



Discipline, Love, and Grace

Proverbs 3:11-12 “My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

Billy Graham said, “God does not discipline us to subdue us, but to condition us for a life of usefulness and blessedness.”

What is Discipline?

Discipline by definition: the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behavior, using punishment to correct disobedience.

Proverbs 22:15 Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.

Deut. 6:5-7

- The Law was given to reveal sin and it brought death.
- Grace is given to forgive and give life.

Discipline is biblical. Let's take it a step further.

The Root and Meaning of Discipline

Discipline comes from discipulus, the Latin word for pupil, which also provided the source of the word disciple (You can see the leap we made to get from Discipline to Disciple?) (albeit by way of a Late Latin sense-shift to “a follower of Jesus Christ in his lifetime”).¹

Hebrews 12:5-11

- When the Lord disciplines you, it is correction with a purpose, it is divine discipline, from a place of love. Discipline is not meant to be pleasant, it may hurt at the moment, but it reaps reward! Discipline is training.

How does the gospel change the way we discipline?

John 14:6

Ephesians 2:8-9

- When we look through the lens of eternity, we see the soul of a person, not the actions of the child.



- In those moments where discipline is necessary, reflect on how the gospel will change the way you communicate and discipline.

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrated his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”

There are two reasons that discipline is important to your ministry.

1. For the _____ child you are setting a biblical standard and training. This is the law that reveals the sinful state of the heart. In their sinful state, they want their own way. Beware self-righteousness! Do not overly praise the “good” child that may not be saved.
2. For the _____ child you are setting a biblical standard and training in righteousness. Recognize that by God’s grace, the Lord helps them to walk in obedience, love, forgiveness, and honesty...and He is doing the process of sanctifying them by his Word. **John 17:17** “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.”

Why is love and grace so important to discipline?

1. Showing loving _____ to a child who is disobedient is an example of the gospel.
2. Showing _____ to a child who is disobedient by pointing them to the truth of the gospel and praying for them instead of punishing them is an example of the gospel.
3. Allowing for loving consequences will _____ the truth that God allows punishment for sin that leads to repentance.

Applying love to discipline?

- When working with children, you must ask God to give you His love for the child you are correcting. This is more than punishment; it is an opportunity for counsel, correction, training, and discipleship. There may be resulting consequences but that is also showing them, love.

1 John 1:9

Discipline from grace:

For the Teacher: The Lord _____ His grace on us for daily life and ministry.

John 1:16 “For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”



For the saved child

Romans 6:14 “for sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law but under grace.”

- Children are not righteous because of the law, any more than you or I. It is by grace through faith that we are declared righteous.
- Their sanctification process is no different from your own... it is a lifetime work of the Holy Spirit.

“Grace is God’s plan and God’s provision to keep sin from dominating our lives.”

Bob Hoekstra

For the Unsaved child:

- As we teach God’s Word and share the gospel, the Law reveals to them their sin.
- Take every opportunity to share the gospel and show grace.

Ephesians 2:8-9 ‘For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of your own doing it is a gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one can boast.’

Discipline in the Class:

1. Rules and Expectations in class are understood by children. Give a Biblical Standard. Repeat the Rules _____!
2. Establish a Routine! Classroom structure, schedule, and prep are key to classroom _____.
3. Speak softly but firmly. Control your temper and walk in the Spirit. Remember your time with them is short and you may be the only spiritual training they are receiving.
4. It’s not about _____. Take your personal offense out of the equation. You are dealing with a heart problem in the life of the child.
5. Remove the child from the group in a _____ way so you can speak privately.
6. Ask thought-provoking questions.
 - a. Do you know why I removed you from class?
 - b. Why is it wrong to do this thing?
 - c. How are you going to act differently when returning to class?
7. Let the child know that there are _____ to actions. You will call the main leader or parent if they must be removed from the class again.

8. Pray with the child before returning. If they need to apologize to another child or teacher, encourage them to do so, but do not force it.
9. Depending on the situation and child it may be the perfect opportunity to share the gospel. Remember you should be sharing the gospel each week in your lesson or class time.
10. Younger children may respond to a short _____ to correct minor behavior.
11. If the class is getting out of hand, do a _____! Stand, sing a song, then review the rules of the class.
12. If a child must be removed from class, always allow returning to class activities.
13. The teacher/helper remaining in the classroom should continue an activity.
14. Watch for children who would behave better if given a task and allowed to help. This is a great opportunity for _____.

Building Obedience and Correcting Disobedience

Positive:

1. (Short-term) Challenge the Class to earn a reward (candy, sticker) for obedience during class. (Long-term) Challenge them with goals that will take weeks for a bigger reward (ice-cream party, Prize Box, Movie night).
2. Use This / Then – If everyone listens carefully during our Bible lesson we will then have a snack.
3. Reward those who are obedient by calling on them for games and or giving helping opportunities.
4. Build a relationship with each child.
5. Review the rules as needed.

Negative:

1. If class rules are not followed then there will be a removal of privileges or rewards for the offending child or class.
2. Leader or Parents will be contacted if the correction in class has been unsuccessful.
3. Divide children who instigate one another, if possible. If not, add an additional leader to separate or buddy up with a child who is struggling.
4. Remove the child from the Children's Ministry for a short time as determined by the leader and parents.

Bonus: Books that will encourage your heart and help you show discipline, love, and grace as you reach the little ones for Jesus!

“Parenting” by Paul David Tripp

“Give them Grace” by Elyse Fitzpatrick

Optional Rules for the Class:

“The Bee Rules” is a free download on our resource page edifykidmin.com

The BEE Rules

quiet and listen carefully to the teacher.
So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;
James 1:19

obedient to the teacher the first time.
Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls...
Hebrews 13:17

thoughtful and raise your hand for questions.
Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.
Philippians 2:3

attentive and eyes on the Teacher.
So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding;
Proverbs 2:2

kind and forgiving to your friends
And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.
Ephesians 4:32

honoring to God with your actions and words.
Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
I Corinthians 10:31

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