

Parenthood (4): The Politically Incorrect Spanking

December 1995

In the war being waged against godly, responsible parenthood, spanking has been made not only politically incorrect but in some countries a criminal offense. Prejudiced literature often refers to corporal punishment as “beating,” “hitting” or some other term suggestive of child abuse. Spanking is said to be demeaning, psychologically destructive and an infringement of a child’s civil rights.

All the “experts” deny what centuries of common sense and Biblical precept has taught: *“Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him”* (Pr 22:15). And what has resulted from the modern philosophy of child-rearing? Children who have no respect for their parents or authority in general; parents who are at their wits’ end over the insolent disobedience of their children; scholastic decline; a growing underclass of juvenile criminals and other social ills.

Such “enlightened” child-development philosophy has ironically *caused* the very abuse it aims to prevent. How? Because parents have been sold a load of rubbish that doesn’t work and their children are laughing in their faces. Some parents, feeling frustrated and helpless, finally lash out at their children in uncontrolled anger.

Let’s be very plain: the Bible does not encourage or condone any sort of verbal or physical abuse of children, and the father or mother who would so harm their child is both a sinner and a criminal.

Spanking is pain with a purpose; it is an attempt to communicate, in love, a strong message that cannot otherwise be conveyed. *“He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly”* (Pr 13:24). *“For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives”* (Heb 12:6).

If used properly, spanking is a tool that should span a short time of a child’s development. Young children cannot reason matters through like adults, but they need to know early that parents are to be respected and certain behaviors are unacceptable. This groundwork must be laid first. If done so properly, then reasoning and other alternative forms of discipline and punishment can be utilized as the child grows.

Christian parents must be on guard against the world’s intimidation and propaganda. To neglect discipline and fail to teach respect for authority is, itself, a form of abuse.