

# PARENTING BY THE BOOK

## OBEDIENCE

### 1. REVIEW

A. DONNA AND I BELIEVE THAT THE BEST WAY TO “GET OBEDIENCE RIGHT” IS FOR PARENTS TO TRAIN THEIR CHILDREN IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

1. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN...

a. IT MEANS THAT OBEDIENCE MUST BE TAUGHT!!!...  
PARENTS ARE RARELY SUCCESSFUL TEACHING CHILDREN OBEDIENCE WHEN WE DEMAND OBEDIENCE BY THREATENING, BRIBING, OR NEGOTIATING IN ORDER TO GET OUR CHILDREN TO OBEY.

2. ANOTHER PRINCIPLE OF OBEDIENCE IS THAT CHILDREN WILL MOST OFTEN RISE TO THE LEVEL OF EXPECTATION OF THEIR PARENTS.

a. THE PROBLEM IS THAT MANY PARENTS EXPECT LITTLE... AND RECEIVE EXACTLY THAT!

b. DISCUSS:

3. Ephesians 6:1 (NASB) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise),

a. NOTE: IN THE EARLY YEARS, ONE OF THE WAYS CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE HONOR IS BY OBEDIENCE.

4. Colossians 3:20-21 (NASB) Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. (Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.)

a. DISCUSS: WHY... “Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart”

1) HOWEVER... THIS WARNING CAN ALSO INCLUDE MOTHERS.

B. THREE COMMON WAYS PARENTS UNDERMINE THEIR EFFORTS OF BRINGING THEIR CHILDREN TO GOD’S STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE.

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1. PARENTS OFTEN **UNDERMINE THEIR EFFORTS** OF BRINGING THEIR CHILDREN TO **GOD'S STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE** BY BEING A **THREATENING/REPEATING PARENT**
  - a. IF WE **TRAIN/TEACH** OUR CHILDREN **FIRST TIME OBEDIENCE**
    - 1) OUR CHILDREN **DETERMINE** WHEN THEY WILL BE CORRECTED OR RECEIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE BY THEIR **DISOBEDIENCE**.
    - 2) **DISCUSS**
2. PARENTS OFTEN **UNDERMINE THEIR EFFORTS** OF BRINGING THEIR CHILDREN TO **GOD'S STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE** BY BEING A **BRIBING PARENT**
  - a. **BRIBES** INCLUDE:
    - 1) THREATS
    - 2) OFFERING REWARDS BEFORE BEHAVIOR
    - 3) SCARE TACTICS
    - 4) COUNTING
    - 5) REWARDS **AHEAD** OF OBEDIENCE
      - i. NOT **ALL** REWARDS, BUT REWARDS TO GET REQUIRED/REQUESTED OBEDIENCE
  - b. **CHILDREN OF BRIBING PARENTS** OFTEN DEMONSTRATE THESE **SELF-ORIENTED BEHAVIOR PATTERNS**:
    - 1) SELFISHNESS
    - 2) PRIDE
    - 3) JUDGMENTAL AND CRITICAL TENDENCIES
    - 4) THEY BECOME MANIPULATIVE

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- c. NO CHRISTIAN PARENT WOULD **TRAIN THEIR CHILDREN** IN THOSE BEHAVIOR PATTERNS **IF THEY UNDERSTOOD THE POTENTIAL OUTCOME OF BRIBING THEIR CHILDREN!**
- 3. PARENTS OFTEN **UNDERMINE THEIR EFFORTS** OF BRINGING THEIR CHILDREN TO **GOD'S STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE** BY **NEGOTIATING** WITH THEIR **CHILDREN IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS** = WHEN CHILDREN **DO NOT OBEY THE FIRST TIME** A REQUEST OR A COMMAND IS MADE.
  - a. THE **ISSUE** HERE IS A PARENT WHO IS **CHARACTERIZED BY NEGOTIATING** SOMETHING THAT IS **LESS THAN THE ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS**.
  - b. IN ORDER TO **AVOID A CONFLICT**, THE **NEGOTIATING PARENT** SEEKS TO **COMPROMISE**.
    - 1) **THE PROBLEM**: WHEN **CHILDREN BELIEVE** THAT THEIR PARENTS ARE **WILLING TO NEGOTIATE... NO INSTRUCTION SEEMS ABSOLUTE TO THEM!**
      - i. ... **RESULTING IN CHILDREN WHO RARELY OBEY THE FIRST TIME** THEIR PARENTS REQUEST.
- 2. **TWO PRINCIPLES** THAT HELP **PARENTS ESTABLISH THE CHARACTER OF OBEDIENCE** IN THEIR CHILDREN:
  - A. **PRINCIPLE 1 – IF/WHEN** PARENTS **SPEAK** TO THEIR **CHILDREN** IN A WAY THAT **REQUIRES AN ANSWER OR AN ACTION... THAT PARENT SHOULD EXPECT AN IMMEDIATE AND COMPLETE RESPONSE**.
    - 1. **NOTE**: **"IMMEDIATE AND COMPLETE"** IS THE **GOAL, BUT MAY NOT BE THE REALITY WITHOUT EXCEPTIONS**.
      - a. THIS PRINCIPLE SPEAKS TO THE **PARENTS LEVEL OF EXPECTATION... REMEMBERING THAT CHILDREN WILL MOST OFTEN RISE TO WHATEVER LEVEL IS EXPECTED AND ENCOURAGED AND TAUGHT**.

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- b. **NOTE: THE GOAL OF FIRST TIME OBEDIENCE IS OFTEN FAR LESS OF AN ADJUSTMENT FOR CHILDREN THAN IT IS FOR THEIR PARENTS!**
- 1) **DISCUSS: WHY MIGHT THAT BE SO?**
- B. **PRINCIPLE 2 – NEVER GIVE A COMMAND (SPEAK TO YOUR CHILD IN A MANNER THAT REQUIRES AN ANSWER OR AN ACTION) UNLESS YOU INTEND FOR IT TO BE OBEYED... UNLESS YOU WANT TO TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN NOT TO OBEY!**
1. "SAY WHAT YOU MEAN, AND MEAN WHAT YOU SAY".
  2. THERE IS NO BETTER WAY TO TEACH A CHILD NOT TO OBEY THAN TO GIVE THEM INSTRUCTIONS THAT YOU DO NOT INTEND TO ENFORCE.
    - a. WISHING AND HOPING IS NOT A GAME PLAN FOR OBEDIENCE!
  3. IF YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO OBEY... DO NOT STATE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS AS A QUESTION IN THE FORM OF A CHOICE.
  4. PARENTAL INSTRUCTIONS ARE EITHER:
    - a. DIRECTIVE
      - 1) TELLING YOUR CHILD WHAT TO DO, OR
    - b. RESTRICTIVE
      - 1) TELLING YOUR CHILD WHAT NOT TO DO
3. THREE WAYS TO MAXIMIZE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR INSTRUCTIONS:
- A. PROVIDE A FIVE MINUTE WARNING
1. **NOTE: SOMETIMES (NOT ALL THE TIME) THE TIMING OF THE PARENTAL INSTRUCTION IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE INSTRUCTION ITSELF.**
  2. INSTRUCTIONS THAT INTERRUPT OR TERMINATE AN ACTIVITY SHOULD OFTEN BE PRECEDED BY A WARNING.
    - a. PARENTS WHO FAIL TO CONSIDER THE TIMING WILL "EXASPERATE" THEIR CHILDREN.

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3. THEREFORE, THERE ARE **SOME** **TIMES** WHEN IT IS **APPROPRIATE** FOR PARENTS TO **PROVIDE** WHAT WE ARE GOING TO CALL A "**FIVE MINUTE WARNING**".
    - a. "**FIVE MINUTE WARNINGS**" HELP CHILDREN TO **EMOTIONALLY PREPARE TO COMPLY TO PARENTAL INSTRUCTION**.
    - b. "**FIVE MINUTE WARNINGS**" (OR 8 MINUTES, OR 10 MINUTES) HELP **REDUCE THE TENSION** BETWEEN THE CHILD'S **DESIRE TO CONTINUE WITH THEIR ACTIVITY** AND THEIR **NEED TO COMPLY WITH PARENTAL INSTRUCTION**.
      - 1) **EXAMPLES**: WHEN YOUR CHILD IS...
      - 2) WATCHING A FAVORITE TELEVISION PROGRAM.
      - 3) PLAYING WITH FRIENDS.
      - 4) DOING SOMETHING ELSE YOU HAVE INSTRUCTED THEM TO DO.
      - 5) IN THE MIDDLE OF A PROJECT.
      - 6) ... **DISCUSS** OTHER EXAMPLES.
  4. WHAT HAPPENS IF THE CHILD **CONTINUES** THEIR **ACTIVITY** **BEYOND** THE "**FIVE MINUTE WARNING**"?
    - a. **CONSEQUENCES**.
  5. **AVOIDING "EXASPERATING"** OUR CHILDREN BY GIVING THEM "**FIVE MINUTE WARNINGS**" DOES **NOT** MEAN **COMPROMISING THE STANDARD OF OBEDIENCE... BUT WORKING WISELY WITH IT**.
  6. **DISCUSSION**: ON "**FIVE MINUTE WARNINGS**"
- B. **PROVIDE A DOOR OF ESCAPE**
1. PARENTS **MUST TEACH** THEIR CHILDREN TO **LOOK TO THE "DOOR OF ESCAPE"** WHEN **CHALLENGED TO DO THE WRONG THING** (SIN).

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2. **1 Corinthians 10:13 (NASB)** No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who **will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also**, so that you will be able to endure it.
3. **GOD NEVER ALLOWS A TEMPTATION TO SIN COMING FROM THE 3 ENEMIES OF OUR SOUL (THE WORLD, OUR FLESH, AND THE DEVIL/ DEMONS) WITHOUT PROVIDING A DOOR OF ESCAPE.**
4. **WHEN PARENTS ARE TEMPTED TO SIN... AN APPEAL TO JESUS (OUR AUTHORITY FIGURE) CAN BE OUR "DOOR OF ESCAPE":**
  - a. "JESUS PLEASE HELP ME...!"
  - b. "IN JESUS' NAME I GIVE NO CONSENT TO THAT THOUGHT".
5. **WHEN OUR CHILDREN ARE TEMPTED TO SIN... APPEALING TO A PARENT (THEIR AUTHORITY FIGURE) FOR HELP/INTERVENTION CAN BE THEIR "DOOR OF ESCAPE".**
6. **EXAMPLE:**
  - a. **TWO SIBLINGS ARGUING OVER A TOY.**
    - 1) **BEFORE USING FORCE, THE "DOOR OF ESCAPE" IS FOR THE MORE MATURE CHILD TO TAKE THE CONFLICT TO A PARENT... THE ONE WHO CAN MAKE THINGS RIGHT.**
    - 2) **NOTE: THIS BEHAVIOR MUST BE TAUGHT.**
    - 3) **TEACHING OUR CHILDREN TO LOOK TO THE "DOOR OF ESCAPE" BEFORE DOING THE WRONG THING IS GREAT TRAINING TO LOOK TO GOD AS THEIR "DOOR OF ESCAPE" LATER IN LIFE WHEN THEY ARE TEMPTED TO SIN.**

#### C. **REMEMBER CONTEXT**

1. **IN DEVELOPING OBEDIENCE IN CHILDREN, PARENTS MUST GUARD AGAINST CROSSING OVER INTO LEGALISM.**

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2. **LEGALISM** SEES ALL **DECISIONS** AS EITHER **BLACK** OR **WHITE**... **MORAL** OR **IMMORAL**... **RIGHT** OR **WRONG**.
  - a. **LEGALISM** DOESN'T ACKNOWLEDGE ANY **HEART** OR **MOTIVE** AREAS.
  - b. **LEGALISTS** TEND TO **DEMAND** THAT THE **CONSCIENCES** OF **EVERYONE** BE **IDENTICAL** TO **THEIRS**.
- D. YOU HAVE HEARD IT SAID, "**KEEP THINGS IN CONTEXT**".
- E. **CONTEXT** MEANS "THE **CIRCUMSTANCES** THAT FORM THE **SETTING** FOR AN **EVENT**, **STATEMENT**, OR **IDEA** SO IT CAN BE **FULLY UNDERSTOOD**".
  1. **CONTEXT** GIVES US **PERSPECTIVE**.
  2. ONE OF THE MOST NOTABLE **CHARACTERISTICS** OF A **LEGALIST** IS THAT THEY **REJECT CONTEXT**.
  3. **PARENTS WHO FAIL TO CONSIDER CONTEXT** OFTEN **EXASPERATE** THEIR **CHILDREN!**
    - a. **Colossians 3:20-21 (NASB)** Children, be **obedient** to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, **do not exasperate your children**, so that they will **not lose heart**.
- F. **LEARNING TO LOOK INTO THE CONTEXT** OF A **SITUATION** WILL **HELP PARENTS GUARD AGAINST LEGALISM** AND THE **ABUSE** OF **PARENTAL AUTHORITY**.
- G. **CONTEXT** ALLOWS OUR CHILDREN TO **DO THE RIGHT THING** BY **TRAINING THEM TO THE PRINCIPLE**... AND **NOT** THE **RULE** THE **PRINCIPLE** REPRESENTS.