

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn how to build up the Christian Church. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one characteristic of a believer in Jesus Christ and then memorise it together. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme.

In this eighth series, the Bible teaches five responsibilities of Christian parents with respect to raising their children. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: TO LOVE THROUGH DISCIPLINE. We will meditate a new Bible passage, memorise a new Bible verse and then review the previously memorised verses together.

(S) **POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The new Bible verse that we will meditate and memorise is Proverbs 13:24. We will meditate the truths in the Bible together. Let me read Proverbs 13:24. "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him."

The memorisation verse is: To love through discipline. Proverbs 13:24. "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him." Proverbs 13:24.

(T) **First. Discipline means that the parents love their child.**

Ephesians 6:4 says, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children. Instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord". Notice that according to God's Word, *the fathers* are responsible for the discipline and the training of their children, even though the mothers do it more in practice! The word *training* in this verse means *discipline and correction*. In Hebrews 12:10-11, God teaches the advantages of discipline, "Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best. But God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it". Discipline does not primarily mean to punish a child for stepping out of line. It rather means *to train a child in the way he ought to go* (Prov 22:6). Therefore, true love will discipline a child. But love will not discipline a child harshly, because God forbids the father to exasperate or discourage his children. If parents love their child, they will discipline him, but they will not discourage him.

(S) **Second. Discipline means setting boundaries or limits for important areas of life.**

If parents love their children, then they will *not give them unlimited freedom!* Genuine love draws a circle around the child so that the child can *know the difference* between right and wrong, and between good and bad. Setting clear boundaries around the child helps the child to *feel secure* within these boundaries. The boundaries help the child to realise the bad consequences and the unhappiness it brings if he goes outside that circle! The boundaries function as fences. They *protect* the child and help him to know and feel sure that when he stays within these fences, then he does things that please his parents. The boundaries or limits are often summarised in *the house rules* of a family. The parents clearly communicate with the child *what* these house rules are, and *why* they are important. Parents should not have unnecessary rules, but should set clear limits. For example, parents should especially discipline their children in three basic areas: for disobedience, for dishonesty or telling lies and for disrespect (Eph 6:1-3; Lk 2:48-51). Setting clear boundaries for the child is the only way to provide security for the child, because with these rules the child knows at all times what it may or may not do. When a child has learned to respect boundaries or limits in the home, he will also respect boundaries and limits in the society and in the church.

(T) **Third. Discipline means rebuking and correcting the child.**

Proverbs 27:5 says, "Better is open rebuke than hidden love". In 1 Samuel 2:22-43 and 3:12-13, Eli had two sons who did very evil things. He *talked* a lot to his two sons, but *failed to rebuke* them and *restrain* them. He asked them, "Why do you do these things?" This is not a rebuke, but rather a plea to stop. Instead, Eli should have asked his wicked sons, "What have you done?" He should have confronted them with their wickedness and the consequences of their wickedness! He should have rebuked them for their sin! *To rebuke* consists of several possible aspects of correcting: The parent begins by *exposing* the specific sin the child has committed. The child must know very clearly *what* his transgression was. The parent *convince*s the child *why* it is wrong in the eyes of God and the parents. The parent *convicts* the child of the seriousness of his transgression, so that he feels guilty or ashamed of his transgression. Then the parent *rebukes* the child by scolding or disapproving of his conduct. If necessary, the parent *refutes* the arguments of the child who tries to justify himself without reason. Finally, the parent *corrects* the child by helping it to go in the way it ought to go. And if the child persists in disobedience by being foolish, arrogant or rebellious, hardening his heart against his parents or challenging the authority of his parents, then the parent must *punish* the child in the appropriate way.

(S) Fourth. Discipline means promptly administering punishment.

Due to the influence of their own culture, Christians differ about how children should be punished. However, the culture of the kingdom of God has very clear teachings about the necessity of punishing children and the necessity of using an instrument of punishment, called the 'rod'.

One. The Bible teaches that the absence of punishment leads to more crime.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 teaches, "When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, the hearts of the people are filled with schemes to do wrong". When the governing authorities of a country do not promptly punish criminals, the criminals will become more arrogant and commit many more crimes! Likewise, when parents do not administer discipline promptly and clearly, the child will wonder if his parents are serious or not. One child will become more and more arrogant and do more wrong things. Another child will become more and more insecure and develop psychological problems. Punishment is indispensable.

Two. The Bible teaches that punishment should be administered with an instrument of punishment, called a 'rod'.

Sometimes it is necessary to punish a child by making use of a rod. Proverbs 23:13-14 teaches, "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you *punish him with a rod*, he will not die. *Punish him with the rod* and save his soul from death". And Proverbs 20:30 teaches, "*Blows and wounds* cleanse away evil, and *beatings* purge the inmost being". However, parents and the governing authorities may not beat a person anywhere on his body. They should administer beatings only on the one place that God has built in every human being - his backside. Therefore, do not beat your child anywhere else than on *his backside*, in order to prevent damaging his back or head of hands.

Also parents and the governing authorities may not use their hands or fists to beat a person. They should use an instrument of punishment, called a 'rod'. A rod may be a bamboo cane or a switch, which is a flexible shoot cut from a tree and resembles a whip. Therefore, never beat your child with your hand, because he will fear your hands at all times and you also want to use your hands to show love and affection to your child. Rather *use a rod as a symbol of punishment*. The child will fear the rod and should fear the rod if he transgresses, but he will not develop an unhealthy fear for his parents.

(T) Three. The Bible teaches the great benefits of punishment.

Discipline drives away foolishness and teaches the child wisdom. Proverbs 22:15 teaches, "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him". And Proverbs 29:15-17 teaches, "The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother. Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul". Children sometimes do foolish things, or show disgraceful conduct towards their parents, or they do evil or commit a crime. The various passages in Proverbs teach that sometimes punishment with a rod is necessary, in order to give the child a clean conscience and to bring peace in the home. It is necessary in order to turn him away from evil and foolishness, and to save his soul from death! When a parent promptly administers punishment, the child will grow wise and peace will return to the house and in the hearts of the children and the parents!

Discipline produces righteousness, holiness and peace. Hebrews 4:7-11 says, "For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined - and everybody undergoes discipline - then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, *that we may share in his holiness*. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, *it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace* for those who have been trained by it."

Four. The Bible exhorts children to accept discipline and punishment.

Proverbs 3:11-12 says, "My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father (loves) the son he delights in".

Five. Finally, the Bible warns those parents and governments who do not believe in discipline or who are against the use of the rod.

People who do not believe in discipline and who oppose punishment hate people. God will hold them responsible for the death of people. Proverbs 19:18 says, "Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death". And the verse we memorise today says, "He who spares the rod hates his son. But he who loves is careful to discipline him.

(S) Fifth. Discipline means expecting obedience consistently.

Ecclesiastes 5:5 teaches, "It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfil your vow". It is better never to make empty threats, like for example, "If you don't do this, then I will punish you!" Threats cause a child to live in fear or to lie and to plot secretly how to escape punishment. However, if a parent does make threats, he must carry them out! If the parent does not carry out his threats, the child becomes convinced that the parent cannot be believed or be trusted. The parent should expect obedience. He should not give in to the child's whims. He should not nag or plead with the

child. If the parent gives in to the child's whims or if the parents nag the child to obey, then the child will always follow this pattern of scheming to escape punishment! In the area of expecting obedience or anything else that is reasonable, the parent should not give the child a choice! Discipline means expecting obedience and doing this consistently!

(T) Sixth. Discipline means encouraging the child to go the way he ought to go.

The parent should not provoke the child to anger either by too much or too little discipline. Colossians 3:21 says, "Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged". *To embitter* means to provoke to anger or to irritate. Parents should discipline their child firmly, but not in a hot temper. They should not make criticisms or judgements about the child's character, like for example saying to the child, "You are stupid!" "You are ugly!" "You never listen!" "You are always lazy!" This is called character assassination and can cause serious psychological problems later in the child's personality. There are many ways in which fathers can discourage their children. One very frequent way to discourage children is to shout at them in anger and to say very nasty things about their character especially in front of other people! Proverbs 15:1 teaches, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger". By observing the reactions of the children to their parents, parents can know which things discourage them. For example, if the parents notice that a child gets irritated, angry, depressed, withdraws or gives up on his parents, the parents must realise that the child is probably discouraged. These reactions are indications that the parent ought to *change his approach* in dealing with his child. Discipline should bend the child in the right direction, but should not break his spirit!

(S) Seventh. Discipline means comforting the child after repentance or punishment.

After the child has repented of his sin or the parent has punished the child for his transgression, the parent should *forgive* the child, *comfort* it and *reassure* it of his love! If the parent does not do this, he gives Satan a foothold in the child's life and the child might become bitter and revengeful. 2 Corinthians 2:5-8 teaches that after the punishment, the parent ought to forgive and comfort the child, so that it will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. The parent should reaffirm his love for the child. This is best done by *praying together* with the child, by *giving the child a hug* and by *telling* the child that his father and mother love him.

(T) POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE

The method of memorising a new Bible verse has four steps:

Step 1. Meditate and understand the Bible verse before you memorise it.

Step 2. Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. Write topic at the top. The topic today is "To love through discipline". Beneath that, write the Bible reference of the verse. The Bible reference today is Proverbs 13:24. And beneath that, write the whole verse.

Step 3. Memorise the verse in the right way. Always start with the name of the topic, the Bible reference and the first line of the verse. It is a good practice to learn the Bible reference twice, first at the beginning of the verse and then at the end of the verse.

Step 4. Review the new Bible verses every day for five weeks. And review the old Bible verses at least once every three weeks.

(S) Let us memorise the Bible verse together. Then let us take turns to say that part of the verse alone without looking at the Bible or notebook.

(T+S) To love through discipline: Proverbs 13:24. He who spares the rod hates his son.

(T) To love through discipline: Proverbs 13:24. He who spares the rod hates his son.

(T+S) To love through discipline: Proverbs 13:24. He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him. Proverbs 13:24.

(S) To love through discipline: Proverbs 13:24. He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him. Proverbs 13:24.

(T) POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSES YOU HAVE MEMORISED

Let us review the last 5 Bible verses that we have memorised without looking at our notebooks.

Series "Christian marriage", verse 5 and series "Christian parents", verses 1-4.

(S) To remain faithful: Proverbs 3:3-4. Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favour and a good name in the sight of God and man. Proverbs 3:3-4.

(T) To love by spending: 2 Corinthians 12:14-15. I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions, but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. So I will very gladly spend for your souls everything I have and expend myself as well. If I love you more, will you love me less? 2 Corinthians 12:14-15.

(S) To develop all areas of life: Proverbs 22:6. Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6.

(T) To teach God's Word: Deuteronomy 6:6-7. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Deuteronomy 6:6-7.

(T) To bring up in the Lord: Ephesians 6:4; Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4.

(S) **POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Daily review the last five memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and build Christ's Church" and Internet on www.dota.net

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".