

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

Freedom is a good thing. You can dress casually to come here because our church does not have any dress code. Some churches expect guys to wear a full-suit and ladies to put on a long dress on Sunday. Some denominations require their pastors to wear a robe. I may faint on the podium if I do that in the summer! However, freedom can lead to indulgence if there is no restraint. Let us use some wild imagination here. Suppose there is no traffic light or stop-sign on the streets. There is no speed limit either. In fact, there is no speedometer in your car! It will definitely create big chaos. Worse still, there is no policeman to call for help when accidents occur. In addition, there is no rule to enforce and no justice system to prosecute wrongdoers. What kind of society will that be? As you can see, the law-and-order system exists to ensure everyone's well-being. We will study the topic of discipline from Proverbs. Discipline is more than punishment. Discipline is to use intervention to foster positive changes. That is why the Department of Jail is called the Department of Correction. It is hoped that prison time will discourage people from doing wrong and encourage offenders to do the right things. Therefore, discipline is a good thing. Usually we think of teaching little kids when we mention discipline. We equip parents with Biblical principles to bring up their children. However, every believer is a child of the Heavenly Father no matter how old we are. God will discipline us when necessary. As such, we will level the playing field today. All of us need to listen to what God has to say about discipline.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

## 1. 管教反映疼愛 Discipline Reflects Love

First and foremost, discipline reflects love. If you forget everything else you learn today, I hope you can at least keep this point in mind. Proverbs 3:11-12 tell us: **11 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, 12 because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.** We see this father-son talk to convey wisdom again. The word "discipline" here can mean chastening or correction, whereas the word "rebuke" refers to a verbal warning. Further action will be needed if a spoken threat does not achieve the result. God will not hesitate to discipline those He loves. You should question your relationship with God if He does not discipline you when you sin. It is just like you have no control over your neighbor's kids. All earthly fathers should discipline their children like the Heavenly Father disciplines us. We love our children so much that we cannot ignore them when they go astray. The author of Hebrews quotes this passage and further elaborates on God's discipline. Hebrews 12:10-11 read: **10 Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. 11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.** God disciplines us so that we can grow in His holiness, righteousness and peace. It is a process to shape us to be more like Christ. It is like you trim off tree branches that grow toward

undesirable directions. We change our wrong attitude and actions to pursue God's virtues. Hence, we should submit to God's discipline. We will learn nothing if we only focus on the discomfort. But if we can associate our transgression with God's punishment and love, then we will mature in our godliness. We should discipline our children with the same goals. We disapprove their wrongdoing so that they will avoid a bigger mistake and forming a bad habit. We show them love in the process. If no love is felt, then the discipline is carried out incorrectly. Many of you grew up in a traditional home like me. My parents are not Christians and so the way they disciplined us siblings was far from Biblical. I have to admit that I deserved the punishments they gave me in most cases. However, very often my parents would swing their bat before giving me a warning. The result was strikes – but on my body! Do I know my parents love me? No doubt! But in those moments I only sensed my pain and their disappointment. Some so-called experts advocate strongly against discipline. They equate discipline with child abuse. They warn that children may hate their parents after they grow up if they are disciplined. Our God is much wiser than any child specialist. God's way is the right way and the best way. He never confuses Himself about hating sins and loving sinners. We as parents love our children, but we hate their wrongdoings. Discipline is done effectively if children can distinguish the two notions. Parents can hold and kiss their kids to reassure their love after discipline is administered. To older children, parents can express their affection verbally afterward. We love them so much that we will bring them back to the right path before it is too late.

## 2. 管教需要工具 Discipline Requires Tools

Discipline reflects love. Secondly, discipline requires the use of suitable tools. We mentioned the two common tools earlier. Let us consider discipline using words first. Proverbs 17:10 says: **A rebuke impresses a man of discernment more than a hundred lashes a fool.** Physical punishment will not be necessary if a verbal reproof can address the issue. That answer a question whether spanking is the only way of discipline. One of my sisters-in-law said that she never had to spank her daughter when she was small. The mentioning of smacking would scare her to death. She would quickly admit her misbehavior and ask mom for forgiveness. But an unwise person will never learn a lesson even with chastisement. Some people bet on their chance that they will not be caught when they speed, even though they got many tickets already. A stricter means is sometimes needed on such stubborn people. There was an Egyptian maxim that says: "Boys have their ears on their backsides; they listen when they are beaten." In general, boys are more adventurous and eager to test the limits. Inflicting suitable amount of pain will etch the rules in their mind. All 50 states do not forbid physical punishment at home as long as it is done in a way that does not cause injury. Each state enacts specific laws to define what is considered reasonable. Therefore, parents, your government endorses your spanking. The next advice is in Proverbs 23:13 – **Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die.** Spanking should be administered with an instrument. In that regard, spanking with bare hand is undesirable. You do not want your child to be afraid of your hands! We use our hands to show care. The verse implies that parents should use just enough force to get the message across. They should calm down before giving the whack. Let me share with you my failure. When my boys were

small, we used a soup ladle as a spanking rod. Once my younger son did something bad. I gave him a good smack. The ladle split into a few pieces. Both he and I were shocked. I quickly asked him for forgiveness and I promised that I would never hit him like that again. I even saved a fragment of the ladle as a reminder. That takes us to a usual question: what is the suitable age range for spanking? Focus on the Family suggests ages 2 to 6. The organization also introduces other alternatives. Distraction is effective to toddlers. For instance, what if they bang a TV remote on a coffee table? You can use a toy as an exchange. Time-out is a good way for a child to cool down. You ask the kid to sit at a corner for a few minutes, then you explain what was wrong afterward. Two other tricks work well for children of all ages. The first one is called “natural consequences.” Say a child does not want to eat dinner. Then, you just let him go to bed on an empty stomach. He will not die by skipping one meal! But he will be eager to eat anything the next morning. Another method is “removal of privileges.” For example, you withhold a favorite toy for a period of time. For teenagers, taking away their car-keys are worse than chopping their legs off, and confiscating their phones will be like putting them in jail! When you think about it, God disciplines us the same ways. Remember the lessons from the Israel kings? God disciplined them by sending prophets to warn them. When the Israelites did not listen, God inflicted pain on them through foreign enemies, He removed blessings of safety and prosperity and He gave them time-out by exile. They lost freedom, property and health. God deals with us as He sees fit. Our wisest choice is to turn away from sins and turn back to Him.

### 3. 管教重建智慧 Discipline Restores Wisdom

Discipline reflects love and it requires suitable tools. Lastly, discipline restores wisdom. It is like a medical treatment that restores health. You will feel bad before you feel good. Let us look at Proverbs 22:15 – **Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far away from him.** The Chinese say sometimes it is necessary to beat a child to clear up his mind. It sends a strong message that breaking the rules will have its consequence. The image of spanking to chase away folly makes me think of an old-fashioned way to do laundry. People brought their clothes to a river. They soaked up dirty clothes and laid them on a rock. Then they used a rod to pat them to drive out the dirt. Nowadays, detergents and machines work the same way. A stronger force is needed to clean up stubborn stains. Hence, a more vigorous means is necessary to deal with a serious offense. But parents need to distinguish between carelessness and defiance when disciplining a child. Toddlers will most likely get messy when they first feed themselves. They need time to learn how to use utensils. However, a kid who intentionally drops food on the floor for fun must be corrected. I often advise young parents not to be fooled by their children. They are way smarter than their ages may indicate. Once my wife was shocked to find my older son gazing at a mirror to practice how to fake his cry. That little cunning guy! It was a solid proof that we are all natural-born sinners! Then let us turn to 15:32 – **He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding.** The difference between the wise and the fool is in their response toward discipline. A fool will become bitter and resentful if he only focuses on the pain and loss. He will harden his heart furthermore. He may figure out some crafty ways to outsmart the system next time. Some famous people

issued a public apology after they were caught in their crimes. They felt embarrassed for being exposed instead of feeling sorry for their acts. But a wise person will learn from his mistakes. He does not only get over the incident but he also grows wiser. After all, a person must admit his fault before he understands that he needs to change. We can also look at 10:17 – **He who heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray.** Here we see the two contrasting attitudes toward discipline again. Whether we accept or reject discipline will shape a different pathway of life. It takes humility to admit one's mistake. It takes courage and determination to make change. However, the author says those who ignore correction will "lead other astray." A leader who overlooks warnings will guide others to the wrong path. We see that in the news often. One person's foolishness and stubbornness can cause even irreversible damages to many. But at least he himself will travel to the wrong direction. A story was told about a Belgium woman who planned to drive to a train station 90 miles away. She ended up going 800 miles to another country! It was because she trusted her GPS completely. She was supposed to head north, but she went to the south instead. She also ignored common sense that it should not take so long to reach her destination. Actually, she noticed that the language on the road-signs changes from French, German and finally to Croatian. She just kept on driving anyway. In general, ladies have a stronger sense of direction. Men are usually too prideful to stop and ask for advice. That speaks for my family too! But in this case, the woman relied on an instrument and ignored the facts. Failure to heed warning will lead to one bad decision after another. Wise people know when to stop at a warning signal. They evaluate the situation and return to the right way.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

Discipline is to use intervention to foster positive changes. God disciplines us because He loves us. We have to treat our children the same way. No one enjoys discipline. But sometimes it is the last resort for us to grow in our wisdom. In closing, let me summarize what we have learned into the five steps of discipline. First, we must state the rules upfront. A child being punished for eating candies before dinner will feel unfairly treated if he does not know the rule. God's requirements are clearly written in the Bible. We cannot excuse that we do not know His commands. Second, we have to reiterate the warning. We give children a final chance to turn back. God is far more gracious than us. He alerted His people over and over again of the upcoming judgment. If the wrongdoers confess and are willing to change, the goal of gaining wisdom has been accomplished. Otherwise, we need to proceed to the next step. Third, name the offense. Children have to understand why they are disciplined. God stated His reasons in case His people were still in the fog. Fourth, execute the punishment. Penalty must be administered when there is no repentance. Children need to know that their parents are serious about what they say. God preserves His integrity when He carries out discipline. Fifth, restore the offender. This is where love is once again emphasized. We tell wayward children that we discipline them because we love them. No wrongdoing is great enough to cut off the relationship. However, it may take time for a prodigal son to come home. I hope these five steps will help us become wiser parents of our earthly children and wiser children of the Heavenly Father.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

自由是一件好事。我們的教會沒有任何服裝的要求，你可以隨意裝著來這裡聚會。一些教會規定男士要穿全套西裝，女士要穿長裙。一些宗派也要求牧師要穿長袍。如果我在夏天這樣做，我可能會在講台上暈倒！然而，沒有約束的自由會導致放縱。讓我們發揮一下瘋狂的想像力。假設街道上沒有紅綠燈或停車標誌，也沒有速度限制。事實上，你的車裡根本沒有速度表！馬路上一定會一片混亂。更糟糕的是，發生交通意外時沒有警察可以尋求幫助。此外，沒有任何交通規則，也沒有執法的制度。那會是一個什麼樣的社會？司法制度是為了保障每個人的利益。今天我們會從箴言看管教這個課題。管教不只是處罰。管教是透過干預來達致正面的改變。因此監獄部被稱為懲教部。政府希望坐牢能夠警告人別做壞事，並鼓勵罪犯改過自新。因此，管教是一件好事。當我們提到管教時，通常我們會想到教導小孩子。我們以聖經的原則裝備父母養育小孩。然而，無論我們年齡多大，我們都是天父的孩子。在必要時，神會管教我們。因此，我們今天都在同一個水平來學習。我們所有人都需要聆聽神對管教的看法。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

## 1. 管教反映疼愛 Discipline Reflects Love

首先，管教反映疼愛。如果你忘記今天所學到的其他事情，我希望你至少能記住這一點。箴言 3:11-12 告訴我們：**11 我兒，你不可輕看耶和華的管教，也不可厭煩他的責備；12 因為耶和華所愛的，他必責備，正如父親責備所喜愛的兒子。**我們再次看到父親向兒子傳達智慧的教育方式。這裡的「管教」這個字可以理解為懲戒或糾正，而「責備」是指口頭警告。如果口頭警告沒有達到效果，你便需要採取進一步行動。神會毫不猶豫地管教祂所愛的人。如果你犯罪時沒有得到神的管教，你要懷疑你與神的關係。這就像你無法干涉鄰居的孩子一樣。所有地上的父親都應該像天父管教我們一樣管教自己的兒女。我們非常愛我們的孩子，因此我們不能眼巴巴看著他們誤入歧途而置之不理。希伯來書的作者引用了這段經文，進一步解釋神的管教。希伯來書 12:10-11 說：**10 生身的父都是暫隨己意管教我們；惟有萬靈的父管教我們，是要我們得益處，使我們在他的聖潔上有分。11 凡管教的事，當時不覺得快樂，反覺得愁苦；後來卻為那經練過的人結出平安的果子，就是義。**神管教我們，是要使我們能夠更多學習祂的聖潔、公義和平安。這是一個塑造我們更像基督的過程。這就像你修

剪樹枝，使樹長得更好。我們改變錯誤的態度和行為去追求神的美善。因此，我們應該順服神的管教。如果我們只把焦點放在管教帶來的不舒服，我們就等於沒有學到教訓。但如果我們能把自己的過錯與神的懲罰和愛聯繫起來，那麼我們就會更加成熟和敬虔。我們應該用同樣的目標來管教我們的孩子。我們否定他們的錯誤行為，以免他們犯更大的錯誤並養成壞習慣。我們在這個過程中向他們表達愛。如果沒有感受到愛，那麼可能管教的方式不對。我們中的許多人都像我一樣在傳統的家庭中長大。我的父母不是基督徒，所以他們沒有根據聖經的方式來管教我們兄弟姐妹。我必須承認，在大多數情況下，他們給我的懲罰是我應得的。然而，很多時候父母會在毫無警告之前便打下來。我知道我的父母愛我嗎？當然！但在那一刻，我只感覺到我的痛楚和他們的失望。一些所謂的專家強烈反對管教。他們將管教等同於虐待兒童。他們警告說，如果孩子們受到管教，他們長大後可能會恨他們的父母。我們的神比任何兒童專家都更有智慧。神的道路是正確的道路，也是最好的道路。祂從不混淆恨惡罪和愛罪人。作為父母，我們也應該愛自己的孩子，但厭惡他們的錯誤行為。如果孩子們能夠區分這兩個概念，那麼管教就是有效的。在管教後，父母可以抱抱和親吻孩子，重申對他們的愛。對於年齡較大的孩子，家長可以事後以口頭方式表達他們的愛。我們非常愛小孩，因此會在為時已晚之前將他們帶回正途。

## 2. 管教需要工具 Discipline Requires Tools

管教反映疼愛。其次，管教需要使用適合的工具。前面我們提到了兩個常用工具。讓我們首先考慮使用言語來管教。箴言 17:10 說：**一句責備話深入聰明人的心，強如責打愚昧人一百下。**如果口頭的警戒可以達到效果，則不需要體罰。這就回答了一個常見的問題，打屁股是否唯一的管教方式。我太太的一位姐姐說，她的女兒小時候從來不用打屁股的。一提到拿棍子，她就嚇死。她便趕緊向媽媽認錯並請求原諒。但是沒有智慧的人即使受到懲罰也不願汲取教訓。有些人拿了很多罰單後照樣超速，以為下一次不會被抓到。有時需要更嚴格的手段來對付這種頑固份子。埃及有一句格言說：「男孩的耳朵長在屁股上；不打不聽。」一般來說，男孩比較喜歡冒險和挑戰權威。施加適量的痛苦會在他們的腦海中留下深刻的印象。美國的所有 50 個州都不禁止在家中進行體罰，只要不會造成身上的傷害。每個州都制定了具體的法律來定義什麼是合理的刑罰。因此，父母們，政府支持你們打屁股。下一個建議是在箴言 23:13：**不可不管教孩童；你用杖打他，他必不至於死。**打屁股時應該使用一個工具。這樣看來，用手打屁股便是不理想。你不希望你的孩子害怕你的手！我們用雙手來達關愛。這節經文暗示父母應該適可而止。他們應該在打之前冷靜下來。讓我與你分享我的失敗經驗。當我的孩子們還小的時候，我們用湯勺作為刑杖。有一次我的小兒子做了壞事，我打了他一下。湯勺裂開分成幾片。他和我都嚇

壞了。我馬上請求兒子的原諒，我保證我再也不會那樣打他了。我甚至保存那一塊碎片作為提醒。這就帶到一個常見的問題：打屁股的合適年齡範圍是多少？美國愛家協會建議是 2 至 6 歲。那個組織還介紹其他的管教方法。轉移注意力對幼兒很有效。例如，他們在茶几上敲擊電視遙控器。你可以用玩具跟他交換。暫停是讓孩子冷靜下來的好方法。你讓孩子在角落裡坐幾分鐘，然後解釋出了什麼問題。另外兩招對任何年齡的孩子都很有效。第一個被稱為「承擔後果」。如果孩子不想吃晚飯，那你就讓他餓肚子睡覺。他不會因為不吃一頓飯而餓死的！第二天早上你給他甚麼他肯定都會吃。另一種方法是「拿走特權」。例如，暫時充公小孩最喜歡的玩具。對於青少年來說，拿走車子的鑰匙便等於砍斷他的腿，沒收手機比坐牢更痛不欲生！想想看，神也以同樣的方式管教我們。還記得以色列君王的教訓嗎？神差派先知警告他們。當以色列人不聽時，神通過外敵使他們受苦，祂拿走了他們平安和繁榮，並藉著流亡來給他們一個暫停。他們失去了自由、財產和健康。神以祂認為最適當的方式對待我們。我們最聰明的選擇是轉離罪惡並轉向祂。

### 3. 管教重建智慧 Discipline Restores Wisdom

管教反映疼愛，管教也需要用適合的工具。最後，管教能夠重建智慧。這就像治病能夠恢復健康一樣。一開始你會覺得難受，後來才會覺得舒服。讓我們看看箴言 22:15：**愚蒙迷住孩童的心，用管教的杖可以遠遠趕除。**中國人說有時候要打醒孩子。懲罰傳遞一個強烈的信息，違反規則會有後果。打屁股趕走愚昧這幅圖畫讓我想到古老年代洗衣服的方式。人們把衣服帶到河邊。他們把髒衣服浸濕，放在一塊石頭上，然後他們用一根棒子拍打把污垢打出來。如今，洗衣液和機器代替了人手。清除頑固的污漬需要更大的力量。因此，嚴重的罪也需要更強而有力的手段來處理。但是父母在管教孩子時需要區分不小心和故意。小孩子剛開始學習吃飯時一定會弄得亂七八糟。他們需要時間來練習如何使用餐具。但是，如果他們貪玩故意將食物丟在地上時便必須糾正。我經常勸告年輕的父母不要被孩子欺騙。他們比我們想像的要聰明得多。有一次，我的太太很驚訝地發現我的大兒子盯著鏡子練習如何裝哭。那個狡猾的小傢伙！再次證明我們都是天生的罪人！接下來我們看 15:32：**棄絕管教的，輕看自己的生命；聽從責備的，卻得智慧。**有智慧和愚昧的人的區別在於他們對管教的反應。愚昧的人只關心他受到的痛苦和損失，因此他們的心中會充滿苦毒和怨恨。他的心便漸漸剛硬起來。下次他可能會想出一些巧妙的方法來鑽漏洞。一些名人在犯案被抓之後公開道歉。他們是因為被曝光而感到尷尬，而不是為自己的行為感到難過。但有智慧的人會從錯誤中汲取教訓。他不會把事情忘記，而是希望從中增長智慧。畢竟，一個人必須先承認自己的錯誤，然後才能明白自己需要改變。我們也可以看 10:17：**謹守訓誨的，乃在生命的道上；違棄責**

備的，便失迷了路。在這裡，我們再次看到對管教的兩種截然不同的態度。接受或拒絕管教將塑造不同的人生道路。承認錯誤需要謙卑的態度。改變需要勇氣和決心。然而，作者說那些不願被糾正的人將會「失迷了路」。這個形容也可以翻譯成「誤導其他人」。忽視警告的領袖會引導他人走錯路。我們經常在新聞中看到這一點。一個人的愚昧和固執甚至可以對許多人造成不可逆轉的損失。但至少他自己會走錯方向。有一個故事是關於一名比利時的婦女。她本來要開車 90 英里去火車站。她最終去了 800 英里以外的另一個國家！那是因為她完全相信她的導航儀。她本來應該向北走，但她卻向南走。她也不去想為何開了這麼久還沒有到達目的地。事實上，她注意到路標上的語言從法語、德語，最後變成了克羅地亞語。她不顧一切繼續開車。一般來說，女士的方向感比較強。男人有時候太要面子，不好意思停下來問路。我們家就是那樣！但這位女士依賴儀器，而忽略事實。不注意警告將導致一個又一個錯誤的決定。有智慧的人看到警告訊號便知道該停下來。他們會評估情況並返回正確的道路。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

管教是透過干預來達致正面的改變。神管教我們是因為祂愛我們。我們必須以同樣的心態對待我們的孩子。沒有人喜歡被管教。但有時管教是我們增長智慧的唯一途徑。最後，讓以管教的五個步驟作為總結。第一，我們必須先**說明規則**。一個孩子如果事先不知道吃晚餐前不可以吃糖果，他被處罰時一定會覺得很冤枉。神的要求在聖經裡寫得很清楚。我們不能編藉口說我們不知道祂的命令。第二，我們必須**重申警告**。我們給孩子最後一次回頭的機會。神比我們恩慈得多。祂一次又一次地提醒祂的子民即將到來的審判。如果犯錯的人知錯並願意改變，那麼灌輸智慧的目的就達到了。否則，我們需要進行下一步。第三，**指出錯誤**。孩子必須清楚知道為什麼他們會被處罰。神也指出祂管教的原因，以免人們仍然一頭霧水。第四，**執行懲罰**。如果沒有悔改，就必須施行懲罰。小孩需要知道父母是說到做到的。神在執行管教時也保持祂的信實。第五，**挽回罪人**。這一點再次強調愛。我們告訴不聽話的孩子，我們管教他是因為我們愛他。沒有任何錯誤的行為能把關係切斷。然而，要一個浪子願意回頭可能需要時間。我希望這五個步驟能幫助我們成為更有智慧的父母和天父更有智慧的兒女。