

[Proverbs 23:12-25](#)

My son, if your heart is wise, then my heart will be glad. Proverbs 23:15

"If you can't hear it through the ear, you'll feel it through the rear." I heard (and felt) that proverb when I got spankings as a boy. Did my parents hate me and want me to end up miserable? No, they loved me and wanted me to end up happy. Sinful folly leads to sadness and death; holy wisdom leads to gladness and life. Godly discipline drives that message home.

A happy family is not where parents draw no boundaries and impose no punishments. Out-of-control homes are miserable. A happy home is where parents are firm, fair, and loving, like our heavenly Father. "The Lord disciplines those he loves... The Father of our spirits ... disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness" (Hebrews 12:6-10).

Good parents must punish at times, but they must not be harsh or hot-tempered. "Fathers do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged" (Colossians 3:21). Don't vent your anger; seek your children's wellbeing. "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Discipline has a healthy effect only in affectionate homes where hugs outnumber spankings, where big doses of encouragement accompany smaller amounts of scolding.

Loving instruction backed by discipline helps children grow up to be wise and happy. When that happens, the parents are also happy. "Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul" (Proverbs 29:17).

PRAYER--Dear Father, may our home shine with love that reflects your love, and correction that imparts your wisdom. Train us for eternal happiness in Christ. Amen.