

Key Text: Malachi 4:6

“...He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

WHAT IS THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF CHILDREN?

Kids are the obvious result of a husband and wife being obedient to Gods' command to... “Be Fruitful and Multiply”. (*Gen 1:28*) This command was part of God's BLESSING upon mankind. **So, the Bibles' first thought expressed about kids is that kids are a blessing.** Gods' view of children is referred to in Psalms 139:13-18. God has made each kid with utmost respect and marvels at each one. This viewpoint can be in direct contrast to a sinful perspective that a child is just an “Accident” or an “inconvenience” and a “burden”. Here is a quick list of what the Bible teaches about a child:

- Children come from God. (*Genesis 4:1...I have acquired a man from the Lord.*)
- Children are the heritage of the Lord. (*Psalms 127:3*)
- Children are as arrows of the mighty. (*Psalms 127:4-5*)
- Children are as “Olive Plants”. (*Psalms 128:3*)
- Children are the Lord's reward. (*Psalms 127:3*)
- Children are a “Crown”. (*Proverbs 17:6*)



KIDS ARE A BLESSING

When children are not viewed Biblically, it is as if the land becomes cursed (*i.e. Experiencing Punishment and Pain*). This is why it is important to have a heart that loves your own kids and for kids to love their own parents. The love that I am speaking about is both a feeling and an idea that a child is VALUABLE, WANTED and CHERISHED.

IN YOUR HOME, HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE LOVE VERBALLY & PHYSICALLY?

VERBALLY - What is said and what goes “UN”-spoken are both important. How do you say that your child is loved?

PHYSICALLY - How is love being communicated in your home through touch & presence? How often do you “HUG” or “KISS” your kids? How often are you just sitting NEXT to your child?

“It is not the love you are **THINKING** that influences your child, but rather the love you are **COMMUNICATING**.”

IS IT TIME FOR A REVIVAL?

One of the ways to test if Gods' Holy Spirit is moving in a society is by taking a look at how children are being treated. How are the unborn children being treated in society? What about infants and those children with disabilities? With this perspective in mind, it would be understandable for every Christian to go to God in fervent prayer and petition. Pray that God's Holy Spirit would move on the hearts of parents and children again like in previous times of revival.

THE BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PARENT

A Christian home is intentionally built upon the authority of the Bible. This means that we must consider what the Bible teaches about a parents responsibilities. Do not be naive and equate whatever is currently TRENDY or “In-Style” as a parent to the same standard of the BIBLE. Here is a list of the A B C’s of your responsibilities toward your children.

CHILDREN ARE TO BE BROUGHT TO JESUS

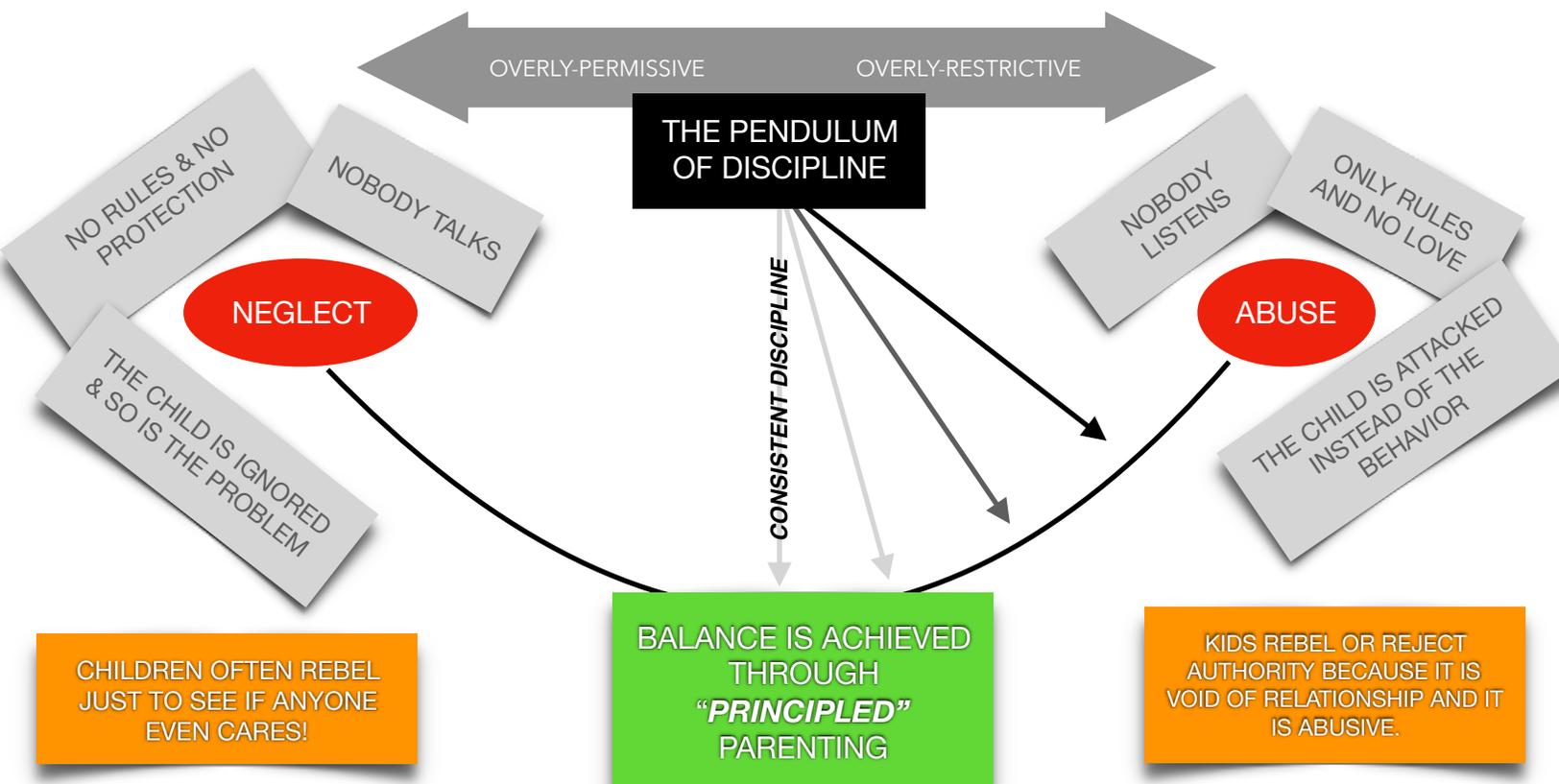
- Hebrew children were presented to the Lord in the temple during infancy and again at the age of twelve. (Luke 2:21-24, 41-52; Matthew 19:13,14; Mark 10:13,14.) Parents have the greatest influence on the faith of a Child. It is important to examine your “Parenting” and see if anything is hindering a child from coming to the Lord? **Parents can hinder or help their children come to Jesus, which do you want to be?**

CHILDREN ARE TO BE TAUGHT THE WORD OF GOD

- Instruction in the word of God should be part of every childhood. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Proverbs 22:6) Teaching the Bible to our children is FIRST the responsibility of the parent in the home and then it is complemented by the Church.

CHILDREN MUST RECEIVE CORRECTION, PUNISHMENT, & TRAINING...”IN” LOVE!

- Correction and Punishment are required in a Christian home. (Proverbs 29:15-21; Proverbs 13:24) **The Bible teaches that “FOOLISHNESS” or the seeds of all sinful behavior have already been sown into the heart of every child at birth.** (Proverbs 22:15 & Psalms 51:5) This means that...Correction, Punishment, and Training are all required if you want to see God’s best become a reality for your child. Now, if the idea of punishment intimidates you then know the Bible teaches that words alone are not enough to remove the foolishness that is in a child's heart. (Proverbs 29:15,19) The other extreme of just discipline and punishment will only embitter and anger your child. The key is to be balanced in your parenting and avoid the two extremes of **neglect** or **abuse**. This Balance will not be achieved through learning a simple list of rules but rather focusing on principles in your parenting. **A principle is a FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH which maintains its relevance in every stage of life.** For instance, **one fundamental truth of balanced discipline is... “long-term benefits have the priority over immediate gratification.”** Hebrews 12:5-11. Over time, the fruit of balanced discipline will be evident in the life of the child. (Proverbs 17:25; 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4)



THE BIG PRINCIPLE is “CONSISTENT TRAINING” in an atmosphere of “LOVE”

If we as parents ignore the responsibility we have to train our children then we will be complicit in their destruction. **Training can be understood as the molding of character through drilling & discipline; as in preparing for a contest; it is teaching by repetition. Training involves “HABIT” and patterns.** These are your customs and they are the predictors of what is to come. See how habit is integral to the concepts in these scriptures: Hebrews 10:25 - Religious Habits; Galatians 6:8 - Spiritual Habits; Proverbs 6:6 - Work Habits. Your particular habits and customs should ultimately direct your children to God. Take some time to identify the real patterns in your home. Then ask yourself what is taught or impressed upon your child because of those patterns. Lastly, based solely on your family’s habits and patterns, what appears to be of the highest priority? Is it, school, sports, TV, church, family, or fun? Is that priority the one you want?

TRAINING IS EVERYTHING

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Proverbs 22:6

PARENTS ARE NEVER GOING TO BE PERFECT!!!!!! So, give yourself a break and give your kids a break too. Acknowledge the grace and mercy that our heavenly father gives us and then recommit to living in the balance of PRINCIPLED PARENTING. There are at least five principles that together form a well-balanced approach to parenting. Here are some statements to help illustrate these principles...

“AN EXAMPLE IS STRONGER THAN A RULE” Live out your values in front of your children. You cannot effectively teach children the ideals you fail to live up to yourself. This means “Mutual Respect” must become part of your homes DNA. Do this while your children are still young or your children will not listen to you when they are older. You must Live the golden rule and teach the golden rule. (*Matt. 7:12*)

“HABITS MUST PRECEDE PRINCIPLES”
The habit of responding **QUICKLY, COMPLETELY** and with a **GOOD ATTITUDE**, will prepare the way for obedience from principle instead of by command.

“LOVE THAT PURSUES IS STRONGER THAN A LAW THAT DEMANDS”
Parental love that is inspired by divine love exercises a mighty influence in the home and is the secret to effective nurturing. Learn what it means to hate only what should be hated and love what should be loved. (*Romans 12:9; Colossians 3:21*)

“RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN WINNING”
Be willing to lose an argument if it saves the relationship. Also be willing to be humble and submit to Gods’ authority in your life. It is possible to be right in one area and yet wrong in the way you enforce your standards. Make the relationship the main thing.

BLOCK #5 RELEASE
CELEBRATE, AND AFFIRM...
PRAISE IS THE GREATEST
MOTIVATOR A PARENT CAN GIVE.

BLOCK #4 RESPECT
LISTEN AND EARN THE RIGHT TO
BE HEARD

BLOCK #3 OBEY
OBEDIENCE COMES PRIOR TO
UNDERSTANDING

BLOCK #2 LOVE
YOUR LOVE MUST BE SINCERE

BLOCK #1 CHRIST
YOU MUST ABIDE IN CHRIST &
WALK IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD