

## INTRODUCTION

A unique child was born, Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Man and Son of God in one person. He was born without human father, his mother Mary having been caused to conceive by the Holy Spirit of God. We know by this that Jesus was not counted or reckoned to have sinned in Adam. He did not have Adam's guilt imputed to Him, nor did He inherit Adam's corrupt sinful flesh. He was sent here by God the Father to be a second Adam, a better, perfect Adam. So, in this unique child, Jesus, there was no foolishness. Instead, the Spirit of the Lord rests upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of the fear of the Lord. In that wisdom, when He was a child living with his parents, Joseph and Mary, He was subject to them, He was submissive to them, even though He Himself was the very Son of God. As He grew into a man, Jesus only increased in wisdom.

This is the one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose disciples we are, in whom we have the sure hope of eternal life.

He Himself, having wisdom, was in subjection to His parents. Is it any surprise, then, that the men He provides as shepherds for His church, are men who have their children in subjection? As we have read together several times, and as we are studying together these several Lord's Days, for the church rightly to choose a man as a church pastor, he must be observed to rule his own household well, having his own children in subjection, in submission, under obedience.

In the case of Jesus as a boy, he subjected Himself to His parents by wisdom. The Bible tells us parents by what means God is pleased to give that wisdom to our children. So, see in the book of Proverbs how we human parents can have our children in subjection by wisdom, as we deal with their foolishness in the way God prescribes: by the rod and reproof.

## TEXT

Proverbs 22:15 Proverbs 29:15 Proverbs 23:13-14

## BODY

- I. Our Children Naturally Are Foolish Rather Than Wise
  - A. Proverbs 22:15a Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child...
  - B. Think about your experiences with children, and consider how closely their behavior matches how the Bible describes a fool
    - 1. they do not want to do what they are told to do, even by their own parents (Proverbs 1:7b; 15:5a)
    - 2. they think that what they want to do must be right (Proverbs 12:15a)
    - 3. they break things and ruin things even in their own house (Proverbs 14:1b)
    - 4. they do not know God (Jeremiah 4:22a)
  - C. Proverbs 22:15 says that such foolishness is bound or bound up in the heart of a child
    - 1. it does not merely sit or rest in the child; it is tied down there; it is strapped down securely; it is held there with strong chains that are bound tightly
    - 2. it is not on the surface; it is not skin deep; it is in the child's very heart
  - D. A child does not get this way during childhood; he is born that way; ever since Adam and Eve sinned, every child except Jesus has been born this way
  - E. The world denies this; the world would have us believe that children come into this world innocent, and only by bad influences in this world does a child go bad.
  - F. It is only natural that during your life, you may have unknowingly taken in some of this worldly thinking about children. So, sort through your thoughts to see if some of your ideas about raising children are not in keeping with the truth that our children are naturally foolish, having foolishness bound in their hearts

Our children naturally are foolish rather than wise

- II. If We Leave Our Children In Their Foolishness, They Will Be a Disgrace to Us
- A. A child set at libertie, left to himself, allowed to get his own way, will bring his parents shame and grief
    - 1. Proverbs 29:15 specifically mentions the mother being ashamed of her child; elsewhere in Pr. the father also is mentioned, and grief is included with shame
    - 2. some of the shame and grief will come while the child is still a child, as his behavior shames and grieves the parents; some of the shame and grief will come later, when the child becomes an adult, and comes to bad ends
  - B. APPLICATION Does this move you, Christian man, out of love for your wife? Do you understand that if you leave your child to do whatever he wants to do, your darling, your dear wife, will be ashamed? The child that you left to do whatever his foolish heart wanted will bring such shame and grief to your wife that she will go into her room or the bathroom, shut the door, and sob unrollably at what has become of her child.
  - C. APPLICATION Does this move you, Christian woman, out of love for your husband? Do you understand that if you leave your child to do whatever he wants to do, your beloved husband will be ashamed and brought to grief?
  - D. APPLICATION Does this move you, disciples of Jesus Christ, out of love for your church? Do you understand that if the men of the church let their children have their own way, those men, when evaluated by the church, will not be found blameless, and will not be made elders or deacons. Or, worse yet, maybe they will be made elders or deacons, despite their children not being in subjection. Either way, the men of the church or the whole church itself comes to shame because the children were left to follow their hearts.

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### III. God Has Told Us How To Deal With Our Children's Foolishness

#### A. We can drive foolishness out of them by the rod of correction - Proverbs 22:15b

1. certainly we work against foolishness by setting a good example in our own behavior
2. certainly we work against foolishness by speaking to our children: reading them the Bible, telling them what is right and wrong
3. but the point here in describing foolishness as being bound in the heart of the child is to prove the need for correction not only by words, but by the rod, also; that is, by spanking the child

#### B. We can give them wisdom by the rod and reproof - Proverbs 29:15

1. see here foolishness pictured as something the child has naturally, that must be driven out, and wisdom pictured as something the child lacks naturally, that must be given
2. reproof, or rebuke, or correction, whichever your Bible says, is the H8433 *tokechah*, which means most literally, correction
  - a) the child has done something that is not correct
  - b) you tell the child that what he said or did is incorrect
  - c) you tell him what is correct
  - d) you require him to say or do what is correct
3. this process requires both the rod and reproof; neither can do the job without the other
  - a) use the rod, without reproof, and the child does not understand the rod
  - b) use reproof, without the rod, and the child does not accept the reproof
  - c) use reproof, backed up by the rod, and the child both understands and accepts the lesson; he is, in fact, corrected

#### C. What an opportunity for us to give a rich gift to our children!

1. wisdom is more precious than gold, even than rubies

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IV. Let God's Assurances Convince You To Deal with Your Child's Foolishness In His Way

- A. The devil's way is to convince us not to accept what God has said, but instead to doubt it and to be reluctant to obey it
- B. The world, under the sway of the devil, would convince you that you must not use the rod on your children, that it would harm them. Many parents seem so strongly opposed to spanking children, it is as if they think it would kill them.
- C. But the Bible assures us that a child will not die of a spanking.
- D. That spanking a child to correct him will harm the child is as far from the truth as can be; because the truth is that if you beat your child with the rod to drive foolishness out of him, you will deliver his soul from hell
  - 1. in the sense of saving him from an unnecessarily early death
  - 2. in the sense of making him wise unto salvation which is in Christ Jesus
    - a) he knows God is there; he fears God; he wants to please God, and does not want to be punished by God in the judgment to come
    - b) he knows he should listen to those who are wise, and who are in authority, so he listens to the preacher
    - c) he knows the Bible is the word of God, so he reads it, and accepts what it says as true

## CONCLUSION

Our children naturally are foolish rather than wise

If we leave our children in their foolishness, they will be a disgrace to us

God has told us how to deal with our children's foolishness

Let God's assurances convince you to deal with your child's foolishness in His way

If you saw that your child were in grave danger from some dangerous animal or violent person, you would rush to his defense. You would try to warn off that dangerous animal or violent person by stern words in your fiercest sounding voice. But if that threat to your child would not be scared off by your voice, you would be willing to go to blows, fighting it off with whatever weapon was at hand, even to the use of deadly force.

So it is that your child is in terrible danger. The enemy is his own foolishness. If allowed to have its way with him, it will tear him from your arms, drive him to an early grave, and send him to the fires of hell. Fight it! By your careful instruction, by your stern warnings, and by the use of the rod when needed, drive that foolishness far away from your precious child. And give your child, in its place, the precious gift of wisdom.

So, let the church be filled with the saved, who have been made wise unto salvation which is in Christ Jesus. And so let the church be blessed with blameless men, with their children in subjection, who can shepherd and serve the church until the Lord Jesus comes back.

Audrey - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 533 "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

Rita - Trinity 765 "My Heart Is Firmly Fixed"

Rita - Trinity 187 "Hark! The Voice of Love and Mercy"

Thad - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer: Revelation 4:8-11

Chris - Scripture Reading: Romans 5:1-10

Roel - Congregational Prayer

Jeff - Benediction: 1 Peter 5:10-11

Pr 22:15

GEN Foolishnesse is bounde in the heart of a childe: but the rodde of correction shall driue it away from him.

KJV Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

NKJV Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

ESV Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.

H191 fool

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

Proverbs 14:1 Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

Proverbs 15:5 A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

Jeremiah 4:22a For my people is foolish, they have not known me...

What are we instructed to do?

use the rod of correction or discipline on the child

What will happen if we do what we are instructed to do?

foolishness or folly will be driven far from the child

What will happen if we do not do what we are instructed to do?

the child's heart will remain foolish

Bridges:

Resistance therefore cannot begin too early. Education should commence even in the cradle.

But foolishness is the mighty propensity to evil — imbibing wrong principles, forming bad habits, entering into an ungodly course. It means the very root and essence of sin in a fallen nature — the folly of being revolted from a God of love. It includes all the sins of which a child is capable — lying, deceit (Psa\_58:3 ), willfulness, perverseness, want of submission to authority (Job\_11:12 ) — a fearful aptness for evil, and revulsion against good. It is not the sheet of pure white paper; not the innocent, or even the tractable, creature, easily guided by proper means, that we have before us; but a little heart full of sin, containing all the seeds of future evil, multiplying to a fruitful harvest.

The prescribed remedy, however, is clear. It is vain to bid the foolishness depart. And little inclination is there in the child himself to drive it far away. The rod of correction is distinctly named, and repeatedly inculcated, as God's own means for this important end.†5 And surely the thought of having been an instrument of producing nature envenomed against a God of love must constrain the parent to use the means thus divinely appointed for destroying the deadly poison.

Use the LORD's means, and we can then, what otherwise we cannot do, wait in faith for the promised blessing. Many a stirring movement of the flesh will be restrained. Man's will will be put down, and God's will gain the supremacy. Shame of sin will issue in abhorrence; and in this sorrow and humiliation the path of wisdom will be chosen, loved, and followed. (Pro\_29:15 .)

We have indeed no right to demand to see God's reasons for his ordinance. Yet we may be permitted, in part at least, to trace its workings. Habits are of immense value, as wrought into the character by the Holy Spirit. But there must be a beginning, and the use of means to fix the principle. If a child be punished for falsehood; to avoid future punishment, he abstains, and speaks the truth. As he advances, he finds the blessing and comfort of the right path. He learns gradually to speak truth from a higher motive. Insensibly his conscience acquires tenderness respecting it; and it becomes a principle in his character. Thus the rod of correction performs its work with permanent benefit.



Pr 23:13-14

GEN Withhold not correction from the childe: if thou smite him with the rodde, he shall not die. 14 Thou shalt smite him with the rodde, and shalt deliuer his soule from hell.

KJV 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.

NKJV Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. 14 You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.

ESV Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. 14 If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol.

What we are warned not to do:

do not withhold correction or discipline from a child

What will happen if we do what we are warned NOT to do:

the child's soul will go to hell, to Sheol

What we are instructed to do:

smite or beat or strike him with the rod

What will happen if we do what we are instructed to do:

the child shall not die

Bridges:

The rule therefore is, notwithstanding all the pleas of pity and fondness — withhold it not. Do the work wisely, firmly, lovingly. Persevere notwithstanding apparently unsuccessful results. Connect it with prayer, faith, and careful instruction.

We admit that it is revolting to give pain, and call forth the tears of those we so tenderly love. But while hearts are what hearts are, it is not to be supposed that we can train without discipline. If it be asked — will not gentle means be more effectual? Had this been God's judgment, as a God of mercy, he would not have provided a different regimen.

Pr 29:15

GEN The rodde and correction giue wisdome: but a childe set a libertie, maketh his mother ashamed.

KJV The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

NKJV The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

ESV The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

Job 28:28 ...the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom...

Many times wisdom and understanding are paired, almost as synonyms.

Wisdom is more precious, more valuable, than gold or jewels.

Job 28:18b the price of wisdom is above rubies

Proverbs 8:11a For wisdom is better than rubies...

What we are instructed to do:

give a child wisdom by the rod and correction; the rod and reproof; the rod and rebuke

What we are warned NOT to do:

do not leave a child to himself; set a child at liberty

What will happen if we do what we are warned NOT to do:

the child will bring shame to his mother

Bridges:

Let reproof be first tried; and if it succeed, let the rod be spared. (Pro\_17:10 .) If not, let it do its work

The rod is evidently to be taken literally, not metaphorically; corporal, not spiritual chastisement.

At whatever cost, establish your authority. Let there be but one will in the house. And let it be felt, that this will is to be the law. The child will readily discover, whether the parent is disposed to yield, or resolved to rule. But however trifling the requirement, let obedience be, in small as great matters, the indispensable point.

The awe of parental authority is perfectly consistent with the utmost freedom of childlike confidence. Nay — it is the very foundation of it (for the child can hardly appreciate the kindness of a parent, whom he thinks afraid to strike), while it operates as a valuable safeguard against a thousand follies of uncontrolled waywardness. But ever let us put the awful alternative vividly before us. Either the child's will, or the parent's heart, must be broken. Without a wise and firm control, the parent is miserable; the child is ruined

Josiah Pratt, *Memoir*, Chapter 19 [as quoted by Bridges]:

I earnestly entreat you to subdue the wills of your children most tenderly *if you can*. But if not, your duty and your love require measures which shall enforce obedience. Commit yourselves as little as may be into a contest with your children. But having once done this, you must maintain the contest till the child yields. Every such victory will make the next easier, and in all likelihood deter the child from entering on another contest. And you must make thorough work of it, if you would bless the child.

Charles Bridges (1794-1869)  
Church of England

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Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of	The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to	Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not

correction shall drive it far from him.	himself bringeth his mother to shame.	die. 14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.
foolishness [H200 <i>ivveleth</i> ]...drive it far from him H191 <i>eviyl</i> fool	give wisdom [H2451 <i>chokmah</i> ] H2449 <i>chakam</i> wisdom	
rod of correction	rod and reproof	