

## LIFEFAITHFUSION DEVOTIONAL

# Putting Discipline into Discipleship

LIFEFAITHFUSION  
DEVOTIONAL  
DAY FIVE

### SCRIPTURE STUDY

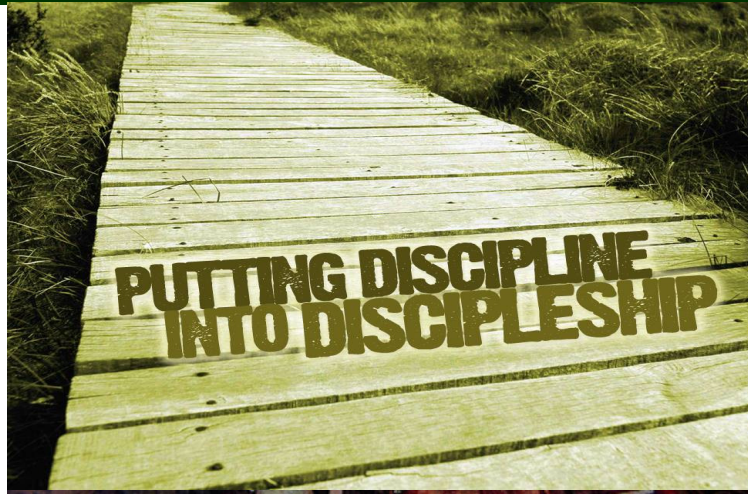
Proverbs 29:17  
Proverbs 19:18  
Galatians 6:1  
Matthew 18:15-16  
Proverbs 9:8  
Proverbs 14:6  
Proverbs 15:14  
Proverbs 25:12

### SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Effective discipline requires wisdom, fairness, and consistency. When we discipline those under our care, God gives us a model as a wise and just Heavenly Father.

### PRAYER FOCUS

Dear Jesus,  
Teach me to be faithful to discipline those entrusted to my care. I want to be wise, discreet, consistent, and fair as I dispense discipline.  
Amen



### WHEN YOU HAVE TO DO THE DISCIPLINING

God has a plan for discipline. His discipline is loving, fair, well-planned, timely, and purposeful. He not only executes discipline, but teaches as He does so to help mature the person being disciplined.

Discipline is not easy. Disciplining others, especially our children, requires a carefully prepared plan and consistent execution. When God makes you responsible for disciplining others, you are accountable to Him. Such discipline and disciplining will require tremendous thought, time, and energy on your part as you invest in the lives of spiritual and physical children entrusted to your care.

We'll start by taking a look at disciplining in the home.

### DISCIPLINE IN PARENTING

King Solomon wrote these words about parenting.

“Discipline your son, and he will give you peace  
he will bring delight to your soul.”  
Proverbs 29:17 (NIV)

“Discipline your children while you still have the chance;  
indulging them destroys them.  
Proverbs 19:18 (MSG)

Most of us will be entrusted to discipline our children or extended family. Some of us will be required to discipline students in the classroom, or employees in the business world. Of course, the style of discipline will be very different for each of these arenas, and for each unique child. It's easy to punish a child as a reaction to bad behavior. Punishment can be reactive rather than proactive. Punishment can be capricious, rather than consistent. Wise and fair discipline not only addresses the inappropriate behavior, but sees the teachable moment and uses the experience to reshape the child's understanding. Child-training is based upon the Word of God and not on the whims of the parent. For example, the immature parent will punish a child out of anger and frustration. If the child broke a drinking glass filled with water; the parent might angrily respond by breaking one of the child's toys. In effective discipline, **a child would experience the consequences of his actions** and then the parent would work with the child (depending on his or her age) to clean up the glass and water. The wise parent would also take advantage of the teachable moment and discuss with the child why the incident happened and how to avoid future incidents. Such proactive parenting is essential to good discipline.

There are three basic styles of parenting, and each style will have an effect on the parent's basic view of child-training.

**Authoritarian**: This parent believes he must remain in total control, allowing no discussion and no disobedience.

"Do what I say—now!" is the authoritarian motto. Authoritarian correction does not make allowance for growing maturity in the child. The child is corrected the same if he is five or fifteen.

Authoritarian parents do not spend time investing in the life of the child to establish the close relationship needed to correct him. As stated in earlier lessons, the most effective discipline is dispensed when there is trust between parent and child. The greater the trust, the more effective the discipline—no matter how strict the parent chooses to be.

Read about Laban and his daughters in Genesis 29-31 for an example of the authoritarian parent.

**Permissive**: This parent wants to be his child's best friend and, usually because of guilt, has a hard time saying no.

"Sure honey, do what you want", is the permissive motto.

It's hard for this parent to even *think* about discipline, so setting boundaries with the child in advance will be almost impossible for the permissive parent. Follow-through is even more challenging. The child is insecure because he has no limits. Permissive parenting is selfish and unbiblical.

Read about Eli and his sons in 1 Samuel 2 for an example of the permissive parent.

**Authoritative**: This parent uses a balance of training and loving correction. The authoritative parent is consistent and fair. The child will learn early on that there are consequences, both positive and negative, for every action. God blesses His children when they obey Him. He chastises His children when they rebel. The authoritative parent sets boundaries and then allows freedom within those boundaries. He or she is loving, supportive, and available to his/her child. This is God's pattern of discipline.

- Do you intentionally seek to learn more about parenting? Do you find yourself child-training or simply punishing your child? List some boundaries that are important to establish in your home. List some boundaries that are important to establish with people who are under your care and tutelage.
- What is your style of parenting? You may normally be an Authoritative parent but when you're stressed you're *Authoritarian*. Have there been challenges in your life recently that have affected your parenting or your mentoring of others? Ask God to help you be the godly *Authoritative parent and teacher* He wants you to be. On the back write down three specific steps you will take this week in this area.

- Are you the Permissive parent? Is the idea of discipline is overwhelming for you? Talk to a Christian friend that is an authoritative parent that follows God's plan of discipline and ask them to help you. Once you get started, you'll find God's way is much better for your child(ren) and your house will be much more peaceful.

It's hard to be a parent today with our children exposed to so many destructive outside influences. Parents are incredibly busy and pressured. Below are websites that have excellent information for parents. Some of the sites are specifically designed for parents, and others are more general, but they often have information that will help in the area of discipline.

All Pro Dad [www.allprodad.com](http://www.allprodad.com)

Family Minute <http://www.myfamilyminute.com/dailyemail/index.php>

iMom <http://www.imom.com/>

NetFamilyNews <http://www.netfamilynews.org/index.shtml> This is not a Christian website but it is very informative about what is going on around the world related to the internet, etc.

### DISCIPLINE OF OTHERS

Sometimes God calls us to discipline and mentor others. As mature Christians, God challenges us to lead others in Galatians 6:1:

“Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual,  
restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness;  
each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.” (NASB)

In Matthew 18:15-16 Jesus gives very specific instructions about how a Christian is to approach and admonish another believer when he/she is caught up in a particular sin. In Romans 14:13, Paul the apostle warns us not to play the part of “Holy Spirit” in the life of another. So often we can focus on the fallenness of the other person rather than their neediness. Often, if we begin to meet their needs, their fallen behaviors diminish. For example, when Zaccheus the tax collector sat in a sycamore tree to see Jesus, the Savior could have chided him to stop stealing and repent. But Jesus saw behind his fallen behaviors some feelings. Zaccheus was lonely and rejected. He needed acceptance, companionship, and forgiveness. When Jesus came to lunch with Zaccheus, He did the most loving, affirming thing a person could do in the Jewish culture. Jesus sat down and ate with his family. After lunch, Zaccheus repented, received Christ's forgiveness, and restored all of the money he stole fourfold. Before we address the fallen behavior of another, we should also ask God to show us the unmet needs of the person. After we have met those needs, correcting and mentoring a person is more natural and more well-received. In admonishing a person, we should address their actions and not assassinate their character. “We have proof that you're stealing from your work.” Stealing is an unlawful act. “You're a thief.” This comment is an assassination of someone's character. The transgressor must be held accountable for his behavior so he can be restored to God and returned to fellowship with his fellow believers.

Solomon observed the receptivity of others to discipline in many of his proverbs. The king distinguished foolish and wise men by how they responded to criticism and discipline:

“Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you;  
rebuke a wise man and he will love you.”  
Proverbs 9:8 NIV

“A mocker never finds the wisdom he claims he is looking for,  
yet it comes easily to the man with common sense.”  
Proverbs 14:6 LB

“A wise man is hungry for truth, while the mocker feeds on trash.”  
Proverbs 15:14 LB

Solomon also emphasized the importance of sharing God’s wisdom, and not our own personal bias:

“Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold  
is a wise man’s rebuke to a listening ear.”  
Proverbs 25:12 NIV

God said in Deuteronomy 18:20:

“But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded  
to say...must be put to death.” (LB)

Fortunately for us we don’t live under Deuteronomy 18:20! God is merciful when we counsel poorly. However, we need to be very careful that whenever we speak God’s truth, that it *is His truth* and not our own opinions on the subject (unless we establish that we are simply expressing our opinion).

- Are you able to speak the truth in love to someone who needed mentoring because of poor choices they had made? Who were they? How did they receive your correction? Did you look first at the needs behind their poor behaviors?
- Have you ever experienced a rebuke from someone else? How did you respond? How did it affect your relationship with Jesus? Are you still hurting? What did you learn from that experience?

Most of us will use God’s discipline in parenting, and some will apply it in the training, correction and mentoring of others at school, at church, or in the workplace. Through this week we’ve learned that God established discipline in Genesis with Adam and Eve and continues to discipline His children that they may share in His holiness. We also discovered that God’s discipline will produce a harvest of righteousness and peace in our lives!

### **APPLYING THE TRUTH**

Read: Genesis 29-31; Deuteronomy 18:20; 1 Samuel 2;  
Proverbs 8:33; 12:14a; 15:5, 12, 23, 31-32; 23:9; 25:11; Romans 14:13.

In the area below, write out the Scripture(s), thought(s), and question(s), from today’s devotional that you want to spend more time thinking about. What will you apply to your life?