

The Christian Family



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JEREMIAH 31:1

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UNBELIEF.DOES.NOT.HINDER.GOD 62-0128

37 ...In the last days what it's going to take to stand is a Scriptural-trained church.

Introductory Notes:

1. Not a Miracle Worker. The intent is to pass along principles, insights and truth we utilized in raising our family. And to thereby strengthen families. This is a direct challenge for us all to learn and grow.

It's the darkest hour that the family's ever seen. Look at the families broke up. There's more divorces in America alone, then there is in the whole rest of the world put together. Divorce on the rampage. Where has the honesty, and the sincerity, and the womanhood of our American women gone to?

(THEN.JESUS.CAME 57-0407)

2. By virtue of our births (plural) we are citizens of two kingdoms, diametrically opposed to one another. We live within one, and insulate (not isolate) ourselves from the other, because it is a world falling apart. The cosmos, the Gentile world, is on a collision course with destruction, we're not ordained to go down with that ship.
3. **PSALM 34:11** *Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.* God's original masterpiece was not a church, but a family, specifically ordered. There is no building of the church apart from the building up of families. The family belongs to God. He created it, He determined its structure and order. It is His establishment:

PSALM 127:1 *Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. 2 It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep. 3 Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. 4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. 5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.*

Thus, it isn't our marriage, it is His. It isn't our home, it is His. These aren't our children but His. **If He is Lord of your family it will influence everything you do and everyone in that family.**

4. **Gen. Erwin Rommel (North Africa) studied the tactics of Robert E. Lee.** Horses vs. Tanks. Deserts vs. the mountains of Virginia. Yet the principles gave these men something in common. Conditions and situations may change but truth has an enduring legacy.

5. **The Christian Family** by definition is a family who places Christ at the center of all they do. The secret of good family life is disarmingly simple: Cultivate the family's relationship with Jesus Christ and then there is no phase of family life, there is no problem that we face that is outside the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Definition: A Christian family is a group of people who are related to each other through marriage, birth, or adoption and are committed, first and foremost, to the person and work of Jesus Christ, faithfully witnessing to the love, power, and forgiveness of God. They have as a theme, *"...but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."* **JOSHUA 24:15**

6. There may not be a tomorrow, but we train anyway! Part of our leadership and stewardship responsibility is to equip the new generation as well as anticipating the challenges that exist before us. *"Any generation who fails to train the upcoming generation will witness their own demise."*

PROVERBS 6:20-23 *My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 21 Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. 22 When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. 23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:*

7. Our responsibility, as His Bride, is to live for Christ, to please Him. Our responsibility as parents is to utilize all the resources and opportunities at our disposal to spread the Message of hope, to become a faithful witness of truth, and to inspire, challenge and equip those who believe to shine as lights in this present world.

23 We fail to get the beautiful expressions of the Holy Spirit when He brings His power among us, see His beauty, watching Him work, knowing that that's the Saviour of our soul, the only real Thing that's left in the world that we can hold to. All other foundations shall be destroyed. All other kingdoms shall perish, but this Kingdom will last forever.

(A.PROPHET.LIKE.UNTO.MOSES 59-1120)

Our interest is not in the power of politics, the Holy Spirit has not chosen that channel to accomplish His purpose. (Otherwise we would send our best men to Washington.) Our interest is in the program of God that allows us to see the hour we have come to and make preparations to leave for the other kingdom. Until that moment comes (when we shall be changed...) **Sodom's at the Door!**

WORLD'S.FALLING.APART 63-0412M

18 Now, we find out that politics in the days of the world that Noah lived in had taken over. And the educational program, and the great business world of that day had glamored itself into a place to where ...the buildings of the pyramids and the sphinx and something that we could not no wise build today... But they were farther advanced than we are in education; in science. And then, they come to find out the world begin to fall apart.

And God sent them a message, but they refused it... Same thing taken place in Sodom, the time of Sodom when immorality was on the move. But come to find out, God sent His system in there, then they refused it, and it fell apart. It always does. Now, the same thing exists today.

RECOGNIZING.YOUR.DAY 64-0726 174 ...in the past seventy-five years that man has come from a horse and buggy to an astronaut. Why? He turned away from his faith in God and turned it over to his senses and his ability as a human being. ...He quit trusting God; he trusts himself.

176 Like this infidel woman (What's her name?) in Washington there that changed all this? **Murray**. She said, "As long as we've got a army and navy, we don't need old Jehovah." I don't care what we've got, it's Jehovah or nothing to me. Let army and navy sink, and it will, but Jehovah will remain forever.

"Why are so many people afraid of you?" I will never forget her reply: "I'll tell you Mr. Thomas why some Christians are afraid of me. They're not sure that what they believe is really true. If they were sure, I wouldn't be a threat to them at all." Interview with Cal Thomas (1970)

GREATEST.BATTLE.EVER.FOUGHT 62-0311 55-1 ...There's only two forces: Satan and God. And what's Satan's weapon against you? Is to try to get you to disbelieve your Weapon. He disarms you. If he can get you to disbelieve, your Weapon is equivalent; if he gets you to believe that your Weapon is not strong enough, he's disarmed you. ...He disarms you, when he gets you to disbelieve that Weapon. When you lay That down, that finishes your fight; you're done. Hold that Weapon; don't you lay It down.

"Mothers and fathers, if you have children, they must come first. Our success as a country and your success as a family depends not on what happens in the White House but on what happens in your house."

Barbara Bush: Speech at Wellesley College June 1, 1990

Teenagers (Self-Defined Youth)

91% say there are no moral absolutes

65% say that Satan doesn't really exist, he's only a symbol of evil.

61% agree "If a person is generally good, or does enough good things for others during their lifetime, they will earn a place in heaven."

50% of young people who claim to have an experience with God deny the same by graduation.

HEAR.RECOGNIZE.ACT.ON.WORD 60-0221

211 Education's at the end... Children, there ain't no hopes for children; they done gone insane. You can't have no education. You can't go down here at the school and ...get a kid with education. He's twofold child more of hell when he comes out than he is when he goes in. Now, they got signs up every time, "Give college education to these kids." They do need it, but the Devil's got them. ...And it's not only just normal to go out and be mean and take a gate off and hang it up in a tree on Halloween night, or do some little meanness like kids used to do, or take a farmer's buggy and set it out in the road, not like that; but they're insane. They do things that's insanity; shoot you, kill you, and murder you, poison you, anything. That's the next generation.

212 Child bearing's at the end, womanhood, motherhood. Why, birth control practiced everywhere, and little dogs has took the place. Morals, there's no moral to it no more. Women, dressing evil, come through television, all kinds of impersonations of evil people of Hollywood, all kinds of stuff, fashion, all at the end.

Because these things are happening all around us, they are at the door, like Sodom was pounding on Lot's door, we all need to practice a little more of what we call Bible discipline is to always influence the heart, not just the behavior! Behavior will change with age and influence. Easy to get caught up in the process and lose sight of the goal.

I look at my children as adults waiting to happen. I want them to see what they are becoming! And I want to enjoy my grandparenting days! In order to do that, I must raise them by godly principles now. Then they might apply their hearts to wisdom in their day.

We need to be looking at the right things our children do, not just the bad things. The bad things need to be understood, is this behavior or this a problem of the heart. **I have a grave responsibility to help turn my boys into godly men**, who will be leaders, fathers, providers and warriors - not only for their families, but men of valor and strength, unashamed of the Gospel and its standards, unafraid to accept God on His terms, and willing to persevere to the end!

I have a message on behalf of all young, godly men to all you parents raising girls today, in less than ideal conditions, with little or no outside support: Sodom's at the door. Hold the standard high, be courageous and strong. Help turn those young girls into sisters who have a respect for God and His Word. Who know how to labor with a husband as he serves God. Who can handle the duties of a home and manage it on one income. Help her to choose character in a man and may she not compromise her virtue for popularity!

TAKING.SIDES.WITH.JESUS 62-0601

755-52 So we've got to think of the others that's coming on behind us, these young people and so forth, and a place for our children. Our daughters, we don't want them out in the world in these things like that, we want them girls raised like their mothers. And we've got to make arrangements for that.

4 Pillars of Corrective Discipline:

1. Spiritual: Hebrews 12:3-6; 9-11
2. Verbal: Romans 12:1-2
3. Behavioral: Galatians 6:7-8
4. Physical: Proverbs 13:24

1. Spiritual:

This is a discipline of the heart, based on the Bible and the Message principles, and the ultimate aim is developing a spiritual relationship with Christ.

HEBREWS 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Chasteneth: (Gr.) paideia

1) The whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment) It also includes the training and care of the body;

2) Whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, by correcting mistakes, curbing passions. Instruction which aims at increasing virtue.

HEBREWS 12:9-11 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

2. Verbal:

The actual work of getting the heart (soul) and the mind working in the same direction!
Romans 12:1-2

MAN.RUNNING.FROM.PRESENCE 65-0217 40 Dear Jesus, help us tonight now in these few words as we wait upon Thee. ...And tender our hearts; move back all the shucks, the thorns, the thistles; let the blessed sunshine of God fall in upon the Word, Lord. ...May all the great mysteries that we are supposed to know at this age, Lord, be unveiled to us and we'll see the plainness of God, so that we'll know how to behave ourselves and act, correcting ourselves and bringing the members of our body into discipline to the Word, that we might know how to live in this present day at the approaching of the Lord Jesus.

II TIMOTHY 3:14 *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith*

which is in Christ Jesus.16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

3. Behaviour:

The discipline of the will: should be consequence oriented, *"If you do this you can have this. If not..."* Example of Samson, if he didn't give away his secret, he had strength. The converse is also true. You say, That's Old Testament conditional covenants, We're under grace!

Gal. 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

DIVINE.HEALING 54-1219M 164 Now, you notice those people who set and say, "Well, I accept the Lord." You take their word for it. I would too. I can't judge. God does. But in ten years from now, they've never progressed a bit, just staying right in the same old place. We grow daily. Each day our heart hungers, keeps moving on. There's something growing inside of you. You get bigger, spread out... If a birth is born from the inside out, the child, it grows if it lives. If it doesn't, it remains. Well, when a birth is on the inside, shouldn't it grow? The Christ in your heart ought to be growing daily, getting bigger, more powerful, understanding things better, forgiving, walking on as God would, till Christ be formed in you, the hope of glory.

UNPARDONABLE.SIN 54-1024 204 My Christian friends, if the only thing that you know about, is just simply coming to church, you stop that right now. Stop just thinking you're all right. If you got imaginary mind, "Well, I believe I am saved," and you see that you're always picking fusses, or you're always griping about something, there's something wrong with you. If you see you just can't keep enmity out of your heart, if you see there's something like that, don't be deceived; God is not mocked. That's right. "Whatsoever a man soweth, so shall he reap." The thing for you to do... You say, "Well, I believe I got the Holy Ghost," and you see it don't bear fruit of meekness, and yielded, kindness, gentleness, and forgiveness, and so forth, then it's time for you to shake out of yourself. *"For if you sin wilfully, after you received the knowledge of the truth, there remain no more sacrifice for sin,"* till you come make that thing right. If you know you're doing wrong, walk right up just as humbly as you can, search it out. "Well," you say, "I'll look it up, some of these days." "Some of these days" may be too long. You may not live "some of these days." The thing to do is search it out right now.

4. Physical:

If #3 is working on the will, this is for the "won't" in a person!

PROVERBS 13:24 *He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*

Spareth: *avoids the duty, refrains from the responsibility, he's going to reap the whirlwind!*

Chasteneth: *means to discipline and correct the son.*

PROVERBS 23:12

Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge. 13 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

Prov. 22:6 *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

Prov. 22:15 *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.*

Prov. 29:15 *The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left [to himself] bringeth his mother to shame.*

Reasons for Discipline

1. **Telling Lies** (Eph. 4:25 *"Wherefore putting away lying..."*)
2. **Destruction of Property** (Ps.119:15 *I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.*)
3. **Disrespect** (Col. 3:20 *Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.*)

Boundaries:

Boundaries are helpful in parenting. Setting healthy limits for children will protect them. Unhealthy boundaries tend to be controlling and selfishly motivated. Boundaries should guide a child to become the person God created him or her to be, allow children to develop an identity separate from their parents within the safety of their family.

Children often feel boundaries are "mean" when they are immature. When they grow up, they usually realize the boundaries were to keep them safe. Adults who were raised without protective boundaries often feel that someone saying "no" to them is "mean," because they never learned self-control. Naturally, when children do not get what they want, they are disappointed, but learning to accept "no" from others is essential to godly character; however, setting boundaries with children must be done in loving ways in order for the child to feel loved ([Eph. 6:4](#); [Col. 3:21](#); [Titus 2:4](#)).

The Lord's instruction for parents is that they teach a child boundaries (Prov. 19:18 *Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.*) Boundaries help a child see that life is not about pursuing what he wants but surrendering to the Lord and following Him. Boundaries set with unconditional love will teach children to surrender to the Lord because they trust God knows what is best and will bring true contentment.

Learning boundaries as a child is important. It is more difficult to learn boundaries later in life. Children will not grow up to respect God's boundaries if they do not learn boundaries in their home. Modeling is necessary; parents cannot teach boundaries and not abide by them themselves.

APPROACH.TO.GOD 55-0123

37 ...It's not easy. When God gives you a whipping, you go out here and say, "Well, I'll mingle around a little bit." God will give you a real old fashion spanking for it. And I **tell you, if we had more of that in the natural today, we'd have better children. God wants His household straightened out.** So He gives you a little whipping, so you can get straightened up. Makes you love Him more.

My father used to give me whippings, and I thought, "Oh, my." I wished I could call the old gray-headed brother, father of mine, back from the other lands today. I would respect every whipping he ever give me. I never got even as much as I needed. I thought so then, but I don't now, because it corrected me. Though he didn't do right himself, yet he wanted me to do right.

38 He wants us to. If the earthly parents wants us to do well, what about our heavenly Parent the Lord Jesus? He has to correct us.

Characteristics of Biblical Discipline

"Discipline" can be a really vague concept, and if you're lost in the landscape of opinions surrounding it out there, you're not alone. If you were to ask a hundred parents to describe their motives and methods of discipline, you might get a hundred different answers. But here's the good news: God's Word is pretty specific about this subject. Since the Bible is always more reliable than opinion surveys — a good principle for any issue in life, by the way — let's take a look at what God says through the Apostle Paul in Hebrews:

Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. (Hebrews 12:4-11)

In this passage, we can discern five distinct characteristics of God's kind of discipline.

1. The Necessity of Discipline: To Deter Destruction (v. 4).

Paul ends chapter 10 with a strong warning coupled with strong encouragement: Those who shrink back from faith and God's will are destroyed, but those who persevere receive all that He has promised. Chapter 11 is full of examples from the men and women in Scripture, and then chapter 12 continues with the encouragement to live a courageous, faithful life. The context of verse 4 is this idea that haphazard living leads to destruction.

The message is clear: Disciplined lives reap rewards.

Discipline is about watching your child to see the direction in which he's going. Remember the illustration of giving your child the keys and letting him drive on his own? Action needs to be taken when you see your child take the wrong route and you know he's headed straight for a cliff. You yank the wheel or slam on the brakes, or even put up a barrier so your child won't plunge a thousand feet. He'll get mad for a moment, but ten years down the road he'll thank you.

Many parents are afraid of making their children mad. I remember the first time one of mine stuck out his lip and said, "*I don't love you anymore.*" My first thought was, "*Boy, I don't ever want to be that hard on him again.*" That's a lot of power to give a five-year-old, isn't it? A better response is to grit your teeth and bear the anger of your child, because it's better to make him frown than let him rush toward destruction. That frown won't last forever. Destruction, however, just might.

Do you see how, from this perspective, discipline — even painful discipline — is actually an expression of love? **It always seeks the child's best interest.** A mature parent can withstand the anger of their child and say, "*That's okay, you don't need to love me right now. You'll love me for it in a few years.*" It hurts temporarily, but to compromise your child's welfare from fear of losing his love will hurt a lot worse later on.

2. The Means of Discipline: Actions & Words (v. 5).

In the Proverbs 3:11 passage that is quoted in Hebrews, two different Hebrew words are used: *yasar* (discipline), which involves God's actions; and *yakach* (rebuke), which refers to God's words. Hebrews 12:5 tells us not to make light of God's actions and not to lose heart at His words of rebuke. *Yasar* refers to disciplinary actions; *yakach* refers to corrective words.

As parents, that's exactly how we are to discipline. We bring both words and actions, warnings and consequences, into our children's situations in order to keep them on track.

3. The Motive In Discipline: To Express Love (vv. 6-9).

When juvenile delinquents, as part of a research study, were asked how they knew their parents' feelings toward them, almost all of them said that lack of discipline in their home was a sign that their parents didn't love them. We often think that we're expressing love when we repeatedly say, "I'll give you another chance." **What we're really doing, though, is neglecting to set boundaries that let our children know they're in a safety zone where they can feel secure. One of the most powerful ways to love your child is to be consistent in your discipline. And that's really hard.** We're inclined to do whatever we can to maintain a friendship with our kids, when discipline is actually much more important.

When we start strong with discipline (for a few weeks), and then start to make compromises, kids pick up on that in an instant. Try listening to them sometime when they aren't aware that a parent can hear them. Their conversation often sounds something like this: "*I got grounded last night.*" "*Oh no. How long?*" "*They said two weeks, but it'll probably just be three or four days.*" Where did they get that idea? **Children are diligent students of parental behavior.** They usually know when they can get away with things.

4. The Goal of Discipline: To Teach Obedience (v. 9).

When you teach your children godly submission, you're teaching them to do the right thing for the right reason. You want them to get beyond the point where they say "I've got to" and get them to the point of obeying out of love and trust. Their discipline will be primarily external in the beginning, but eventually it should become internal — so integrated into their personality that it's self-discipline rather than imposed discipline. The way you regulate how they speak and act toward other people needs to become a part of who they are so that when you remove the regulations, the behavior remains.

5. The Result Of Discipline: Short-Term Pain And Long-Term Gain (vv. 10-11).

The reason we don't like to discipline our kids is because it involves short-term pain. We're sympathetic to their feelings, and we never enjoy correcting them. Verse 11 acknowledges the pain, saying all discipline — not some or even most, but all — seems not to be pleasant, but painful. But there's a process involved; those who have been trained by it yield the fruit of righteousness.

Someone advised me long ago not to ask myself whether my child liked the discipline I was imposing but to ask whether he would love me when he looked back on the situation years later. That helped me tremendously, especially when one of them would say, "*What do you mean I'm grounded? I really can't go? I hate you. You're the worst parent in the world.*" I even overheard one of my kids, only mildly joking, telling his friends, "*It's like my dad chains me to the bedpost. I never get to go anywhere.*" I would have to remind myself that he was reaping the consequences we had decided on and spelled out up front, and his disobedience produced the expected results. I didn't give in, and my kids came back to me later and said, "*Thanks, Dad.*"

MICAH.THE.PROPHET

5 But I tell you: it was certainly a God-sent gift to me when God gave me my wife [Meda]. And thank you so much. And through there He's given me three lovely children. And she taken Billy Paul over. And usually a mother, a stepmother, to come in, you know how it is about that. I can say this, that she loves that boy and... She's better to him than his mother. I seen his mother give him a spanking when he wasn't six months old, but Meda has never touched him at all.

She ought to have done a little more maybe, or maybe it'd been different. She left it all up to me. **Some people say they don't believe in spanking them, but you know the Scriptures says if you spare the rod you spoil the son, so I believe in correcting children, making them mind.** If we had more of that, we wouldn't have too much juvenile delinquency.

61-0426

APPROACH.TO.GOD

37 ...And I tell you, if we had more of that in the natural today, we'd have better children. God wants His household straightened out. So He gives you a little whipping, so you can get straightened up. Makes you love Him more.

My father used to give me whippings, and I thought, "Oh, my." I wished I could call the old gray-headed brother, father of mine, back from the other lands today. **I would respect every whipping he ever give me. I never got even as much as I needed.** I thought so then, but I don't now, because it corrected me. Though he didn't do right himself, yet he wanted me to do right.

55-0123

MAKING.THE.VALLEY.FULL.OF.DITCHES

19 I went into the house here not long ago to visit a person that was sick. And in come little junior, little Oswald. And he walked in; he said, "Mammy, ain't you got my dinner ready yet?" She said, "Sonny, I been so sick." Said, "This is Bro. Branham." Said, "Well, why ain't you got some dinner ready for me?" She said, "I been real sick." Said, "That's no excuse." She said, "There's an orange." He took it, looked at it, said, "That's all you can do, blankity-blank..." and threw it against the wall, and the juice run all over the place. Said, "Junior, behave yourself." And he kicked over something and walked out. I looked down at the mother. I thought, "Lady, you just give me the privilege for a few minutes. I'll make him think different from that the next time he come in the house."

Oh, how we let down. **You're too good to kids nowadays. You baby them. You can't go beyond the Bible.** The Bible says, "*If you spare the rod, you spoil the child.*" And that's right. Pop used to take the old gun stick... Brother, I got the education with that thing. He's in the grave tonight. When I looked upon him when he was laying there, I thought of every one of them, how I honored every whipping I ever got. I never got half enough. He's my daddy, and I loved him because he tried to make me do right. He was determined that I would do right.

56-0728

4 Fences of Protective Discipline

1. People: Who holds your child's heart?

LUKE 6:45 *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*

Heroes: Bro. Branham had childhood heroes (Tarzan, etc.) Grew to love Miciah (stood alone.)

Look at the modern heroes today: music, sports, movies? Sodom was a city of addicts, people addicted to their own hormones. More and more and more evil and perverse. *"I'll do my own thing and you need to be doing my thing or I'll be offended by that."*

2. Media: Who captures their imagination? Ps. 101:3

Gen 6:5 *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

The reality: God was not in their minds at all, didn't consult, consider Him. Not going to be told!

Setting children in front of a TV today (like so many children are), is like having a molesting relative come and babysit unsupervised. They're being massaged and beguiled into worse and worse things.

3. Appetites: What controls their desire?

PHILIPPIANS 4:8 *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. 9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

MANIFESTED.SONS.OF.GOD 60-0518 19 Then did you notice Moses, that great miracle performer that brought down Israel down through the land, and brought them up to the promised land, but did not place their inheritance to them? He did not give them their inheritance; he led them up to the land, but Joshua divided the land to the people. Is that right? And Christ brought the church up to the place to where their possession was made to them, was given to them, just the Jordan to cross, but the Holy Spirit is the One Who sets the church in order, the Joshua of today puts the church in its order, giving to each one, gifts, places, position. And He is the Voice of God speaking to the inner man that Christ has saved: the Holy Spirit.

EPHESIANS 3:14-17 *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner*

man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

4. Influences: Who sets their course? Col. 3:1-4

JUST.ONE.MORE.TIME.LORD 63-0120

133 You fathers, you mothers, are you ready to establish an altar in your house, and take that television out? Are you ready to take that deck of cards off the table? Them comic books that your children's reading, preparing their little mind for a blast that the Devil's going to give them. Or do you just want to continue on the way you are?

The United States has more people per capita in prison than at any other time in our history.

GOD.OF.THIS.EVIL.AGE 65-0801 171 ...It's a god of this earth, and she has built colleges. She's built universities. She's built hospitals. She's built libraries. She's built all these things for temporary help of man, just enough to deceive them to get off of that Word. And what's she led them to? The whole church world is plunged into death, for God said that He would burn the whore and her children with an everlasting fire. Come out of it, people. Don't you be caught in there. You get away from that thing as quick as you can. By her scientific knowledge, she's been able to do this (Now, notice.) without God's Word.

TRIAL 64-0621 155 Now, did He promise, "As it was in the days of Sodom, it would be the same thing in the coming of the Son of man," that He would be revealed in the last days like He was to Abraham's and his Seed at Sodom? Did He promise that? Luke the 17:30, you can read it. Now, He promised that. He said it would happen. Jesus said all Scriptures must be fulfilled, all He promised. Did He promise in Malachi 4, what He would do in this last days? And immediately after this would come fire and burn up the unbeliever, and the righteous would walk out upon the ashes of the unbeliever. Well, we're right here at the door.

CHOOSING.OF.A.BRIDE 65-0429E

10-4 Now, you can't have all things. There might be one girl that's real pretty, and the other girl maybe she's her statue looks better than this one. And you might have to sacrifice one for the other. But if she's not the statue of a lady, of a woman, ... I don't care whether she's pretty or not, you'd better look at her character, whether she's pretty or not pretty. For it is becoming if a Christian would choose a wife, he ought to choose a genuine borned again woman. Regardless of what she looks like, it's what she is what makes her. And then again, that reflects his own godly character and reflects what's in his mind and what's going to be in the future, for his family will be raised by such a woman, for the future plans for his home. If he marries one of these little modern Rickettas, sex queens, what could he expect? What kind of home could a man expect to have? If he marries a girl that ain't got enough moral about her to stay home and take care of a house and wants to work out in somebody's office, what kind of a housekeeper will she be? You'll have baby-setters and everything else. It's true.

3 Goals of Discipline:

1) Direction: Proverbs 4:1-9

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. 3 For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. 4 He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. 5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. 6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. 7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. 8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. 9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

2) Protection: Proverbs 4:13-17

Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life. 14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. 15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. 16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. 17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

3) Correction: Proverbs 4:20-27

My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. 22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. 24 Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. 25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. 26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. 27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

Every Parent Should Give His Child...

- I. The gift of a stable marriage between Dad and Mom
- II. The gift of impartial parents who love each one of their children with unconditional love
- III. The gift of praise
- IV. The gift of a genuine spiritual example

1. A child needs both a _____ and _____.
2. The hardest decision for a child in a troubled home?
3. When should you become emotionally involved with a potential mate?
4. While the make up of each child in the home will have great similarities, they will also have great difference of which the parent's should never use to become _____.
5. Children need the _____ of _____ love.
6. This love needs to be _____.
7. Love is spelled: _____, _____, _____,
8. By age three every child should be able to:
9. You must be _____ to _____ your child.
10. At what week of a woman's pregnancy does the fetus start listening continually?
11. Praising a child for their godly practices are as equally important as praising them for their accomplishments in sports. True or False.

The Most Important Key In Strengthening Family Relationships?

All too often, God's people lose generation after generation to the distractions and cares of this life, bringing up children who leave faith behind as they reach adulthood. We want our children to continue on in the faith. This outcome does not happen by accident. It is necessary to have a **loving relationship** with our children in order to influence them for the Lord.

As Christian parents, **we must become students of the Lord as He teaches us how to raise Godly children.** Through times of fervent prayer and demonstrating genuine love, we can increase the harmony in our family and lay the foundation for loving relationships that last a lifetime.

Experience the Power of Prayer

In seeking to build our family relationships, we must pray and **ask God to show us how to strengthen these relationships.** We all experience struggles within our families, and nothing can replace the power of praying for our children.

Many times we experience discouragement over the spiritual growth, character development, or academic achievement of our children. From our perspective, things can seem hopeless and we feel like it's too late to make any corrections. When we call on the Lord in desperation, He answers and we can expect Him to do more than we could even imagine in the situation. *"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us...be glory"* (Ephesians 3:20-21).

As our children see God answering prayers and meeting our needs, their faith is strengthened. Our children receive training for life as **they see our great needs and God's faithful answers to prayer.** *"This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles"* (Psalm 34:6).

Develop and Maintain Loving Relationships

The foundation of a dynamic home must be a **love for God and for His Word and loving relationships between parents and family members.** It is vital to maintain a good relationship between the father and mother in order to have peace within the home. It is essential to win the hearts of our children by accepting and understanding each child, resolving any anger problems, and being the first to ask for forgiveness.

Daily **family devotions** are also important for the spiritual growth and unity of the family. As we have meaningful devotions, our children see that the Word of God is powerful and has answers for their needs. When we become overwhelmed with all of our responsibilities within the home, church, and ministry, it is easy to miss out on the loving relationships within the family. To keep our relationships strengthened, we try to spend our evenings together as a family as much as possible, whether at home or when out ministering as a family.

We also try to **schedule an evening once a week where we have special time together**. In our family, we have designated Saturday night as “*Family Night*.” We have a special dinner that evening, along with our favorite snacks. We spend the evening enjoying our family, playing board games, outdoor games, or doing some other type of activity together. We may invite other families over, or just spend time together with our family. The Lord has used this time to continue to build our relationships.

A favorite activity for “*Family Night*” (especially with younger children) was taking turns putting together presentations on character qualities. We gave our children the freedom to be creative with the ways in which they presented the quality, such as through a skit, object lesson, game, project, or activity. The entire family usually enjoyed a good laugh over the unique presentations! We have wonderful memories from such evenings.

Demonstrate Genuine Love

God establishes a pattern for loving one another when He demonstrates His love for us. His love is unconditional. In John 3:16 we read, “*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...*” He did not say that He would send His Son when we stopped sinning. There are no conditions mentioned. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us while we were still unlovable sinners. (See Romans 5:8.)

Our love for our children must follow this pattern. We need to **love them unconditionally, no matter what they say or do**. Even as we correct and train our children, it should always be done in an attitude of love. “*Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones*” (Psalm 16:24).

It is this **unconditional love that will be a key as we raise our children for God** in the light of eternity. It will be the strength of our relationship with them and a model of how they should have a relationship with their Savior. We can begin this at any time—the sooner the better. It is never too early or too late to begin loving our children.

7 Jewish Parenting Principles, Inspired by Experience

By [Yael Trusch](#)

These 7 Jewish parenting principles can help you [with your] best long-term investment:

1. Parenting Is a Partnership

“There are three partners in the making of man: the father, the mother and G-d.” (Kiddushin, 30b)

G-d is a partner in this parenting endeavor. We can, and dare I say, must, rely on Divine assistance because quite frankly, this task is at times (if not at *all* times) beyond our human capacity. But, as the Midrash attests, G-d does not make excessive demands of us. If He gave us these children, it means that they are the perfect match for us and we for them—hard as it may be to believe at times! But don’t despair because this also means that it’s not all up to us! Truthfully, we cannot take full credit for the outcome of parenting.

2. Capitalize on the Gifts/Talents in the Child

“Educate the child according to his way and when he’s old he will not depart from it ... ”
([Proverbs 22:6](#))

G-d has given each of our children unique personalities, strengths and weaknesses. We must recognize and respect our children’s individuality. The inherent way of a child—his or her G-d-given traits—should not be suppressed by parents. Rather, we should cultivate them to the fullest, bearing in mind that negative traits should be channeled positively.

In addition, the sages explain that children must be trained in self-discipline—to set boundaries and change their habitual natures until they attain sovereignty of mind over heart (*Tanya*, Chapter 12). Living a life that is guided by the framework of Torah law provides plenty of opportunities to exercise mindfulness over impulse and hone this ability.

3. Compliance Remains Key

“Honor your father and your mother, so that your days should be lengthened.” ([Exodus 20:12](#))

If your children exhibit chutzpah sometimes, then you’re in good company. Children are not naturally inclined to treat their parents with respect; hence, the need for the Fifth Commandment, which by the way, is about behavior, not feeling. It’s inclusion as one of the “Big Ten” suggests that rude children are nothing new. But it also teaches us how to prevent them from turning into self-absorbed, thoughtless adults.

Jewish parenting expert Wendy Mogel points out in *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* that children “*will only accept your guidance and heed your advice if they respect you. ... If you*

don't teach your children to honor you, you'll have a very hard time teaching them anything else. By honoring their parents, children will be more likely to respect authority, the older generation, and in turn, make the leap from family to community. Their reward will thus be length in days to contribute to this world.

4. Hedge With Love

"The right hand draws near and the left hand pushes away." (Sanhedrin, 107 b)

King Solomon warned *"one who withholds his rod, despises his child," (Mishlei 13:24)*. Yet as naturally loving parents, we often wonder: How much discipline and how to discipline? We do it with the less dominant hand—"the left hand."

Our sages advise us that it is best to take the middle path, and in his parting letter to his children heed them to always "consider what you are going to say before letting the words escape." Yes, that does suggest that we parents should stop yelling (present company included).

5. Stick to the Fundamentals

"The soul of man is a candle of G-d." (Proverbs 20:27)

A Jewish child has a soul that "is truly a part of G-d above" (*Tanya*, Chapter 2). Focus on this fundamental part of your child and see the good inherent in them. Moreover, just like when we hold a candle near a large flame it will be attracted to the larger flame, our souls are attracted to its Divine Source. When we train our children in the observance of *mitzvot*, we afford them the opportunity for their souls to shine overtly.

Many mothers add one Shabbat candle for each of their children. Teach your children that the world is brighter because of their existence. Imbue in them the understanding that they are a "light unto the nations." (*Isaiah 42:6*)

6. Be a Mentor

"For I know him, that he will instruct his children and his household after him, so that they will keep the path of G-d, to do righteousness and justice." (Bereishit 18:19)

We are our children's teachers of right and wrong, based on the Divine blueprint set for humankind: the Torah. Perhaps this is best seen in the connection between the Hebrew words: "parent" (*horim*), "teacher" (*moreh*), "instruction" (*horah*). How we want them to live, we must first model.

The Talmud lists religious teachings, as well as universal teachings of a very practical nature, which we must impart on our children. The obligation to find them a spouse also

means educating them to become emotionally mature adults, equipped to maintain familial relationships. Teaching our children a profession means providing them with the practical skills necessary to survive and succeed in life. Aside from the life-saving component, the obligation to teach our children how to swim also means teaching them the skills necessary to swim amid the risks and challenges inherent in life's murky waters. But once we've taught them how, we can't swim for them!

7. Take Risks

"Lech Lecha" ([Genesis 12:1](#))

"Go forth!" G-d told Avraham when it was time for him to leave his father's land and venture out into the unknown. This phrase, which literally means "go to yourself," teaches us that the capabilities to go are precisely within ourselves. In order for our children to learn confidence in their abilities to triumph over life's challenges, we must allow them to venture out into the world and work things out on their own.

In the process, we must be mindful to praise and encourage their efforts over talents. "Man was created to toil" (*Job 5:7*). Toil, not produce. As Rabbi Tarfon says, "You are not required to complete the task, yet you are not free to withdraw from it" (*Ethics of Our Fathers 2:21*). When we encourage effort, we foster a "growth mindset," which results in more patience, and a willingness to take risks and experiment with different tasks.

When our children are being rambunctious, we wish them to be angels. Yet angels are standing, stagnant beings—*omdim*, who don't grow or move (*Zechariah 3:7*). Humans (a.k.a. our rambunctiously active kids) are *holchim* ("movers"). Unlike the angels, they climb levels and can reach higher. They can fall and can get up again. Let them move, let them swim, let them grow!

https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/4085869/jewish/7-Jewish-Parenting-Principles-Inspired-by-Experience.htm

WE ARE FAMILY

God still works through families, despite our feeble attempts to "improve" His design

by [Gene Edward Veith](#) Post Date: May 20, 2000 - Issue Date: May 20, 2000

God could have chosen to make each human being separately out of the dust, observed Martin Luther, as He did Adam. But instead He chose to populate the earth from generation to generation by inventing the family. When in marriage a man and a woman become husband and wife, they are entering a vocation, a calling from God. This union may well lead to another calling, that of being parents.

For Luther, the doctrine of vocation was not so much a matter of serving God in one's work as it was an understanding of how God works through human beings. God gives us our daily bread through the vocation of farmers, bakers, truck drivers, retailers, and checkout clerks. God heals through doctors, protects by police officers, teaches through teachers, and cares for His people spiritually through pastors. Though God works through the vocations of even non-Christians to exercise His providential care, Christians all have multiple callings: in the church, in their work, as citizens, and as members of a family.

There are even different callings within the family, each of which is a sphere of love and service to the others: husband, wife, father, mother, son, and daughter. Luther even considered being a child to be a vocation. A man is a husband to his wife, a father to his children, and still a son to his parents as long as they live. Each relationship entails specific kinds of responsibility, love, and service. Each relationship is also a means by which God blesses those who are touched. The husband is to be a blessing to his wife, and the wife to her husband, channels for God's manifold gifts to one another.

Parenthood-though so commonplace as to seem ordinary-may be the most miraculous calling of them all, the one in which God's workings are most dramatically evident. The husband and wife join physically and engender a new human being. Then they must take care of the child, tending to his every physical and emotional need. Then they must teach the child as he grows, showing how he is to treat other people, correcting his bad behavior, shaping his character, explaining what he needs to know, and initiating him into adulthood.

More than that, as Spenser points out in his great wedding poem "Epithalamion," to beget a child is to beget an immortal soul, and parents' larger goal is to fit their children for heaven, "of blessed Saints for to increase the count." To help in that process parents teach their children God's Word, take them to church, make sure they get a godly education, and guide them through the big and small trials of their lives. This process goes on through time for generations and generations, as children grow up to have children of their own, whereupon they grow up to have children, until both the earth and heaven are indeed filled with a particular couple's "large posterity."

And yet, it is God all along who is working in the family, bringing a man and a woman together and calling them into marriage, creating new life in the mother's womb, providentially caring for children through the sometimes fumbling ministrations of mom and dad.

The family is God's invention. He protects it in the Ten Commandments-"Thou shalt not commit adultery" and "Honor thy father and thy mother"-and His Word uses the family as a way to talk about God Himself. Since our dependence on Him is that of a helpless baby to a loving parent, we are told to address Him as "our Father." Since His relationship to us in Christ is as loving and intimate as that between a groom and his bride, the church is called "the Bride of Christ." Husbands and wives are told to emulate the relationship between Christ and the church in their relationship with each other.

The church is for believers, but God blesses even those who do not know Him with families, which become the foundation for every other social and cultural institution. This is what the family is, by God's design. Its center is marriage, God's way. But today many people think there is a better idea: marriage, our way. We live at a time when husbands and wives routinely divorce each other, even though Jesus warns human beings not to break asunder what God Himself has joined. Even when marriages stay together, they are often torn by marital discord, even though it is a violation of God's calling to make each other miserable.

We live in an era of child abuse. Although the popular culture pretends to consider child abuse a terrible thing, the worst form of child abuse is legally and socially acceptable, namely, abortion. It is the vocation of parents to care for their children, not to kill them. Although the family is the basis of culture, as any anthropologist will say, today parents often find themselves having to protect their children from their own culture. Instead of helping parents teach their children to control themselves, to act morally, and to mature into adults, our society-in its entertainment industry, its schools, and its government-often seems to undermine parents and to be at war against children.

And now we are presuming to re-engineer the family itself. Why should marriage be just for a man and a woman? That isn't fair. Why shouldn't men be allowed to marry men, and women be allowed to marry women, if that is their choice for sex? Vermont has now passed a law allowing homosexuals to form civil unions, and many churches and theologians-whose liberal theology encourages them to throw out Scripture in favor of whatever the dominant culture dictates-are clamoring for same-sex marriage.

People ask, What business is it of the state to regulate people's sexual practices and living arrangements? And if two people love each other, why shouldn't they have the legal benefits of marriage? The answer is that sex-by God's design for all of His creation-is a family value. That is, sex is designed to engender children. The institution of marriage and the family is about having and raising children. (While it is true that some married couples cannot have children, the structures and the legalities of marriage are still designed around this purpose.)

The state's interest in marriage has nothing to do with people's sex lives, but with the primal social function of bringing children into the world. A family is not just a set of individuals who have sex with each other, nor is it a set of individuals who love each other. Rather, it is a

biological unit, grounded in how God made us, and a social unit. The state's authority derives from the family, not vice versa. Human beings-whether state legislators, federal bureaucrats, or church conventions-cannot simply pass a law to change what marriage is.

How have we come to this point? Some of today's confusions about family date from the time when our culture began to treat sex as an end in itself, and to separate it from procreation. People have always wanted the pleasures of sex without its result, namely, children. "Sex without responsibility" captured the unique selling proposition of the prostitution industry. In the latter half of the 20th century, technology made that proposition universal.

One does not have to be a Catholic or to reject birth-control entirely to recognize that contraceptives had a profound effect on the culture's mores about sex. Separating sex from procreation meant that each could go his separate way. Sex without the family commitments of marriage became socially acceptable. Sex became a matter of recreation, a jolt of physical pleasure, unconnected to family attachments. This led not only to promiscuity but to the acceptance of pornography and the constant sexual stimulation of our entertainment industry, in which sex obviously has nothing to do with having children. Homosexuality too makes perfect sense, if sex is seen as simply a type of pleasure one can have, apart from its biological purpose.

Often, instead of bringing couples into marriage, sex becomes an occasion for breaking up marriages. In their lust for unrestrained sexual pleasure, people consider the marriage bond too constraining and start looking for other partners. Most seriously of all, the separation of sex from procreation means that when sex by accident does produce a child, it is nothing more than an unwanted byproduct. It becomes perfectly acceptable, under this mindset, to get rid of the unwanted "product of conception" (to use a common medical euphemism) by means of abortion.

Once our culture began approving of sex without procreation, the next phase of our dehumanization could begin: procreation without sex. It is no longer that unusual to conceive children via artificial insemination in a culture dish. When the sperm and egg are from a married couple and the microscopic baby is planted inside the womb of the otherwise infertile mother, this might be a valid use of the medical vocation. But increasingly, the baby is placed in a surrogate's womb, so that the woman who gives birth to the child is not the biological mother. Another option now available is to buy sperm and eggs from commercial businesses that harvest genetic material from Nobel prize winners or beauty queens, enabling would-be parents to have "designer babies" with no biological heritage from themselves.

As reproductive technology becomes more and more sophisticated, as the human genetic code is cracked, and as genetic engineering becomes bigger and bigger business, expect more to come. Not just cloning, not just the genetic engineering of children according to our consumer preference, but childbirth itself may become a relic of primitive medical practices. Once an artificial womb is perfected, genetic material can be controlled in the lab, in a way it cannot be in the human body. It is understandable that women in labor may well, at the time, wish they could have a baby some other way. In the not too distant future that may become technologically feasible. We have conquered other kinds of pain, transcended the limits of the body in other ways. Freeing women from the pains of childbirth may well be seen as the final step in the emancipation and full equality of women.

At that point, the family will be technologically obsolete. A woman or a man-with no longer any distinction between them-can take a child off the rack, or have one made according to specifications. If individuals are too busy gratifying themselves sexually, the task of repopulating the earth could be taken up by the state, which could manufacture the workers it needs, raise them in 24-hour day-care centers, and socialize them in parentless schools.

The double helix of the DNA molecule may become a microscopic Tower of Babel. On the other hand, God did not let the Tower of Babel stand, and He is unlikely to let us undo His invention of the family. Since family life is a calling, rather than something we come up with on our own, it has a way of changing people. Rugged independent types find themselves yearning to find someone to marry. And once they are called into marriage, intrinsically selfish individuals find themselves wanting to put another person first for a change. Career couples who never intended to have children suddenly want to have one, and when they do, the baby becomes the most important thing in their lives. Veterans of the sexual revolution, once they have a child, often became moral conservatives. They don't want their child to live the way they did.

The family is under attack. But families are also fighting back. And this is one war in which families really do have God on their side.

Question: I gave birth to our second child a few weeks ago so I'm sleep-deprived and running low on patience. In the meantime, my 3-year-old son has become another person. He has regressed with potty training; he isn't cooperating with me about anything; and he laughs when I put him in time-out, like it's a joke. I find myself yelling and threatening constantly. Is this directly related to having a new sibling? If so, will it pass? By the way, he seems to like the idea of being a big brother. He's very sweet to him and tries to help me when I'm tending to him.

Answer: I doubt that your son's metamorphosis is a response to a new sibling. The fact that he's helpful and caring toward his new little brother indicates that he's making a good adjustment in that regard. I think you're having the adjustment problem, not your son.

You told me what the problem is in your first sentence: you're sleep-deprived and low on patience. Consequently, you've lost a grip on your authority. Your son has picked up on that and is acting out. At this age, his self-control is far from fully established. It's directly related to your self-control, which is the essence of your authority. You lose your self-control (e.g. yelling and threatening); he loses his. It's as simple as that.

I've said it many times, but it bears repeating: The successful discipline of a child is not accomplished by manipulating reward and punishment with things like star-charts and time-out. Behavior modification is a form of manipulation. The successful discipline of a child is accomplished by mastering the attitude that constitutes natural authority. When a parent conveys a natural authority in his or her behavior, a child will submit, naturally. And just as it is in my best interest to submit to legitimate authority, so too is it in a child's best interest. In so doing, the child becomes a disciple. He begins to develop respect, which is the first step on the path to good citizenship as well as a sense of self-worth.

The attitude in question consists of four qualities: You act like you know (1) what you're doing, (2) why you're doing it, (3) what you want, and (4) that the child is going to do what you want. It's an attitude of positive expectation. Without that attitude, no method is going to work for long. With that attitude, you won't need methods. While talking with an older friend of mine about his childhood, I asked him what methods his parents used to bring about his obedience. He thought for a moment and said, "There were no methods; the expectation was perfectly clear." That's it! That's why, for example, I maintain that "Because I said so" is a legitimate expression of parental authority. First, it's the truth. Second, it's perfectly clear. The act of explaining one's instructions to one's child usually conveys insecurity. Explaining is a form of pleading. It is not consistent with an authoritative attitude. As such, it usually results in arguments and disobedience. From that perspective, there is no such thing as an argumentative child; there are only parents who open wide the door to argument.

If you are sleep-deprived, then perhaps you need to convey to your husband the expectation that he give you more assistance with the kids so you can take a rejuvenating nap during the day. Maybe you and he can alternate getting up to feed the baby during the night (assuming you aren't breast-feeding). Perhaps you should hire some temporary help during the day until you're feeling yourself again. In any case, you need to do something to help yourself regain your parental balance before you slip into full-blown post-partum depression. In short, the solution to this problem with your older child is for you to take better care of you.