

CG Equip: Parenting with Purpose

Session 2: Intentional Discipline in Parenting

Key Takeaways from Session 2

1. Discipline Flows from Love, Not Convenience

- God disciplines those He loves (Hebrews 12:5-11; Proverbs 3:11-12)
- Our discipline should mirror God's heart: redemptive, not punitive
- Quote: *"If all our kids know is that there are consequences for their actions, they may grow up as legalistic adults who don't recognize they're sinners needing a Savior."*

2. Discipline Must Include Instruction

- Ephesians 6:4: "Bring them up in training and instruction of the Lord"
- Consequences alone teach behavior modification
- Instruction teaches heart transformation and points to our need for Jesus

3. Consistency and Clear Communication are Essential

- Children need to know expectations before they can meet them
- Example: "Stay in your chair, eat your food, use your inside voice"
- Quote: *"Every family has to choose for themselves what matters to them. But the battles you choose, win them."*

4. Distinguish Between Childishness and Foolishness

- **Childishness:** Immaturity appropriate to age (a 4-year-old splashing in the tub)
- **Foolishness:** Direct disobedience or defiance (continuing after being told to stop)
- Foolishness often shows itself in direct disobedience and defiant attitudes

5. The Five Levels of Foolishness (Proverbs)

1. **Simple Fool:** Open to anything, no concept of consequences (babies/toddlers)
 2. **Reactionary/Silly Fool:** Makes conscious choices to please themselves
 3. **Unreasonable/Essential Fool:** Skilled in deception, making wrong choices habitually
 4. **Scorning Fool:** Mocking authority, influencing others negatively
 5. **Steadfast Fool:** Seared conscience, believes wrong is right
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Discussion Questions

Understanding Scripture

1. Read Hebrews 12:5-11 together. How does God's discipline differ from punishment? What is His goal?
2. Proverbs 22:15 says "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him." How does this verse challenge modern parenting approaches?
3. What does Proverbs 29:15-17 promise as the result of consistent discipline? Have you seen this play out?

Personal Reflection

4. On a scale of 1-10, how consistent are you with following through on discipline? What makes it difficult?
5. Discipline should grieve our hearts because of our children's sin, not just embarrass us. Which do you feel more often? Why?
6. Share about a time when you had to discipline in an inconvenient moment (restaurant, in front of others, etc.). What made it hard? What helped?

Practical Application

7. What are 2-3 non-negotiable expectations in your home? Are they clearly communicated to your children?
8. How do you balance the "rod" (consequences) with the "instruction" (teaching the why and pointing to Jesus)?
9. The Graef's shared about "whine medicine" (apple cider vinegar) for whining and other creative consequences. What creative or natural consequences have worked in your home?
10. Missy Graef said, "You can only expect what you're willing to inspect." Where do you need to follow through better?

Practical Applications for This Week

Choose 1-2 to focus on this week:

- **Clarify expectations:** Write down 3 clear family rules and communicate them to your children
- **Add instruction:** After the next discipline moment, spend 5 minutes talking through what happened, why it was wrong, and how to do better next time
- **Apologize when needed:** If you discipline in anger or unfairly, humble yourself and apologize to your child

- [] **Pray for discernment:** Ask God daily to help you distinguish between childishness and foolishness
- [] **Evaluate consistency:** Identify one area where you've been inconsistent and commit to following through this week
- [] **Connect discipline to the gospel:** Help your child see their sin and need for Jesus, not just behavior modification

As a Couple (if applicable):

- Discuss together: Are we on the same page about discipline methods and expectations?
- Identify one area where you need to present a united front
- Pray together for wisdom and stamina in parenting

Discussion Starter at Home:

Ask your children: "Do you know what our family rules are? What happens when you disobey?" Their answers will reveal how clear your communication has been.

Prayer Points

- Pray for wisdom in discipline (James 1:5)
 - Pray for stamina to be consistent
 - Pray for your children's hearts to be soft toward God
 - Pray for grace when you fail
 - Thank God for entrusting these "neighbors in your home" to you
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Resources Mentioned

- James Dobson's teaching on developmental stages and authority
 - The concept of the "rod" as shepherd's staff (guidance and protection, not abuse)
 - Proverbs passages on the five types of fools (handout available)
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