

# Family Ministry – Biblical Application of the Rod

**Introduction** – It can be difficult to get back to the everyday events of life when God’s judgment has fallen upon our nation. And yet, these very issues of raising faithful children are at the heart of how we have fallen; and these methods, when applied with faith in the promises of God, are our way to repentance as a nation for future generations. Therefore, biblical child-rearing remains a central and even front-line issue for us as parents and for the church in America today.

**The Use of the Rod is Biblical, not Optional** (Prov 23:13-14) – Put away the studies. Put away your own opinions as well. What does the Word teach us about discipline and how it is to be administered?

**“Beat him with a rod”** – Talk about politically incorrect! We even get a bit squeamish with such hard language. God wants painful discipline to occur when the little children of His people break His Law. This should teach the parent and the child about the character of God.

**Effective Means** – Applied in the context of faith and humility, God instructs that this activity accomplishes quite the opposite of what the child thinks is happening – as well as today’s sociologists (Prov 20:30).

**Correction By One Qualified** (Gal 6:1-2) – You are only qualified to correct another if it is in a spirit of gentleness, with honest humility, and with a willingness to be a neighbor, obeying the second greatest commandment.

**Context of Love and Fellowship** – If there is no fellowship broken because there is no fellowship, discipline will not be effective. Parents must believe the promises of God, live in submission to the commands and providences of God themselves, and serve their children as Christ’s representatives – and He wants those children brought to Him.

**Correction In the Name of the Lord** (Eph 6:4) – Children should learn they have not only upset the home. They have upset heaven. The discipline should not occur because they have bothered Mom or Dad, but because they have disobeyed the Lord.

**Identification of the Transgression** – Bring the Word to bear. If they have disobeyed (Eph 6:4), if they have lied (Prov 6:16-19), if they have grumbled (Phil 2:14), if they have envied (Eph 5:3), if filthy talk (Eph 5:4), and so forth.

**Consistent and Prompt** (Eccl 8:11) – Because it is the Lord’s Law and you are the Lord’s instrument, you must not discipline in an arbitrary or capricious manner. Promptness is particularly important with little ones, and consistency for all ages.

**Husband and Wife in Tandem** – Be prepared to stand beside one another in this. And let it be known that if Mom has said to do such and such, asking Dad if you “have to” is a great transgression.

**Discipline is Painful to be Fruitful** (Heb 12:5-11) – Discipline is to be painful, not joyful for the moment. God gives us the gift of bottoms for such a purpose. There, a well placed rod brings stinging pain, but no injury. In fact, we are promised it yields fruit.

**It Proves Your Love** – If you do not spank your little ones, you hate them (Prov 13:24). On the contrary, if you discipline them properly, you display your love for them and provide a picture of God the Father’s love for His sons and daughters.

**Learn the Art of Spanking** – If you understand your goal, you can learn the method. If you are unsure, seek out a parent you know has been successful in the use of the rod.

**An Instrument of Instruction, not Injury** (Psalm 103:13-14, Prov 29:15) – Each situation, each child and each age provides a number of different issues. You must seek to understand the frame of your child, the nature of the offense, and the proper response. How you discipline a 10 month old, an eight year old, and a sixteen year old, is going to look very different. Always discipline for sin, but you must always evaluate whether you have provoked, tempted, or simply forgotten the frame of your child in the matters at hand.

**Broad Brush Strokes of a Method** – Keep in mind the Lord’s promises, keep in mind your delegated authority, keep in mind the nature and frame of your child. And then, in general –

**Go to a Place of instruction** – Do not shame your child. A regular place in the home is good.

**Identify the Transgression or Want of Conformity** – sins of commission, sins of omission.

**Apply the Rod** – Calm but firm. This is not a time of vengeance, nor even justice. You are seeking to instruct.

**Prayer, Forgiveness, Restoration** (1 John 1:9, Col 3:13) – You pray with them, you pray for them, you teach them to pray. You teach them to confess their sins, and to receive forgiveness. You grant forgiveness with a full heart. You hug them. You talk about restitution issues. You assure them of the efficacy of the blood of Christ. You reject any place for self-pity. You invite them back into fellowship. And you lead the family in welcoming them back into fellowship.

**Conclusion** – A rodless love is to be rejected as a lie. So is a loveless rod. Christian kids are too often spoiled and become the scourge of the next generation. Others are disciplined without any context of the ocean of grace and mercy offered in our Lord and Savior, nor the fellowship of the saints. We all need to learn to repent of sins. We all need the blood to cover our sins. And Jesus will not lose one whom the Father has given Him.

*Dave Hatcher, September 23,*