### **Session 14 – Shepherding Children Ages 0-5**

#### **Review:**

1. Why do parents often fail to discipline their children?
2. How does the Bible instruct us, regarding the physical discipline of children?
3. What are the most common pitfalls when it comes to the physical discipline of children?
4. What is the goal of physical discipline?

#### **Main Idea:**

In the early years of childhood, children go through an immense amount of changes. During these early years, it is the responsibility of parents to teach their children how to live under authority by instructing and correcting them. They must teach them the concepts of living in the realm of blessing and warning of the consequences of sin. The means of correction involve both words and physical discipline. The use of the rod in physical discipline must be done with the goal of the restoration and not an outlet of anger or retribution.

#### **Video (notes below)**

#### **I. The training objectives for the first five years of life**

##### **1. The first five years are marked by development and radical change**

- a. Physical
- b. Social
- c. Intellectual
- d. Spiritual
- e. This can be overwhelming

##### **2. Overarching goal for the first five years: help your children be people under authority**

##### **3. The Circle of Blessing (Ephesians 6:1-3)**

- a. Obey – Long life – Honor – Go well
- b. We must make a gourmet presentation of this truth to our kids

- i. Negative presentation invites rebellion
- ii. Make a presentation that is attractive
- c. Key definitions for terms in the circle of blessing
  - i. Obey: Submission to God's authority that causes a child to do what he is told by his parents immediately, without excuse, without complaint and without question
  - ii. Honor: Submission to God's authority that causes a child to speak to his parents with respect for their role as God's agent of nurture, direction and discipline
  - iii. Go well: The natural and spiritual blessings of obedience
    - 1. The spiritual blessing is being where God wants you to be
    - 2. There are also practical, natural blessings
  - iv. Long life: The blessings of prosperity and protection, richness and fullness of life that God provides for a child who lives under His structure of authority
- d. Note how the diagram is extended to illustrate what happens when the child moves outside of the circle of blessing
  - i. Discipline and correction—a rescue mission designed to restore the child to the circle of blessing
  - ii. Discipline and correction is not what I do to my children, but for my children

## **II. Physical discipline in the early years**

### **1. Illustration of little girl with her doll**

### **2. What is a child's most basic problem?**

- a. Not a lack of information
- b. The child's problem is that he is a sinner

### **3. Appropriate use of the rod of correction**

- a. A parent, in faith toward God and faithfulness towards his or her children, undertaking the responsibility of careful, timely, measured, and controlled use of physical discipline

to underscore the importance of obeying God

b. This rescues the child from continuing in his foolishness and coming to destruction

c. The description broken down:

i. A parental exercise—all of the passages about physical discipline describe the parent as the one who is responsible for physical discipline

ii. An act of faith—parents must do this trusting God

iii. An act of faithfulness—recognizing that there is hope in discipline

iv. A responsibility—the parent determining to obey God

v. Physical discipline

1. It is never a time for venting wrath

2. It is a rescue mission to restore your child to the circle of blessing

#### **4. Some distortions of physical discipline**

a. It is not a right to sinful anger

b. Anger in physical discipline is always wicked and wrong

c. It is not a right to hit our children capriciously

i. Parents are not to use physical force whenever they want

ii. This is a violation of Ephesians 6:4

d. It is not venting frustration

e. It is not something you do when you don't know what else to do

f. It is not retribution

i. It is not a child paying for his sins

ii. Instead, physical discipline has the positive goal of restoration

g. It is not associated with vindictive anger

h. Your child should be restored and happy after physical discipline

#### **Reflection Questions:**

1. What is the main goal that we want to be teaching our children between the ages of 0-5?
2. Are children naturally compliant with authority? Why or why not?
3. List out some major changes that happen in young children between birth and 5 years.
4. Why is instruction necessary to go along side of physical discipline?
5. What are some good intentions gone wrong when it comes to the discipline of children?
6. To encourage others, what are some ways you have been able to persevere and stay faithful through all the challenges of having young children?