

# Children and Discipline in the Bible

## 1. How many times is discipline used in the Bible?

- 78 times
- Proverbs is the “go-to” book

## 2. How many times is children used?

- Children 609; son 3,980; daughter 614

## 3. What does discipline mean?

- Same root word as “disciple” — a student, pupil or learner
- Root word mathanō — “to learn”
- Our kids are our disciples
- As they’d say in the Old South — “We’re learnin’ em!”
- **In summary**, discipline is the practice of raising and training a person to live appropriately

— OR —

- Prov 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

#### 4. What is the ultimate purpose of disciplining our children?

- Preparing a child for adulthood, to live a godly life and be a good citizen
- 1 Cor 13:11: When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.

#### 5. How are Fathers a picture of God disciplining us?

- **Two levels** — God with man  
— a father with his son
- Deut 8:5: “Know in your heart, as a man disciplines his son, your **God disciplines you.**”
- Heb 12:7-11: **God is treating you as sons.** For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?



If you are left without discipline ... then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ... we've had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. ... for they disciplined us for a short time for our good ... and God disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields ... fruit to those trained by it.

## 6. What is the wrong perception of discipline?

- Harsh punishment, yelling, slapping or hitting — especially out of anger or frustration
- This is not discipline — it is child abuse
- Discipline is nurturing, guiding, setting goals and limitations, encouraging, honesty, firmness, consistency, authority

## 7. Does Corporal Punishment come into play?

- Yes, but it has become **politically incorrect due to abuses**
- It has always been seen as beneficial with proper administration and conditions
- Prov 13:24: “Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.”
- Prov 22:15: “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.”
- Explain our experience raising our children...

## 8. What’s the difference between godly discipline and harmful discipline?

- Harmful discipline: anger, reaction, striking out, impulsive insults...

- Godly discipline: love, time, patience, the long view, good example, good communication, practical and clear expectations

## 9. Who should discipline the children?

- One passage refers to father and mother...
- Deut 21:18: “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or his mother, and, though **they discipline him** and is a glutton and drunkard, and will not listen to them.”
- BUT in Scripture, **it is the father**.
- Historically it has been the father after toddler years — though unfortunate circumstances exist today
- Mother should be the nurturer — the father the disciplinarian

## 10. How did St. Paul admonish fathers?

- Eph 6:4: “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”
- Col 3:21: “Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”

## 11. Is there a biblical example of a father’s failure to discipline his sons?

- Eli the Priest

1 Sam 3:13: “I declare to Eli that I am about to punish his house ... because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them.”