

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

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ARE YOU LISTENING TO DOCTOR SPOCK OR TO DEITY?

There are a great many naysayers when it comes to spanking children. Consider the following quotes:

“Corporal punishment is of limited effectiveness and has potentially deleterious side effects. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that parents be encouraged and assisted in the development of methods other than spanking for managing undesired behavior” (AAP: Guidance for Effective Discipline).

“If we are ever to turn toward a kindlier society and a safer world, a revulsion against the physical punishment of children would be a good place to start” (Dr. Benjamin Spock).

Folks, let me ask you just a really super intelligent question. When it comes to disciplining children, who knows best: The American Academy of Pediatrics and Dr. Spock, or God? All who have obeyed the gospel will no doubt say that God knows best.

Now, let me ask you a really serious question: since God knows better than man does about everything, and since those who have been washed in the blood *say* that they believe this, why then do some Christian parents fail to physically discipline their children? Hmm.

Over the years I have heard many times from parents about how the law will not allow them to administer physical discipline to their children. Not so... at least not in Michigan. Section 750.136b of the Michigan Penal Code states plainly that a **“Parent/guardian/other person permitted by law can reasonably discipline a child, including the use of reasonable force”** (<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>). Know your rights, parents.

Hey, even if physically disciplining a child were against the law that would not alleviate a parent of his/her responsibilities. We’ve not forgotten that we are to obey God rather than men (**Acts 5:29**), right?

Below is a reminder of what God has told man concerning corporal punishment:

- He expects it to be done (**Hebrews 12:9**).
- It is a demonstration of one’s love (**Proverbs 13:24**).
- It is something that a parent must begin to do right away (**Proverbs 19:18**).
- It is of great value to children (**Proverbs 22:15; Proverbs 23:14**).
- It brings blessings to the parent in the long run (**Proverbs 29:17**).
- It leads to wisdom (**Proverbs 29:15**).
- It is not to be withheld (**Proverbs 23:13**).
- Neglecting such brings miserable consequences (**Proverbs 29:15**).

According to God there is, indeed, a place for physical discipline in the parent-child relationship. In fact, the passages above make abundantly clear that corporal punishment is part of proper parenting.

Listen, do not get it twisted, this article is in no way a sanction for abuse. I realize a lot of horror stories have been penned in the name of discipline. Against such all real Christians must stand (**Romans 12:9**).

What I am trying to get across is this: if we say we accept the Bible as God’s Word, we must accept what it teaches about how to discipline children.

Let’s place all our confidence in the authority of Scripture and reject the notions of the so-called experts!