

## **Godly Discipline: Restoring Order**

### **Hebrews 12:5-11**

#### **Introduction**

Josh recently preached a sermon on Lawlessness... When you look at the world we live in, you see a lot of chaos and disorder. And this is all over the world, but let's just talk about West Louisville because this is our home.

Out in this community there is an epidemic of lawlessness.

What is an epidemic? An **epidemic** is a rapid spread of something harmful or destructive among a large group of people — usually referring to disease, but the term can also be applied to ideas, behaviors, or moral conditions.

An **epidemic of lawlessness** is when rebellion against authority and disregard for God's law **spreads quickly and widely** through a society, infecting families, communities, and nations.

Lawlessness has spread throughout this area and it's causing horrific destruction:

Hatred towards authority, violence, abuse, murders, thefts, out-of-control disorder...

Homes are completely shattered and broken. God designed the family to consist of one husband, one wife, and children.

**""Genesis 2:24** Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.""

This perfect model that God created has been trampled on and despised.

For example: In this area, many children are raised without a father in their lives.

Single mothers are forced to carry both roles of provider and parent.

Children are shuffled between multiple homes because of divorce and serial relationships.

This brokenness can lead to parents becoming addicted to drugs and alcohol to escape the realities that they face.

Responsibilities and children become neglected. Children are exposed to unsafe environments and endure verbal, physical, and sexual abuse. All these things create trauma, mistrust, and fear that shapes their future.

When the parents are absent, either physically or emotionally, the kids are left to the streets, gangs, and their peers for guidance.

This replaces godly authority with destructive influence.

What happens is, the kids that are raised in these situations end up having their own kids later on and they often repeat the same mistakes that their parents made and the cycle will continue.

And it can get worse and worse and worse with each generation.

One of the root causes of this lawlessness and brokenness we see and experience is a lack of Godly discipline. I want you to notice that I said a lack of "Godly" discipline, because there is a certain level of discipline going on in many homes today, but the problem is it's not Godly discipline.

What exactly is discipline?

The Merriam-webster definition of discipline is : *to punish or penalize for the sake of enforcing obedience and perfecting moral character.*

Where there is no discipline, or improper discipline. When there is no proper penalty for wrong doing, when good rules are not being enforced... then lawlessness abounds and all the brokenness I just described will begin to manifest.

**""Judges 21:25** In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which* was right in his own eyes.""

The king is a figure of authority that sets rules and makes sure the people abide by those rules.

So when there is no king, like during this time period in the book of judges, then there are no rules and nothing is being enforced.

So what happens? The people do that which is right in their own eyes.

That means chaos. If you go back a few chapters in Judges 19 you'll see some of the chaotic and horrible things that people were doing because there was no one enforcing rules.

And who is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? Jesus Christ.

God established rules for the people, but the people did not follow them. That's when we see God's discipline come into play.

The word discipline is found only once in the King James Bible:

**""Job 36:10** He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.""

This is a description of God how he opens the ears of his people to discipline and **commands** them to return from iniquity or sin.

Discipline is defined for us right here in God's Word. But there is another word in the Bible that is more commonly used to describe discipline. That word is Chastening.

**""Hebrews 12:5-6** And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: **6** For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.""

This word Chasten is very similar to the word Discipline. However, it has much deeper meaning because chastening is always accompanied with love. It's often used in relation to a father and a son.

Just like it's used here in Hebrews 12—"Whom the Lord loveth he "chasteneth"

**""Deuteronomy 8:5-6** Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee. **6** Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.""

Chastening involves punishment. A good father is supposed to love his children, and chasten them so that they will keep the commandments of God. Chastening brings order, stability, and peace.

If your home is not in order... And when I say not in order I'm talking about a home where:

Children are angry and rebellious. There is no respect for authority. Kids physically and verbally attack parents and each other. Where the kids are running the home, they demand things and control all aspects of life.

If these things are happening in a home, it's because there are no rules being enforced and there is a lack of Godly discipline and chastening.

Right now I would like to give a brief overview of what Godly discipline is supposed to look like in a home. And if we're not giving out Godly discipline as parents, how can we start doing it?

This is extremely important for the future of our Children, the future of West Louisville, and the future of our Nation. We need to get this right.

Before we look at practical things we can do, I want to start by laying out the Attributes of God's Correction.

But first, In order for there to be chastening and discipline, there has to be rules and laws established to follow. God has established rules for us and I want you to notice why he created these rules and laws.

**""Deuteronomy 6:24** And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as *it is* at this day.""

Notice that the statutes and laws that God has established are for our good always. That he might preserve us alive.

Think about how fences are often seen as something that is restrictive. People will often try to climb over or get around fences, but the reality is that fences are usually put in place to protect people from danger.

Like a fence that surrounds an electrical substation. It's there to keep unauthorized people out, but also to protect people from wandering into the wrong place and being electrocuted.

That fence is there for your good, and if you try to get around the fence, you'll probably end up dead.

Same way with God's laws. God gave them to us for our own good and preservation. When we disobey them, we are inviting death and destruction into our life.

**1 John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

Understand that God's commandments are not grievous, they are very good for us. God gave them to us because he loves us.

Now that we see that God's laws are for our protection, let's look at some of the attributes of God's discipline or chastening.

### **1. God's chastening is loving.**

**Hebrews 12:6-8** For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. **7** If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? **8** But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

Imagine a small child playing right on the edge of a busy street with hundreds of cars going by.

Let's say the child is playing with a ball and it rolls into the street and the child steps into the street, gets the ball, and goes back to playing on the edge of the street again.

A loving father or mother will chasten or correct the child because he or she was in danger and the parents don't want the child to die.

If the parents saw the child playing on the edge and going into the busy street, and did absolutely nothing, it's almost as if the child didn't even exist to them.

When God corrects us, it's a mark of our sonship. He scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

And he does it to keep us on the right path. He wants us to stay away from sin that He knows will destroy us.

**Proverbs 3:12** For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth."

**Revelation 3:19** As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Some people think that letting their kids do whatever they want is loving. Think about that young child playing near the street. Is it really loving to let them do whatever they want and be in dangerous situations?

Or maybe a child wants something that they're not supposed to have so they whine and scream until you give in and let them have what they want.

You need to understand that is not loving, that is actually hate because you are setting up the child to become selfish and entitled. And it will actually end up destroying them later on in their adult years.

**""Proverbs 13:24** He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.""

The rod is a picture of discipline and correction. If you spare or holdback the rod, then you hate your child. A parent that loves their child will chasten them betimes. That word betimes, means to do it in a short time. Do it quickly. That brings us to the next point...

## **2. God's chastening is swift.**

A loving parent doesn't wait weeks to correct a child who's playing in traffic — the correction must be swift to prevent tragedy. God is the same way with us. His chastening often comes quickly.

I want to show you a few examples of God's swift correction...

**""Numbers 12:1-2** And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2 And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.""

**""Numbers 12:9-10** And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. 10 And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam *became* leprous, *white* as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, *she was* leprous.""

Aaron and Miriam, the brother and sister of Moses, were envious of Moses because God spoke through him and not themselves. They were speaking against Moses.

God's anger was kindled against them and he immediately struck Miriam with leprosy.

**""Acts 5:3-5** But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? 4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine

heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. **5** And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things."

God's chastening is swift because sin is dangerous. Quick discipline is an act of mercy, not cruelty, designed to stop us before sin brings greater destruction.

**""Proverbs 19:18** Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.""

**""Proverbs 23:13-14** Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. **14** Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.""

Sin spreads very quickly. When it's goes unchecked and undisciplined it will spread throughout an entire family, then it will spread throughout the church, then the entire community, and then the whole nation.

That happens many times throughout the Bible and you can see all the examples for yourself and we need to learn from these things so we don't repeat the same mistakes.

**""1 Corinthians 5:6-7** Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? **7** Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:""

Leaven, also known as yeast, is a picture of sin and corruption. Just like a tiny bit of yeast that is added to flour will leaven the entire lump. A little bit of sin will corrupt an entire family and eventually an entire nation.

That's why God deals quickly with his Children.

### **3. God's chastening is for our profit.**

**""Hebrews 12:9-10** Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? **10** For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.""

God's chastening is never meaningless or done in a way to harm us. It's always for our profit and for our good. He wants us to partake in his holiness. To live a life in safety and blessings.

When we don't follow his commandments we are hurting ourselves. When we sin, we only enjoy those pleasures for a season. Afterwards, a wave of destruction is on the way.

God is trying to prevent that destruction from entering into our lives.

**Hebrews 12:11** Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Receiving correction is not fun, giving out correction is not fun. But afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

**Job 5:17-18** Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: **18** For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole."

Living a life with rules and discipline will make you and your kids happy because you are walking within God's will for your life. That's why it's important to receive correction with thankfulness.

He maketh sore and bindeth up, he woundeth and then makes whole. It's for your good.

**Proverbs 13:18** Poverty and shame *shall be to* him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured."

God's Word always comes true, so if you refuse instruction in your life, or if you do not discipline and instruct your kids, then poverty and shame will follow.

When we open our eyes and look around and see the brokenness, the poverty, and the shame in this area...

We can know that it's because people are refusing to accept instruction, or they are just not receiving it in the first place.

**Psalms 119:71** *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*"

It is a good thing to be afflicted and corrected so we can learn the statutes of the Lord and not make those same mistakes again.

So these are three attributes of God's chastening and correction.



1. God's chastening is loving.
2. God's chastening is swift.
3. God's chastening is for our profit.

Now that we have these three attributes, let's look at some practical steps in applying the example that God gives us to our own lives.

## **Practical Steps to Godly Discipline**

How do we as parents or anyone in a position of authority give out Godly discipline and correction?

### **1. Establish Rules and Set Expectations**

Remember with God, it starts with establishing rules and laws for us to follow. So the same thing goes for us as parents. We need to establish rules and laws for our home. This is the foundation for Godly discipline.

The rules that we make need to be aligned with God's Word. His law is the ultimate authority.

When you make rules for your home you need to set expectations for your children and communicate those expectations clearly.

Be very specific about your expectations and clearly explain what the consequences will be if they are not followed.

**""Deuteronomy 10:12-13** And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, **13** To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?""

God sets the expectation...And he also lays out the consequences.

**""Deuteronomy 11:26-28** Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; **27** A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: **28** And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.""

Most of the time children need to be reminded of the rules and expectations over and over again until they stick. Repetition is key and you cannot let things go.

**Expectation:** *"In this house, we speak respectfully to one another. There will be no talking back, yelling, or name-calling."*

### **How to Set It:**

1. Sit your children down and state the rule plainly.

- *"God's Word says in Ephesians 4:29, 'Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying...' In this home, we use words that build up, not tear down."*

2. Explain the **consequence** for breaking it.

- *"If you choose to talk back or use disrespectful words, you will receive a spanking."*

3. Reinforce the **reason** behind the rule.

- *"We honor authority because God commands us to honor our father and mother (Exodus 20:12). This rule isn't just about obeying mom and dad—it's about obeying the Lord."*

### **2.Be consistent in Enforcement**

Just like God doesn't change, parents must enforce rules the same way every time. If consequences are applied one day but ignored the next, children learn to gamble with disobedience.

**""Proverbs 29:15** The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame.""

Consistency teaches that God's truth is stable and not shifting. If we get slack and let things go, children will regress back into bad behavior. And just like the Bible says, it will bring shame. So we need to stay consistent even when it's an inconvenient time to correct.

Will we do it perfectly everytime? No. Only God does it perfectly everytime, but we need to strive for consistency.

### 3. Discipline with Self-Control, Not Anger

We should not punish and discipline out of anger and selfishness. For example, if you are bitter towards your children, or mad because you can't do the things that you want to do, and you hit them out of anger and rage. That is not Godly discipline. That leads to physical abuse.

Discipline should not be done out of selfishness; it should be done out of selflessness. We are supposed to be correcting because we love our kids and we want the best for them.

Understand when your kids break the rules and sin, they are sinning against the Lord. The whole point of the chastisement is for them to realize their sin against God and to do good.

Correcting in anger and rage will not be effective and will only harm your children. You need to stay calm and have self-control, explain that they violated the rules and they will need to receive their punishment.

Spankings are a biblical form of correction despite what the world tells you. Spankings should be used to chasten your children, but it needs to be done correctly.

When you spank your child, you need to let them know that you love them and you are doing it because you want them to keep the commandments of God and to live a safe and blessed life.

**""Proverbs 22:15** Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; *but* the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.""

And remember, the punishments we set for breaking rules should be carried out swiftly. But we need to make sure punishments are appropriate based on the offense.

**""Jeremiah 46:28** Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I *am* with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.""

Not everything warrants a spanking, so we need to use wisdom when it comes to setting consequences.

In our house we have a system in place with different levels of offense. The kids know what will result in a spanking.

And when a spanking is needed, make sure they know exactly why they are receiving it, and do it as an act of love for their own profit, the same way that God chastens us.

#### 4. Use Both Correction and Instruction

Godly Discipline does not stop at punishment. Correction must be paired with teaching. After the penalty, take time to explain *why* the rule exists and *how* your child can do better next time.

We need to balance discipline with encouragement...

**""Ephesians 6:4** And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.""

Discipline is not effective if you do not show love to your children. If your kids do not see that you care about them, Any kind of instruction that you give them will go in one ear and out the other.

The love that you show them is way more powerful than any rage or anger that you try to use to enforce rules. For children, there needs to be a healthy balance of fear of being punished and also not wanting to disappoint parents because of their love for you.

It's the same way between us and God. We need to have a fear of the Lord because we know what He is capable of doing, but we also love Him greatly because he first loved us and gave His life for us.

So belittling and calling your kids names will have zero effectiveness on getting them to straighten up and listen. Encouraging them and showing them love will work wonders.

#### 5. Model Godly Behavior Yourself

Kids are watching everything that you do, listening to everything that you say, watching every expression that you make. If you are not modeling Godly character and being a bad example as a parent, don't expect your children to do anything different than what you are doing.

As parents we are supposed to be representing the character and love that Jesus has for us. If our kids see us acting one way at church and then at home you act completely different, they will notice and they will copy your behavior.

**""Titus 2:7-8** In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine *shewing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, **8** Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.""

**""Psalm 101:2** I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.""

**Philippians 4:9** Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

Everything that we say and do, we should be happy with our kids doing the exact same things. If there are things that we do or say that we don't want them doing. Then we need to examine ourselves and start making changes.

## 6. Pray with and for Your Children

After you chasten and correct your children, it's very good to pray with them so they can understand who our ultimate authority is and who are we trying to please.

Teach them how to ask God for forgiveness. Teach them to ask God for help to not sin. Teach them how to ask God for wisdom and to be able to walk in the Spirit.

And pray for your kids to have a desire to serve the Lord.

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

So maybe you haven't followed these things in your life. No one has done these things perfectly by the way. All parents have made mistakes. But it's not too late to get started doing things the right way.

So it might seem like an impossible task trying to get things under control in your home. But understand who you have on your side.

Start by being humble and explaining to your kids that we haven't done things right and now we are going to start doing things God's way. Establish the rules. Explain them lovingly. Let them know why the rules are important. And start enforcing those rules without compromise.

Remember we are here for you if you need help. We can all help each other. But first you have to want Godly Discipline and order in your home. I can't give you that desire. You have to want it for yourself.

## Closing Thoughts

So the truth is we cannot afford to ignore these things.

The brokenness in our community is not healing itself. The cycles of rebellion, fatherlessness, and lawlessness are not slowing down — they're speeding up. And if we

want to stop that epidemic from infecting our homes, our children, and our future — we have to start with **Godly discipline**.

We've seen what happens when children grow up without correction. We've seen what happens when there are no rules, no consequences, no consistency, and no love-driven chastening. Just take a look around.

The Bible says a child left to himself brings his mother to shame. And we are living in a generation filled with shame, because children have been left to raise themselves.

But there is hope.

There is still time to turn things around.

There is still time to start modeling godliness in your home.

To start setting expectations.

To start correcting with love, not anger.

Some of you didn't grow up with godly discipline. You didn't have a pattern to follow. But now **you** have the opportunity to break the cycle. You have the responsibility — and the privilege — to pass down something better to your children.

So let your discipline reflect His character. Don't wait until your home is out of control. Don't ignore the signs of rebellion or chaos. Start now. Build the fence. Set the boundaries. Enforce the rules. And when correction is needed — give it swiftly, calmly, and always with the goal of restoration.

And above all — keep pointing your children to Jesus Christ.