

Ephesians 1:1-4

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." 4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Colossians 3:12-21

12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. 20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

Romans 1:28-31

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

Dr. Spock to Christians: Lay Down Your Rods

I. Introductory Comments: Two topical sermons before Ezra & Nehemiah

A. Weeks past: Our love of and obedience to Scripture

B. This week: Dr. Spock told God's people to put down the rod – and they did!

II. Started with R.C. Sproul's comments on various authorities and their power to discipline

A. Self -- Conscience -- universal

1. “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.” Romans 1:20,21

B. Family -- Rod – assumed from loving Father

1. “If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.” Hebrews 12:7,8

C. Civil Government -- Sword -- severe

1. “For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.” Romans 13:4

D. Church -- Keys -- most severe

1. **“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10:28**

E. Keeping the right perspective:

1. You are more than your conscience
2. Civil Government is more than the sword
3. Church is more than the keys
4. The Family is more than the rod

III. Today’s focus will be on the family and the use of the rod: a subject that is important to us all as a congregation receiving God’s blessing

A. This week saw an attack on Biblical authority in the civil realm

B. This week saw a sad case of why even the “Christian” family is in trouble

C. Why is the Church failing?? Not asking the right question: Whom should we obey; God or man?

IV. Keeping the proper Biblical perspectives:

TRAIN -- TEACH -- OBEY

A. All are important and none can be ignored

B. A word to our children: Called to obey

C. We are familiar with Deuteronomy and last week’s sermon on the importance of teaching

D. Today’s focus is on TRAINING... Which is more than just teaching

E. Biblical examples demonstrate this:

- 1. Hanna and Samuel: “For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition which I asked of Him. Therefore I also have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord.” I Samuel 11:28,29**
- 2. Eli and his sons: “Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. So he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. I Samuel 2:22-24**
- 3. The Lewis family is more likely modeling Eli: “Before the hearing they were so hopeful he would be released into their custody they had a satellite dish installed so he could entertain himself while he awaited court appearances.”**

V. Why the rod is important: “Under Loving Command” by Al & Pat Fabrizio

A. “Not long ago our three-and-a-half-year-old son prayed, “Lord, help me to look at your eyes and do what you say,”

B. Psalm 32: 8,9 “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you shall go: I will guide you with my eye. Be not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle.”

C. Making good soil for God’s Word

- 1. Mark 4:14-20 “The sower sows the word. And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown.**

When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

D. The fact that the world attacks it so strongly, just like the creation account: Review some examples

E. What we are about to cover is elementary, but remember it is the meat rather than the milk!

F. Finally, we must remember that our primary goal is NOT just to have well behaved children

VI. How the rod is to be used:

A. Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go: And when he is old he will not depart from it."

- 1. There is a distinction between training and teaching.**
- 2. "All of us are training our children in some way...either consciously or unconsciously. When we have asked our child to do something, we are training him to wait until we have told him twice before he obeys...or we are training him to wait until we have raised our voice before he obeys...or we are training him**

to wait until we have threatened him before he obeys. We can train him to obey immediately when we have said it once in a normal conversational tone.”

B. How? Proverbs 22:15 “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”

1. Correction is an important term!

C. “Oh, but Lord. You surely don’t mean I am to use a rod, a stick, on my child...I love him too much to hurt him”

1. Proverbs 13:24 “He who spares his rod hates his son; but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.”
2. “hate” is a strong word, and promptly means promptly!

D. “Then I argue, but there are other ways of discipline. Word can be rods...the scolding a rebuke”

1. Proverbs 23:13,14 “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.”

E. “But I want him to grow up free, without inhibitions”

1. Proverbs 29:15 “The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.
2. Sherry Lewis is on the front page!

F. “but I am tempted to say, surely these little disobediences are not serious enough yet. He is so young. I will wait until he is older and I can reason with him and he can understand more.”

1. Proverbs 19:18 “Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction.”

G. *But I am afraid if I discipline him he will only rebel more.*

1. Proverbs 29:17 “Correct your son, and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.”

VII. Do we believe what God says??

A. *Must be consistent*

1. “Fathers provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged.”

B. *Must be in love*

1. “For whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives.” Hebrews 12:6

C. *Must NEVER be in anger*

1. “Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, 3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. 6 "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” Matthew 18:2-6

D. *Applies to ALL types of children*

1. “And I will walk at liberty: For I seek your precepts.” Psalm 119:45

2. Proper correction gives liberty by training a child to properly control their will and spirit whatever their natural disposition might be

E. Not punishment: Repentance & correction

1. “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word.” Psalm 119:67
2. We do not allow penance or indulgences as part of the worship service so lets NOT have them as part of our homes!

F. Training the child to obey and have a well prepared heart!

1. Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever.” Deut. 5:29

G. Must be done in God’s strength!

1. “As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.” II Samuel 22:3

H. A word to fathers...[Al’s right here and with the title]

1. “When I asked my wife to write these experiences, I felt that I was united with her in her commitment to train the children in obedience to the Lord. However, I had not faced the struggle to become obedient as a father. I took pride in their development without paying the price of confronting their will. For a long time my wife's obedience was a substitute for my own, and I continually resisted giving clear, thoughtful commands to the children, especially if I thought it might go against their will. I knew that to confront them with a command would force me to submit my will to God. I only used the rod for

selected things and for disobediences which my wife saw and pointed out to me but which I often excused inwardly and rationalized away. This divided spirit frustrated much of the training of my wife. By avoiding my responsibilities, I failed to receive the benefit of God's chastening and training through the spiritual struggle to obey in training my children. I also missed giving the children the trust and hope that they need in their father in order for me to reveal to them God's fatherhood. But God is Sovereign Father. He has met me with difficult struggles and severe chastening, commanding me to see the need to judge myself and turn my attention from my own self-interests. He has taught me to redirect my work and the use of my time to consider what commands God is giving me to give to my children, and to come under these commands myself. Therefore, each time I command or chasten the children, it is to be my own confession and agreement with God's sovereign right to command me to obey for the good of my children and their children to follow. I share this as a warning to every father who reads our testimony. It is a fearful thing to use the rod without giving our children holy and righteous commands. It is a fearful thing to judge our children without judging ourselves, for they are God's children as well and we must all come under His righteous Fatherhood.

VIII. Our desire at Church of the King is to have children [and parents!] who live under Psalm 33:

A. *WORSHIPPING PEOPLE:*

"1 Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! For praise from the upright is beautiful. 2 Praise the Lord with the harp; Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. 3 Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

OBEDIENT PEOPLE:

4 For the word of the Lord is right, And all His work is done in truth. 5 He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. 6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. 7 He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. 9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

HUMBLE PEOPLE

10 The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. 11 The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations. 12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, The people He has chosen as His own inheritance. 13 The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men. 14 From the place of His dwelling He looks On all the inhabitants of the earth; 15 He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works. 16 No king is saved by the multitude of an army; A mighty man is not delivered by great strength. 17 A horse is a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver any by its great strength.

CONTENTED PEOPLE

18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy, 19 To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine. 20 Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our

shield. 21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because we have trusted in His holy name. 22 Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, Just as we hope in You.