

**Foolproof
The Art of Discipline- Week #6
Small Group Notes
February 4 and 7, 2021**

Introduction:

Read the following quote: “In parenting the days are long but the years are short...” When are the times that you see this quote the most accurate? What are the moments that you wish you could stop time with your kids?

Read the following 10 characteristics of great parents:

- 1. They prayed like crazy!**
- 2. They had fewer rules than average!**
- 3. They realized rules without relationship equals rebellion.**
- 4. They were not afraid of their kids!**
- 5. They helped their children discover unique talents and didn't impose theirs!**
- 6. They avoided sarcasm!**
- 7. They prioritized relationships over experiences.**
- 8. Their house was the hub!**
- 9. They focused on spiritual transformation over behavior modification.**
- 10. They did ministry with them!**

Which of these stand out to you? Are there more that you would add to the list? Are there any that you see in your parents?

Today's discussion centers around understanding the art of discipline as a part of living our lives "foolproof." While the message may seem to center around parents and their relationship with their children, there are lessons here for the entire church and how we can understand the way that the Lord views each person's attitude towards godly discipline as well.

Discuss:

1. Make discipline a teaching moment more than a punishing moment.

- Read Proverbs 19:18; Ephesians 6:4
- There is a difference between correction, punishment, and discipline.
- At the heart of discipline should be discipleship.

Explain: These passages show us the responsibility that we have to focus on discipline. Just as discipline for the believer is putting more of Christ into our lives and less of the world, the same is true in what we teach our children, especially in moments of

discipline. The focus from the end of discipline is not for there to be more anger but for there to be a realization of love and grace.

Ask:

What are ways that we can sometimes focus on just the physical act of punishment instead of the greater need to teach discipline?

What are the most important ways that Christian parenting is different from secular parenting?

2. Make honor a priority in your home.

- Read Exodus 20:12; Romans 12:10
- Honor, not obedience, is at the heart of all great relationships
- Without honor you will never have enough rules

Explain: The call in Exodus and Romans is to obey the Lord as represented in how we honor our parents. At the root of our relationship with God is a loving relationship not based on merely following rules but on grace, mercy, and love! Therefore, seeking to honor our family derives from the relationship that we have with our Heavenly Father.

Ask:

What is the relationship between honor and respect? What are ways that you have found that you can build honor in your home?

What are the implications if children never learn honor?

3. Make sure “dishonoring” behavior is met with discipline.

- Read Proverbs 20:20; Proverbs 22:15; Proverbs 13:24
- Dishonoring behavior: dishonesty, disrespect, and disobedience
- If you ignore dishonoring behavior, you reward it and what gets rewarded gets repeated.

Explain: The rod used in Scripture may have been one stick but it had different uses. The shepherd could use the rod to pick up a sheep’s head that had fallen and show it which way to go. The rod was also used as a defensive weapon to keep the sheep safe. Oftentimes this would include guiding the sheep back into the fold. Finally, the shepherd would use it directly on a sheep as a way to correct its course. While we often focus so much of our discipline as a means of punishment, here we can see that the rod represents so much more and focuses the sheep on guidance, protection, and correction which keep the focus on discipline rather than mere punishment.

Ask:

What are ways that you can use different forms of the rod in disciplining your children?

How can children of all ages and family situations give their parents the respect God commands?

4. Make sure discipline has a goal.

- Read Luke 15:11-24
- The goal of discipline is restoration of relationship.
- Discipline takes: 1. A goal. 2. Patience 3. An apology and opportunity 4. Creativity

Explain: In this passage, we see a father that had to let his child go to learn a hard lesson. Yet when his son came to his senses, the father was ready and celebratory to pour out his mercy on his son. There are going to be times as a parent where we are not present with our children 24/7 and yet we are setting them on a course to continue discipline beyond the home. They learn to own their faith and make mistakes, yet they also remember how the grace and mercy of God is available.

Ask:

Why does the responsibility to teach discipline to our children begin with our own discipline?

What does having a goal for discipline mean to you and your family?