



# The Burning Bush—Online article archive

## The Bible and corporal punishment



Such has been the campaign waged against the method of discipline set out in God's Word, that many Christians have foolishly repudiated it. The Principal of Covenant Independent Christian School in Newtownabbey made the following comment in The Belfast Telegraph of 22/11/00: "But we find that other means of discipline work quite well and personally I could not envisage corporal punishment being used here." One has to ask why such a deprecating tone is adopted by some Christians when speaking of corporal punishment? The answer is because of the pressure that comes from the propaganda machines of anti-God organisations that are determined to outlaw every element of a God-ordained ethos in our society. Christians ought not to surrender by default that which God has instituted. The present level of lawlessness in homes, schools and on the streets stems directly from the abandoning of God's principles of enforcing discipline.

As believers in God's Word, it is an essential element of our Christian faith that sin will be followed by God's judgment. I must not only teach to my children this truth but put the principle of it into practice for their benefit. They must learn this by experience as well as by instruction. I must say to them in the words of Elihu, Job's adviser, "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." Job 36:18. We must warn our children and all men generally of the smiting by God's hand that follows disobedience.

### The rod commended by God

The use of the rod as a means of discipline is commended by God's Word. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Proverbs 22:15. "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die." Proverbs 23:13. "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." Proverbs 29:15. As we said in our interview with BBC reporter, Wendy Austin (much to her chagrin), these words ought to be posted above every supermarket, since they are the places where their truth is most commonly demonstrated.

It must be stated that it is no expression of true love to withhold such correction. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." Proverbs 13:24. The use of the rod of correction is further sanctioned by God's example. "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation." Isaiah 10:5. "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Hebrews 12:5-6. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Revelation 3:19.

In my experience (I am the father of 6 children and have 9 grandchildren) where such discipline is exercised as God intended, there is a contented and happy child. Such contentment is not the fruit of the barbarity our critics accuse us of. The benefits of God's physical



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chastenings are lauded in God's Word. "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word." Psalm 119:67. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." Psalm 119:71. "I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Psalm 119:75.

The flood of expulsion of unruly schoolchildren (20 per day according to media reports), the early retirement by stressed-out teachers, the scenes of screaming tantrums so common in supermarkets etc. are all the result of the so-called "modern method." Society is paying for the folly of abandoning God's method of discipline in the currency of increased street crime and the utter disregard for life that is evident everywhere.

I call upon Christians to get on their knees and pray that God will remove McGuinness as He removed Haman, a man who used his position of authority under Ahasuerus, to put forth his hand against God's people and paid the price for his pride and arrogance.

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD." Isaiah 54:17.