

PROVERBS SERIES SEVEN
THE INDISPENSABLE TOOL TO THE LIFE OF WISDOM
Dr. Roger Barrier
Prov. 3:11-12; 12:1;15:31; 17:10;29:17;25:12; 2 Tim. 4:2; 3:16-17

Word Association Game: Mention an occupation and you tell me the tool associated with that occupation.

SLIDE: Carpenter—hammer
SLIDE: Dentist—Drill
SLIDE: Surgeon—scalpel
SLIDE: Bricklayer—trowel
SLIDE: Seamstress—sewing machine
SLIDE: Astronomer—telescope
SLIDE: Writer—(pen) word processor
SLIDE: NFL Referee—whistle

Indispensable tools. Can't do their jobs without these tools.

SLIDE: Another occupation: Wise Lifestyle
What tool do you need? Discipline: Correction; Rebuke; Teaching; Training

SLIDE: **OVERHEAD:** PROVERB 1:1-2: The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: for attaining wisdom and discipline;

Proverbs argues that Discipline is the Indispensable tool that God has designed to develop wisdom.
Discipline is a do or die deal.

Remember, we are all born with a case of the follies. We are not born wise!

● **SLIDE:** PROVERB 22:15: “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.”

We are not just born with a blank slate so that we can be automatically on the path of wisdom. We are all born with a bent toward foolishness.
This foolishness has to be driven out step-by-step, day-by-day, month-by-month, and the foolishness must be replaced by wisdom, or we are going to be dangerous people.

“But the rod of discipline” “There are all kinds of creative ways to drive out foolishness.

In the back hills of Georgia the county school superintendent was having trouble finding the right teacher for an unruly one-room country school house. The children had driven away the last three successive teachers

The superintendent had misgivings about hiring the frail, thin applicant standing now before him. He wondered how he would fare against some of the robust, bully students who were so much larger than he. But, he was desperate, so he appointed him anyway.

On the superintendent's first visit to the school he was delightfully surprised to find everything in order. The new teacher was flourishing and even had gained some weight.

“How did you do it?” he blurted out with unconcealed admiration. This school has been our biggest discipline problem for years and you have them all behaving perfectly! This is a miracle. How did you do it?”

Smiling modestly: “Oh, it was not too difficult. I must admit that they were quite a handful at first; so whenever one of them misbehaved, I just ate his lunch.”

■ SLIDE: OVERHEAD: DISCIPLINE IS NARROWLY DEFINED IN PROVERBS. Not hard work—not training hard like for a marathon. Life is hard —so, get disciplined! No, Hard work and disciplined behaviors are not the tool—No!

It has to do with:

■ SLIDE: 2 Timothy 4:2: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-with great patience and careful instruction.

■ SLIDE: 2 Timothy 3:16-17: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

■ SLIDE: OVERHEAD: Discipline has to do with getting us on the right track in life.

■ SLIDE: THE PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE IS CLEARLY DEFINED AS BEING FOR OUR GOOD, TO PRODUCE HOLINESS AND A HARVEST OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE.

Expand on the definition.

You might not have been disciplined for those reasons. You missed the Godly concept of discipline.

Discipline sounds negative to many people because some disciplinarians are not loving. They discipline out of anger or to control. To punish? To abuse?

■ SLIDE: PROVERB 3:11-12: My son, do not despise the LORD'S discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.

This is explained further in Hebrews 12.

■ SLIDE: HEBREWS 12:5-6: And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons:

"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."

Now the writer to the Hebrews expounds on the Proverbial passage.

■ SLIDE: HEBREWS 12:7-8: Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons.

■ SLIDE: HEBREWS 12:9: Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!

■ SLIDE: HEBREWS 12:10-11: Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Story: How mom and dad spanked us and disciplined us: “I am only doing this because I love you. I want you to be someone special and I don’t want you ever to behave like that again. I love you.”

Never left a mark on me. Never abused.

My parents were concerned with my character development.

They used the Bible as a guideline: and my brother and I are the better for it.

God doesn't punish us because he enjoys inflicting pain but because he is deeply concerned about our development.

Pain and suffering produce empathy and compassion, brokenness and humility—like the heart of Christ. He is producing Christlikeness.

STORY of man in airport running into boy with puzzle. Pieces everywhere. Man in hurry. Stopped to pick up pieces. "Are you Jesus?"

No, but he looked a lot like Jesus.

I have grouped the proverbial teaching on discipline into four areas.

SLIDE: HOW DO I RESPOND PROPERLY TO DISCIPLINE?

SLIDE: If one man calls you a donkey, pay him no mind. If two men call you a donkey, get a saddle.

SLIDE: PROVERB 12:1: Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid.

SLIDE: PROVERB 15:31: He who listens to a life-giving rebuke will be at home among the wise.

SLIDE: PROVERB 17:10: A rebuke impresses a man of discernment more than a hundred lashes a fool.

"Submit":

What if we changed our basic impulse from protecting ourselves to becoming like Christ? How would we respond to discipline then? Defensively? Indifferently? Not hardly.

When conformity to Christ becomes our deep-seated desire, we welcome reproof in favor of our new self being created in the image of Christ (Colossians 3:9-10.).

SLIDE: How To Respond To Criticism

1. Stop and look the other person in the eye.
2. Listen carefully to what they are saying.
3. Restate to them their concerns in your own words until you both agree that you are saying and understanding the same thing.
4. If they are right in their criticism, thank them humbly for sharing their concerns and make the appropriate changes.
5. If they are wrong, thank them humbly for sharing their concerns and go on with your life.

SLIDE: WHERE DOES WISE, GOOD DISCIPLINE COME FROM?

SLIDE: 1. OTHER FOOLS WHO ARE BEING DISCIPLINED

PROVERB 19:25: Flog a mocker, and the simple will learn prudence; rebuke a discerning man, and he will gain knowledge.

Story: Mom making breakfast, children arguing, distract her. Pours OJ in pancake batter. Didn't want to waste it, so cooked it up.

16 year-old daughter: "Ugh! Awful. I'm not going to eat it!"

“Stop complaining! All right enough. Take car keys away! Now eat it.
14 year-old son: “Ugh, awful. I am not going to eat it. Complaining.
“You stop your squabbling. You caused it. Now eat it. One more word out of you and we’re going out to the wood shed!
And the six year old son said: “Yum. Yum.”

SLIDE: 2. WISE PARENTS WHO DISCIPLINE WISELY

PROVERB 29:17: Discipline your son, and he will give you peace;
he will bring delight to your soul.

WRITE ON OVERHEAD: “Train your children so they will respond in a predictable manner.”
This is what brings delight.

Surely boot camp. Need very little correction now.
Dog approaches on a walk. Down.

SLIDE: PROVERB 19:18: Discipline your son, while there is hope;
do not be a willing party to his death.

Start early. In infancy the devil is already at work. Don’t let him get ahead.
Cushiony bottoms

WRITE ON OVERHEAD: Funnel Illustration: Strict and then loosen up. Not loose and then try to tighten up.

SLIDE: PROVERB 13:24: He who spares the rod hates his son,
but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.

Hear some today say that if the child is into something that they ought not to be spanked; but, rather you ought to switch his attention to something else.
Well, bless your heart, it was not my attention that used to get switched.
She would march me to my room for a spanking all the time telling me how much she loved me—and let me tell you, I did not believe a word of it—but I do now.
I thank God every day that she and my dad cared enough to cause me momentary pain for my benefit.

SLIDE: PROVERB 23:13-14: Do not withhold discipline from a child;
if you punish him with the rod, he will not die.
Punish him with the rod
and save his soul from death.

WRITE ON OVERHEAD: Basic misconception: spanking leads to violence and abuse. (No. violence on TV. Movies, video games.)
Child abuse (spanking in anger, abuse, violence) can lead to abuse and violence.

Percentage of parents who spanked their preschool children last year: 90

Rod is one of the basic tools God uses in the early years for discipline. Why? It is hard to reason with a 2 year old.
Discipline changes over time. Still spanking at 10 then something is going wrong.

The rod is the first response, not the last resort.

STORY

We reason, urge, plead and cajole and we finally give up and spank.
God never intended for spanking to be the last line of defense for an embattled parent!

Discipline allows a parent to be in the role of a priest between the child and God.
Explain disobedience and reason for discipline—administer discipline enough to produce wholesome fear—
kneel for forgiveness—reconciliation and restoration to the family.

You may write me letters. I am not advocating out of control anger discipline and child abuse. I am
advocating the Word of God.

SLIDE: 3. WISE PEOPLE

PROVERB 25:12: Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold
is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear.

SLIDE: 4. THE BIBLE

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and
training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

PROVERB 6:23: For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline
are the way to life,

SLIDE: 5. GOD HIMSELF

PROVERB 3:11-12

SLIDE: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I HAVE TO DO THE DISCIPLINING?

SLIDE: 1. Better Is Open Rebuke Than Hidden Love.

PROVERB 27:5: Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.

Crumbs on another's mouth. Awkward but both are glad we dealt with it.

SLIDE: 2. Be Careful Whom You Choose To Instruct Or Rebuke. Not Everyone Will Accept Nor Appreciate Your Efforts.

PROVERB 9:8: Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you;
rebuke a wise man and he will love you.

•SLIDE: Proverbs 26:4-5: “Do not answer a fool according to his folly,

Lest you also be like him.
Answer a fool as his folly deserves,
Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

Some fools we answer and some we do not, if we are wise.
Functional people can handle a rebuke. Dysfunctional ones cannot.

STORY of Sandy and “Will you forgive me?”

Applying wisdom will always be problematic because the world in which we live is fallen, full of uncertainties and unpredictable in many ways.

SLIDE: 3. Be Sure You Are Sharing Wisdom—Not Just Opinions Or Ignorance.
PROVERB 25:12: Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold
is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear.

STORY of “Don’t swallow your gum; it will stay in your system for 7 years.”

SLIDE: 4. Understand the seriousness of correcting and disciplining. Approach the work humbly and carefully.
GALATIANS 6:1-2: Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently.
But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

Email from Mitch Rebman and my apologetic reply.

SLIDE: COMMUNITY RESPONSE: 5 MINUTES
SONG: “The Potter’s Hand”
CLOSING: Roger
WALK OUT: “The Potter’s Hand” chorus