

the bathroom, *not to his room* (there are no toys and nothing for entertainment in the bathroom), with the promise, “You may come out when you have found your smile and can say, ‘Sorry’.” This procedure removes him from his audience, and it also opens the door for reconciliation. From your words, he knows that you are expecting this painful confrontation to end in the restoration of peace. If he lingers, and you feel you must check on him, don’t let him be aware of your presence. He must be the one who makes the change of heart.

6. If one parent corrects a child, the other parent must not interfere or offer comfort. This would be even worse than no correction at all, because it teaches the child that he can be the victor by pitting one parent against the other, and it also sends the message that the *parent* doing the correcting was in the wrong — not the *child*. If there is the need to discuss some confrontation and the way it was handled, let it be done quietly between the parents, and away from the child — for everyone’s sake.

Have you explained to your children that, as a Christian — one of *God’s children* — you have no choice but to teach them to be obedient, even if it means spankings? God has commanded parents to *bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to train them in the way they should go, to chastise them when*

*it is necessary*. If parents fail to do this, they themselves are being disobedient to their Father.

You need, also, to explain to children that when they are being disobedient to their parents, **they are being disobedient to God**. Help them to realize that one reason it is so important that they learn to obey *you* is so that they will also know how to obey **God** and their **teachers** at school and the **policemen** and **everybody in authority**. The biblically approved method of protecting a child from growing up to become a lawless trouble maker, is *to teach him to obey*.

*“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth. And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord”* (Ephesians 6:1-4).

### World Evangelism Tracts

Phone: 662-283-1192

Choate@WorldEvangelism.org

www.WorldEvangelism.org

Request a free Bible Correspondence Course

***Presented by the Church of Christ***



## Training in Obedience

Betty Burton Choate

We might think that all of us would have basic instincts toward our children and our roles as parents, but that is not actually the case. The secular world and the culture around us have definite effects on our baseline of thinking, even as parents. In the US, ever since the famous Dr. Spock wrote his book, there has been growing criticism of physical discipline, and wild, uncontrolled children are the result of this thinking.



Certainly I am not supportive of the physical abuse of a child, but carefully administered discipline is *not* abuse — in fact, it is one of the best friends the family can have. What is the scenario when a child is unruly and disobedient? A household that is frustrated, quarrelsome, and miserable much of the time. What is the scenario when children are obedient and disciplined, knowing their boundaries and living within them? A household that is at peace and going forward in all of the right ways. Which do you prefer?

*“Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction [let not thy soul spare for his crying, KJV]”* (Proverbs 19:18).

*“Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell”* (Proverbs 23:13,14).

Repeatedly, the Scriptures, by divine inspiration, instruct parents to discipline their children, in order to spare them from greater problems. This admonition is about *even small* children, as early as they begin to show disobedience in response to what the parents say.

**Rule 1:** Learn to THINK before you speak. But when you have thought about what you are saying, then say your “Do this”, or your “No”,

or *whatever*; with a voice that carries conviction and determination. If you really mean what you say, and your voice carries that resolution, half the battle is won without more conflict.

**Rule 2:** Your child is disobedient, defiant, ignores you, throws a temper tantrum, etc., etc. What do you do? Obviously, there are many different personalities among children, even children in the same family. Some respond well to reasoning; some to shame for bad behavior; some to scolding; some to “time out”; some to having a privilege threatened or taken away; some to diversion; but some insist that you enter the battle and come out the victor.

Naturally, you try all the options, but occasionally the battle will come, and if you handle the confrontation well, you will have spared yourself and your child many future problems.

So, your child simply will not obey. Perhaps he defiantly says, “No!” or hits out at the parent. My response to such disobedience was to give a stinging little smack to the offending part — across the mouth; the hand —not strong enough to do physical damage, but swift, and decisive — it’s the suddenness and the authority in the voice and action that change little minds and behavior.

But maybe the child is older and is needing

a stronger method of correction. Fathers, with their masculine voice, can be very effective with only a decisive swat on the seat with an open palm. Mothers may not see the same positive results, so let me suggest another approach.

1. Always administer discipline on bare legs. The message comes through much more quickly when there is no padding, even when a mother chooses to use only a decisive hand as the tool of correction.

2. If a hand spanking is not enough, do your child the favor of keeping a keen little switch in some well-advertized place that is out of his reach (you don’t want to tempt him to steal your weapon and destroy it!).

3. Two or three stinging applications on bare legs will not do physical damage, but they are powerful mind-changers. When this form of correction has been administered correctly, just the threat can affect attitudes for a long time to come.

4. The child who has been switched will naturally be crying. Part of the response is real; part of it is for your benefit, to inflict suffering on the parent in retaliation for his own suffering. If you allow him to stay in your presence, there will be extended tears. What worked very well with our children was to send the corrected child to

