

# The Lakeview Lamp

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." - Psalm 119:105*

**April 22, 2007**

## *Child Beating and Insufficient Discipline*

Steve Dewhirst

Perhaps one reason God made us with tough bottoms is to facilitate the "rearing" of children. *"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him"* (**Proverbs 22:15**).

That our Creator values discipline is manifest in His own dealing with us. *"For If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom a father does not chasten?"* (**Hebrews 12:7**). But while we recite the principle, we may not always understand it properly. The root idea behind *chastening* is *training*. Both God's chastening and man's is designed to teach a lesson, to make us better than we were previously. And so it is with our term *discipline*. The principle behind the word is *teaching*. We generally associate discipline with *punishment*, but that's missing the point. While discipline will often *include* punishment, the purpose for such must be to teach, instruct, and guide. It's with this concept firmly in place that we can rear our children *"in the training and admonition of the Lord"* (**Ephesians 6:4**). Proper discipline teaches respect for authority and for those in positions of authority. With consistent discipline children learn early-on that light is light, wrong is wrong, and that wrong-doing results in real consequences.

But proper discipline has fallen on hard times. Ours is a no-fault society. No one is responsible for anything. Everyone is a victim. As brother John Clark has astutely observed, "If we keep cutting off the consequences of folly, we will soon populate the earth with fools." Gangs of children roam the streets, deal drugs, sell their bodies, shoot each other...and the world nervously frets over ways to cure this terrible social ill. Even in "normal" families—yes, even among Christians—it's become commonplace to hear children speak disrespectfully to parents and to react with contempt to any form of restraint. Why?

At the risk of sounding simplistic, the answer should be obvious. The world has lost its respect for God and His word. People clamor for psychology rather than truth, for an "easy fix" rather than sound principles that require effort to employ. As godliness has waned, families have disintegrated, morals have disappeared, accountability has vanished. Too many homes are filled with too few fathers. And even homes with both parents, even Christian parents, have often bought into the lie that spanking and sound discipline are tantamount to child abuse. From listening to the world, parents have sought to become the buddies and pals of their children instead of giving children what they need most: authority figures instilling a legitimate system of values. As always, the world has failed. How ironic that society's rejection of a biblical standard in child-rearing—labeling it "abuse"—has resulted in unprecedented levels of real child abuse.

A common thread among many child abusers is *frustration*. In the absence of God-given Instructions, parents are at a loss in knowing how to deal with their own children. After trying all the psychological mind-games, diligently trying not to bruise the self-esteem of a humanist new age god-child, kids are still brats. Parents are frustrated at not being able to *reason* with their offspring. Could it possibly be that children are not yet equipped with the maturity to be *reasonable*, and for that cause parents must erect some absolutes? And yet we've been warned not to impose our values on children. What's a modern parent to do? Many parents have simply reached the breaking point. Not being able to take any more, they erupt with all the pent-

up fury of a Vesuvius. Children are beaten with fists, clubs, boards—whatever is handy. They are burned, choked, cut, drowned, or just abandoned. Parents even convince themselves that their children are the source of all their troubles, refusing to acknowledge their own procreative powers and duplicity in refusing to rear their progeny responsibly.

There's no excuse for child abuse. And there's no excuse for insufficient discipline. Either will destroy a child. He either learns to resent and despise authority, or he learns to disdain and mock It. Either way, he will be a child of rebellion. Either way, he learns to fight against all forms authority whether from parents, governments, or God. Parents who are abusive need desperately to repent, as do parents who neglect to discipline at all. Both are condemned by a lack of respect for God's word. What chance does any child have, reared outside the will of his Designer and Creator?



When children get on the wrong track, it's time to use the switch.

Children are like canoes: if not paddled they will drift *downstream* instead of going *upstream*.

A pat on the back will develop character if given young enough, often enough, low enough,  
and hard enough.

# Family News

**Mary Burnett** had a pneumonia shot this past week.

**Connie Cobern** still has bronchitis.

**Quinton Coppage** starts a liquid diet tonight to prepare for a doctor visit Wednesday.

**Metty Fain** is in Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN; 37148.

**Barry Fultz** had a good check-up and for the most part received a good report, but there are still some unresolved issues. He will return in six months. Visit [caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn](http://caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn) for more details.

**Sandlyn Fultz** received good results from several scans this past week. Visit [caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn](http://caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn) for more details.

**Janet Hosale**, Pauline Coppage's niece, has liver cancer and is having surgery Monday.

**Bruce Jones**, Karen Moore's dad, is still in CCU at St. Thomas Hospital.

**Fran Pickens** is doing better.

**Cotton Read** is still having trouble breathing and sleeping. **Nancy** is fighting allergies.

**Ruth Thomas'** (mentioned last week) hip surgery has been postponed.

New Reports: Robert Nichols.

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: None known.

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*"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).*