

**Parenting Goals, Methods, and Strategies**

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# Session 1—What is the Big Picture of Christian Parenting?

# Greg E. Gifford, PhD

1. **Introduction to Parenting**
	1. Problems with Children Regularly Come From:
		1. Parents that are not unified
		2. Schedules are chaotic
		3. Dad is absent (passive) or angry
	2. Understanding the Role of Parents as:
		1. Stewards (Ps. 127:3-5)
		2. Spiritual Influencers / Disciplers (Eph. 6:4), and
		3. Care Takers (1 Tim. 5:8)
2. **Worldly Goals**
	1. Focus on academic achievement first-and-foremost
	2. Vocational preparation
	3. Sports success with potential for scholarship/vocation
	4. Well-behaved children
	5. Financially successful children
	6. Vertical Goal:
		1. To come to a saving knowledge of Christ through faith in the Gospel.
		2. Your Goals Inform Your Priorities for Your Child!
			1. Beware of the cult of youth sports *and*

* + - 1. Parental Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)



* + 1. If your child was a God-honoring, Christ-cherishing Christian who drove the neighborhood trash truck—would you be proud of them? Not just interactive with them, but authentically proud?
	1. Horizontal Goals (Eph. 6:4b)
		1. A responsible, moral, self-supporting adult with whom we can hopefully have a friendship.
			1. Life Skills: Career, School, Sports,
			2. Moral: the simple goal of this is that our children may not become followers of Christ, but we do expect that they will be law-abiding citizens who are acting in legal ways. We do *expect* that they would not steal from us, mistreat family, and they are
			3. Self-Supporting (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:10)
1. **What should I be seeking to accomplish as a parent?**
	1. Honor the Lord in the Way we Parent (Eph. 6:4)
	2. Personal holiness makes you a better parent!
	3. Learning skills to equip you for your role as parent.
2. **What should I desire to see take place in my children?**
	1. Heart transformation that only comes through the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives (Tit. 3:5).
	2. Hearts that submit to the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-5).
	3. Then, navigating the world as a Christ-follower into meaningful forms of employment, family, and living as an adult with Christ-like character.

# Session 2—How Do Actually I Go about Parenting?

# Greg E. Gifford, PhD

1. **What principles do I need to keep in mind as I parent my children?**
	1. My goal is faithfulness as a parent—not to control the outcome of my parenting.
	2. How do I have a place of influence in my child’s life?
		1. Relational influence through cultivating time together with any child.
			1. Foxhole parenting vs. Lifeguard parenting
	3. Biblical priorities as a parent that will help protect my family from unnecessary temptations toward sinful living:
		1. Provocative traits as a parent
		2. Sinful environments through school, family, or work
		3. Financial stability and stewardship that blesses our children
2. **Key Definitions in Parenting:**
	1. Obedience: “Doing it the first time without complaining”
	2. Appeal: “One opportunity to appeal, in a gracious way, the decision that I made.”
	3. Warning: “I will warn you once, and then follow through on what the consequences of obedience are.”
3. **What Responsibilities Do I Have as a Parent?**
	1. Faithfulness in parenting means that we are honoring the Lord.
		1. We remove any logs from our own eye that are provocative towards our kids (Eph. 6:4a; Col. 3:21).
	2. “Instruction” (Eph. 6:4a): “the act of providing guidance for responsible living, upbringing, training, instruction.”[[1]](#footnote-1)
	3. Structured Environments for our Children
4. **Types of Structure to Implement**

*There is freedom in Christ to be different, as each of us come from different backgrounds and culture, but these elements should be present to some degree.*

* 1. Biblical Roles of Mom and Dad (Or Just One if Only One is Present!)
	2. Schedule
		1. Calendar When Events Are and Plan for Them (Google Cal.)
		2. Bed Time / Nap Time
		3. Eating / Meal Times
	3. Consistent Consequences
		1. If you are not developing consequences as a parent, you will allow things to escalate to a point of being more and more chaotic. This is *your* fault, not your child’s.
	4. Noise Level
		1. Yelling/Screaming
		2. Music
		3. TV
	5. Stable Home Life and Location
		1. Clean and healthy home environment
		2. Pursuing job security so kids aren’t bounced around
		3. Being thoughtful about moving and the toll that has on our children
			1. *For example*: Don’t move your child’s senior year, if at all possible.
	6. Consistent and Gentle Correction (Prov. 13:24; Heb. 12:9)
	7. Financial Provisions that Are Content in the Lord’s Provision (1 Tim. 5:8, 6:6)
1. **What are the practical activities/duties that I am to carry out as a parent?**
	1. Time Together (Deut. 6:4-8)
		1. Time together is a means of building a relationship with your child. You spend time as a means of investing in the relationship so as to instruct them to better follow Christ.
	2. Instruction: You are looking to have time for formal and informal instruction with your children so as to promote holiness for them.
2. **Biblical Motivation for God-Centered Conversations through Instruction**
	1. 1 Corinthians 15:1-3
	2. “First Importance”: Does your conversation with your children demonstrate that you value the gospel first?
	3. Acts 4:12: “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”
	4. John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
	5. Romans 11:36: “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.”
		1. Each of these verses show us that the Gospel and the work of Christ is primary to our lives and that the goal of our lives are to exalt Christ!
		2. If you really do believe this, then your conversations will naturally gravitate toward the Gospel.
3. **Methods for God-Centered Conversations (Deut. 6:6-9)**
	1. “When you sit”:

Informal

* 1. “When you walk”:
	2. “When you lie down”:

Formal

* 1. “We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation” (Ps. 78:4; Eph. 6:4).
1. **Practical Steps**
	1. Informal:
		1. When Your Child Fails: How can you point them back to depending on Christ and boasting in their weaknesses (2 Cor. 12:7)?
		2. When Your Child Is Hurt (Physically and Emotionally): How can you point them to be strengthened by Christ (Ps. 18:1-3)?[[2]](#footnote-2)
		3. When Your Child is Betrayed: How can you help them resonate with Christ’s betrayal and respond like him (1 Pet. 4:19)?
		4. A few questions to equip yourself with:
			1. What do you think God would want you to do?
			2. What does the Bible say you should do?
	2. Formal:
		1. Family Worship Time – “a God-centered time not behavior correcting time – it’s a time to know God more clearly and respond through Old Testament History, Proverbs and Psalms, Gospel of Jesus Christ (spend much time in these three).”[[3]](#footnote-3)
2. **You’re a Farmer (1 Cor. 3:7)!**
	1. Equipping for Life Skills as a Means of Glorifying Christ (1 Cor. 10:31)
3. **What should Christians think about physical discipline? (Is it abusive?)**
	1. The rod is a means of love and discipline prevents a child from being as foolish as they can be.
		1. “Whoever spares the rod hates his son” (Prov. 13:24).
		2. “If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons” (Heb. 12:8).
	2. There is an abusive type of physical discipline. This type of discipline is unstructured, too physically strong, emotional, and unpredictable. This type of discipline is unhelpful for children and potentially abusive.
	3. Godly, Physical Discipline
		1. Necessary for younger children (Under 5) because it’s nearly impossible to reason with a really young child. There is very little ability to “appeal” to them.
		2. When done faithfully, leads to less behavioral issues as a child grows because they’ve learned to respect authority.
	4. Tips for Physical Discipline:
		1. Predetermined “rod”
		2. Predetermined location: bathroom or bedroom, but somewhere in private where the others don’t see.
		3. Predetermined amount of swats.
		4. Clear explanation of why physical discipline is happening, based on disobedience rather than childishness.
		5. Time for prayer and any reconciliation that needs to happen (under 10-minutes)

# Session 3—How Does Parenting Look different as my children grow older?

# (Part 1)

# Greg E. Gifford, PhD

1. Understanding Your Authority as A Parent
	1. It’s God-Ordained (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21).
	2. It’s Temporal (Luke 2:52; John 9:20-21)
	3. It’s *Should* Be Diminishing



1. From Obey and Honor to Honor
2. **Infants and Toddlers (0-3)**
	1. Structure of Home (see above):
		1. Nap / Bed Times
		2. Wake Times
		3. Eating
	2. Consistent Consequences
		1. First of all, every parent needs to develop a “plan of discipleship” for each of their children. Please see the attached (session #5 we will cover in detail).
		2. Childishness: Accidents, spills, damage to house, etc.
		3. Disobedience: “Not doing it the first time without complaining.”
	3. Some Instruction
		1. Deuteronomy 6:4-8 is applicable
3. **Preschool years (3-6)**
	1. Structure of Home
	2. Consistent Consequences
		1. **Childishness**: Carrying a drink and then spilling it. Now you get to help clean up, but you are not in “trouble.”
		2. **Whininess**: Although not always disobedience, we are helping our children learn how to deal with adversity. We also are helping “put off” (Eph. 4:22) a lack of gratitude. A few things are happening when a child is whiny.
			1. Lack of gratitude (1 Thess. 5:23)
			2. Lack of tenacity (Rom. 5:4)
			3. A child learns to manipulate parents (Matt. 5:37-39)
			4. Find a “consequence” (other than physical discipline) for when a child is being whiny. Some ideas are going to their room, physical exercise (i.e., pushups), not engaging the child until they get control of their emotions, et cetera. But whatever you do, don’t incentivize it!
		3. **Disobedience**: You didn’t do it the first time without complaining, now there will be consequences.
	3. Some Instruction:
		1. At this age, it’s really difficult to have times of formal instruction—though not impossible. Most times you are getting times of informal instruction with your child while in the trenches with them.
4. **Elementary years (7-12)**
	1. Structure of Home
	2. Consistent Consequences
		1. Childishness: Taking your Apple Watch off the bathroom and leaving it there!
		2. Disobedience: I told you to *not* take it off when you washed your hands and you did.
	3. Most Instruction: This is the prime time to be discipling your children. By the time they have reached puberty, they have learned so many things: communication, conflict resolution, how to interact with authority, and so forth.

*Puberty is the dividing line.*

# Session 4—How Does Parenting Look Different as my Children Grow Older? (Part 2)

# Greg E. Gifford, PhD

1. Teenage Years
	1. Concept of Adolescence is Unbiblical!
		1. Either an adult or a Child
		2. Ephesians 4:1-3: “Children”
		3. John 9
	2. Structure and Plan of Discipleship:
		1. Remind yourself of your goals for your teenager:
			1. Vertical goals
			2. Horizontal goals
2. Adult children in the home
	1. Average Rent in Southern California: $2,850[[4]](#footnote-4)
		1. The result is that children are staying home longer because of “high costs of living.”
	2. The other side of this problem is parents haven’t prepared children for adulthood by life skills and independence. There should be a gradual movement of less-and-less support.



Gradual decreasing of financial support.

+

Increasing costs associated with living in your home.

=

Adulthood

* 1. How to know you’re enabling?
		1. Caveat: Adult Sons versus Adult Daughters (1 Tim. 5:8)
		2. Galatians 6:9: When you are inhibiting the natural consequences of life for your child, you are enabling them.
		3. 1 Thessalonians 4:11: When you do not expect your child to “eat their own bread,” you are enabling them.
		4. Lastly, when you perpetuate unfaithfulness to be possible with them while in your home, you are enabling (1 Sam. 2:12-36).
	2. Peer-to-Peer Relationship (and Potential Friendship)
	3. Adult Children Toward Parents
		1. 1 Timothy 5:4,
1. What is the Goal?
	1. Back to the goals of parenting: Your vertical goal is for them to be followers of Christ. Your horizontal goal if for them to be independent, moral-citizens of the country they live in.

**Wise Steps of Accountability When Helping Adult Children**

1. Seek to honor the Lord overall (2 Cor. 5:9)
	1. That is trusting him that God is our savior, and we are not the savior of our children.
	2. That is responding to our adult children in a way that is Christ like.
	3. That is refusing to facilitate in sinful living when aware of it.
2. Prioritize Us, as a Marriage (Gen. 2:24)
	1. No matter the needs of our adult children, we must continue to understand that our marriage is more important than the care of our adult children. If our marriage isn't thriving, our care to our adult children is unstable.
3. Protect each other (Eph. 5:29, 32)
	1. Our adult children are not able to speak about us nor our spouses in rude, disrespectful, or accusatory ways. We must know that our spouses have our back, and we have theirs.
	2. Such talk is immediately wrong and never accepted.
4. Be clear about the expectations of what we can and cannot do
	1. These expectations may include a rental contract
	2. This may include how much we can babysit and how much we cannot
	3. This most certainly includes sinful living while under our roof (i.e., alcohol, drugs, immorality, inconsiderateness).
	4. We believe in the doctrine of human responsibility, and will not enable, coddle, or abandon our adult children. But they must take ownership of their actions.
5. We will not allow our adult children to make our homes chaotic
	1. Our adult children must know that we want to serve them, but they are not able to create a chaotic home due to their life decisions.
		1. This includes who comes over, bedtimes, wake times, and general contribution to the home.
		2. This includes needs and last minute requests that were preventable and foreseeable.
	2. God is a God of order, and for us to help them long term we cannot maintain in an environment of crisis after crisis.
6. Put the Onus of Responsibility on Your Adult Child, While Showing them Where to Go for Resources
	1. We are not responsible for helping them complete job applications, taxiing them to appointments, or managing their own life. These are fundamental adult skills that they must develop.
	2. For us to complete these responsibilities on their behalf, we are often enabling and dulling the need for personal responsibility.
	3. We may utilize our resources to show them where to go, but they must follow through. However, we are not obligated to use our resources and if using our resources is unhelpful, we may withhold them.

# What should be expected of an adult child living at home*?[[5]](#footnote-5)*

* 1. Expect them to take financial responsibility. II Thess. 3:6-12
	2. Don’t allow them to be lazy while living under your roof. Eph. 4:28 Pr. 10:1,4-5
	3. Demand sexual purity. Heb. 13:4
	4. Do not tolerate substance abuse. I Th. 5:7 Pr. 23:20,30-31
	5. Make them pay a price for irresponsibility. Pr. 26:3
	6. Be willing to kick them out—when they have refused to submit to your authority, they have forfeited the right to stay in your home.

# Session 5—How should parents interact with adult children who are outside of the home?

# Greg E. Gifford, PhD

1. Relational Influence

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Two Options: Option #1**I don’t normally talk with my child until they need instruction or discipline, then I provide it (“**lifeguard model**”). | **Option #2**I provide instruction with them in the “**foxhole**,” but instruction is simply part of our time together—not the only occasion for it. |

1. How did Jesus relate to the disciples?
	1. Ate with them (Mark 14:17)
	2. Traveled with them (John 4:1-8)
	3. Slept where they slept (John 18:2)
	4. Goes to where they are (John 21:4).
	5. Jesus doesn’t invite them to stand in his courtyard while he sits on a throne, at a great distance. He is with his sheep. Jesus’ ministry helps provide a cue for parents.
2. In general, you have relational influence with those that you relate with in more than corrective ways.
	1. We know this at work: team building exercises.
	2. We know this in marriage: date nights.
	3. The same is true for our children! To have a platform on which to speak to them, you need to live life in proximity with them.
3. Warning!
	1. The most strained parental relationships will be with those who espouse the lifeguard model. As an adult child, you are still trying to force them to obey you.
	2. We strain relationships with our children by not having any relationship with them outside of our disciplinary relationship.
	3. In this way, we encourage disobedience by our children.
	4. We are not seeking to be our children’s best friend, we simply understand how influence works.
4. Role Clarity
	1. Not to obey, but to honor (Eph. 6:4a).
	2. I must be honorable and the natural result will be to honor.
	3. Relationship Possibilities:
		1. Acquaintance
		2. Friend
		3. Best Friend
5. Q&A
6. Plan of Discipleship Walk Through

# Parenting Plan of Discipleship

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Expectations:** | **Blessings** | **Consequences** |
| Integrity (Character Trait)*We Expect Honesty About Your Homework Status (The specific expectation)* | * You Gain The Trust Of Your Family,
* We Enjoy Communicating With You,
* God Is Please Through Your Words, And
* We Will Let You Have 1 Hour More Of Screen Time Within The Next Day.
 | * Lose The Trust Of Your Family,
* It’s Difficult For Others To Communicate With You,
* God Is Dishonored, And
* You Lose 1 Hour Of Screen Time Over The Next Day.
 |
| Self-Control (Character Trait)Integrity:*Turn in your cell phone before going to bed.* | * You are not distracted while sleeping,
* Clear expectations to your friends,
* You continue to be entrusted more time with phone, and
* You will receive your allowance this week.
 | * You are distracted instead of sleeping,
* Your friends don’t have clear expectations of what you’re doing or if you’re ignoring them,
* You will lose one hour the next day of using your phone, and
* You will not receive your allowance this week.
 |

# (10-Years OLD)

# Plan of Discipleship

# Objective

In 2024, Mom and I would like to see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ grow to be more like Jesus through character and competencies. So we have intentionally sought to clarify our goals for 2024, recognizing only God can make \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ into a man who fears God, and is like Jesus (Ps. 127:1-2).

# Character Traits

* **Friendliness**: Attempting to spend time with worthy acquaintances/friends by honoring and serving them (Prov. 18:24).
* **Fear of God**: Willingness to tell others “no” out of an understanding that he cannot make everyone happy, but must please the Lord (2 Cor. 5:9).

# Competencies

* **Time Management:** Wear a watch and keep track of responsibilities for the day.
* **Physical Exercise**: Lifting weights
* **Technology Self-Regulation**: On days when technology is permissible, limiting time with wisdom.
* **Completing Daily Checklist / Care for Dog**
* **Social Skills**: Keep conversation on track, speak in conversations, work on handshake.
* **Recycling**: Finn can earn money through recycling and jobs for hire around the house.

# Blessings and Consequences

* **Blessing**: Words of praise and affirmation for job well done. Sense of accomplishment and satisfaction of being a man of godly character. A practical way of rewarding \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with something he likes to do (i.e., ice cream, dining out, video games, one-on-one, Lego’s, etc.)
* **Consequence**: We believe that spankings will still correspond to acts of disobedience. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be popped on the mouth for all disrespectful/inappropriate speech. Pushups will be part of any whininess in increasing sets of ten. Technology will also be removed in increments of 20 minutes.

# The Easily Provoked Child

# *Lowcountry Biblical Counseling Center*  Tim Bryant

# [www.lcbcc.org](http://www.lcbcc.org)

Many children are often like dry gun-powder waiting to explode when they are given a command from a parent or authority. In my ministry of counseling parents, it is parents with children like these that come most often for counseling. Unfortunately, many of the biblical books on parenting do not take into account these extreme cases of child rebellion or give a specific detailed approach to handling these children. Whether the extreme rebellion is contributed by the child’s health, genetics, personality weakness/strengths is beyond the scope of this article. But, even so, faithfully following a specific biblical approach to dealing with the child’s rebellion is foundational to discerning any other diagnosis when dealing with heart issues like rebellion in a child. This must come first.

Some children seem to pose a greater challenge to submission. Some counselors have called these “strong willed”, the DSM IV may label these ODD (Oppositional Defiance Disorder). From a biblical view point we might say these children are “easily provoked” (1 Cor 13:5). Knowing this, we, as parents, must work very hard to not provoke the child by keeping ourselves under the Lord’s control. This is best done by following a clear, biblical training procedure. This training procedure should attempt to take into account the various ways our child typically attempts to manipulate us during the various stages of trying to bring him or her under our control. For each tactical maneuvering of the child, we must have a biblical counter planned ahead of time, or we may fall prey to hopelessness and anger.

To begin, sit your child down outside of an upset and share the following things with them.  (If things are so bad that the child is unwilling to talk through this, seek out a godly parent to sit down and help. This would be someone who can biblically counsel you and your child to understand and applying the following principles and procedures.):

* **Instruct Them Biblically** in what obedience is and why it is of utmost importance to learn to respond obediently to your directions. (Eph 6: 2-3; Heb 12: 6 – For more read Tedd Tripp’s book, Shepherding a Child’s Heart on the “Circle of Blessing” Concept.)
* **Identity and Discuss** with the child their “High Risk Situations”. Ask them, “Do you agree that there are times you do well at obeying my instructions and at other times you really struggle?” Identify any patterns of when they have the hardest time obeying; help the child recognize their pattern of disobedience (i.e. What are the common factors that influence the disobedience and what are they loving more than Christ.) Give a list of 3 or more specific ways that the disobedience is being expressed (i.e. sulking – head drops and pouting lip; fit of rage – drops on floor and squirms around, storms out of the room and slams door; speaks unwholesomely – “no one cares about me”, “I hate you”, “It’s not fair” etc.)
* **Share with them your goa**l. You desire to train them to respond obedient in those situations because currently they have trained themselves to respond disobedient in those situations. Explain the “Gumnazo” principle (pg. 61-64 – Lou Priolo, Heart of Anger). That is your goal! Help them acknowledge the benefits of such a goal and that God is good for desiring this.
* **Share your heart for them**. You could say, “If I win the battle for control, you win because I know best and love most; But if I give up and you win the battle for control, then you lose because you need training to obey God. The devil wants me to lose and you to win so in the end you are hurt.”
* **Explain a biblical training procedure** that you are going to train yourself, as a parent, to follow, especially in those “High Risk” Situations. Write it down to help you and them be clear of what will be repeated by you during their resistance to obey you.

**An Example Training Procedure for the Easily Provoked Child**

This may especially helpful in training an “Easily Provoked” (i.e. I Corinthians 13:5, “strong-willed”, agenda driven, "ODD" child). You are encouraged to modify this based on your child’s age. You are encouraged to get specific biblical help, as needed, in implementing this most effectively for your situation.

1. **PRAY** - I am first going to come and pray for you, asking Jesus to help you obey. I will in prayer with you rehearse that he loves most, knows most and so obedience to him is most wise. I may also rehearse in prayer any other helpful truths that will help you motivate obedience to Christ. I will pray that Spirit will open your eyes to the blessings of obedience and the pain of sin. This will be kept short.
2. **ROOM** - If you still choose not to humbly obey me, I will ask you if you will please go to your room where we can speak in private, in a more controlled environment. (If you do not go to your room on your own, I will try to gently guide you there. If I have to use physical force to get you there, I will try to be as gentle as possible because I do love you, but this will add to the consequences once you are brought under my control.)
3. **SCRIPTURE** – Once in the room, I am going to discuss with you you a relevant verse in the Bible. After we discuss it, you will have to write it out on a piece of paper and/or memorize. After this you may have discuss or write out answers to the questions off the “Change Journal” (i.e. I will ask you to share with me how you disobeyed God and why is it good to obey God – based on this verse.) (Here are a few example verses for you as a parent to be ready to discuss with you child: Phil 2: 14-15, 1 Pet 3:4, Eph 6: 2-3, 1 Cor 2: 9, and Prov 12:22. For more on how to correct our children effectively using the Scripture see Priolo’s book, *Teach Them Diligently*.)
4. **(+ / -** **)** If you refuse to do the Scripture assignment and place yourself under my control, I will have to give you a training consequence on top of the Scripture assignment. (A training consequence is a task I assign or a privilege I take away that closely relates with your disobedience action and attitude. For example, if you were fighting your sibling, I may require you to find a significant way to exercise love and service for them. If you became angry because you had to stop playing a computer, I may take away the privilege of computer for a length of time. I will probably need to tell you what the specific training consequence is after you have placed yourself under my control because if I told you immediate to your rebellion you would probably become angrier.)
5. **Spanking Procedure -** At this point, if you still remain disobedient and disrespectful, I will be following a spanking procedure (Unless the child is too old, then move to number 6. The following is a brief spanking procedure that seems especially useful for the easily provoked child.) I will give you two swats (if I have to hold you it will be 3), after which I will leave the room for 3 minutes to give you time to do the Scripture assignment and prepare yourself to obey. My communication to you will remain gentle and my attitude one of grief and compassion for you, not unfeeling or angry toward you. My swats will not be with my hand but with a neutral object that will sting but not bruise or cut, applied to the buttocks. If I come back and there has been no change then the two swat system will repeat. If you yell at me when I am leaving, when I return I will have to give you 2 extra swats. This 3 minute spanking interval will be repeated until you are brought under control. I love you, so I must win or you lose.

1. **Spiritual Brother**  - What if the child is too old to spank? You may have to call a spiritual brother to get involved as per Matt 18:16. Talk to a spiritual brother ahead of time. In extreme cases you may have this spiritual brother a “Johnny on the spot”; but, make sure you are doing your part as a parent by following your procedure so you do not needlessly wear him out. This spiritual brother may even need to host the child for a day or two as a training consequence. This time away however must not be a vacation. The child will need a list of things to accomplish while there. Minimally the child needs to use a tool like “Four Memo’s When Seeking Forgiveness” and write out a letter seeking change and forgiveness toward the parent and God. If after a few times of involving one spiritual brother, a spiritual authority from church will need to be involved, preferable like the pastor, as per Matt 18:17. As these one or more spiritual leaders get involved several sessions will probably be needed to closely examine the situation and the rebellion and give needed biblical directions to both parents and child, as he seeks to spiritually instruct and inspire needed change. The parent must follow the plan established faithfully.
2. **Civil Authorities** – In extreme cases, if you cannot bring an older child under control through a biblical procedure, you will have to involve the civil authorities. We want to do everything we can to avoid this, but in some cases this may not be possible.

As you apply the above, make sure you are doing all you can to not provoke through displaying an uncaring attitude, speaking or acting harshly, ect. If you do sin during the process, seek forgiveness right away from the Lord and your child. Your attitude must never show anger or a coldness toward the child, as this reveals that you are being provoked and thus the child senses they are winning the battle for control. Proverbs 26:4-5 warns us why not to respond this way to a fool, “lest he become wise in his own eyes”. So you must be more resolved to be good, than they are to be evil. (Romans 12:21)

1. William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](https://ref.ly/logosres/bdag?ref=Page.p+748&off=6009&ctx=+Aeschyl.%2c+Thu.%2b)%0a%E2%91%A0+~the+act+of+providing) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 748. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This is obviously not encouraging emotional hurtful or physically hurtful relationships. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Tim Bryant, Parenting by Faith, Lowcountry Biblical Counseling Center, 46-47. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Zillow, <https://www.zillow.com/rental-manager/market-trends/ca/>, accessed October 21, 2024. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Adapted from Jim Newheiser’s *You Never Stop Being a Parent* [↑](#footnote-ref-5)