

**Sermon Series: The Strong Family—6/4/2000—Lord of Life Lutheran**

**Title:** “Shaping the Will with Wisdom”

**Text:** Hebrews 12: 2-13

**Introduction:** *Illus.: Socrates—Desire for Wisdom*

**Theme:** Whether you and I are on the giving or the receiving end of training and discipline, our goal should always be the shaping of the mind, will, and heart to reflect the attitude and heart of Jesus in the conduct which we undertake.

***Distinguishing between crushing and shaping the will***

- **Abuse is unfair, extreme, degrading, and misrepresents the Heavenly Father (9)**
  1. **ILLUS.: SHAPING OR SMASHING THE WILL**
  2. When hurt we strike out with words/actions, we misrepresent the Heavenly Father to child— *eternal abuse*
  3. Remember that there is forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration possible even when we failed (cross and tomb)
- **Discipline is fair, fitting, and respects the child as a redeemed creation of the Heavenly Father (2)**
- **Biblical models for wisely shaping the will for wisdom**
  1. **START EARLY**
    - “Discipline your son while there is hope, and do not desire his death.” **Prov. 19: 18**
    - “He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently.” **Prov. 13: 24**
      - a. **Diligently** = “early in the morning” “early in life/career”
  2. **STAY BALANCED**
    - God does not want us to “**lose heart**”(3) and neither should we want our child to either( **Col 3: 21**)
  3. **STAY CONSISTENT**
    - “Every good thing ...is from above, coming down from the Father...with whom there is no variation” **Jm1:17**
    - A consistent plan:
      - a. Make sure the rules and consequences are appropriate and know beforehand
      - b. Discipline privately and explain the violation and reason for the consequences
      - c. Administer the discipline devoid of anger
      - d. Out of grace and mercy reassure your child of your love and concern for them after the discipline

***Shaped and shaping with Godly Wisdom***

- **Setting your eyes in the right place (vs. 2)**
  1. **STAY FOCUSED** on Jesus who made you *who* you are (architect)
    - **ILLUS.: DISCIPLINED MIND**
  2. **LOOK FORWARD** to Jesus’ plan of *what* you will be (*He who began a good work in you will complete it.* **Ph1:6**)
  3. **REMAIN FAITHFUL** because of *whose* you are---no matter the circumstances you endure
- **Follow the example the Heavenly Father and His Son have already laid down**
  1. The Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus, showed the perfect balance of role and relationship
    - Jesus understood the Father’s purpose for him (“*My will is to do the will of Him who sent Me.*” **John 6:38**)
    - beyond the cross and shame was the resurrection and the exaltation to glory (3)
  2. View discipline for what it is rather than what it is not
    - **For parents:** See discipline as an encouragement of love rather than a punishment of fear (4)
      - a. **ILLUS.: DISCIPLINE WITH LOVE**
      - b. “*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment*” **1Jh 4: 18**
    - **For children:** Not “*dis*”-ing the discipline but making the most of the training as a gift from God
      - a. “*It is because of discipline that you endure. . .it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.*” (7,11)
        - a. Honoring God in your life by honoring your parents’ God-given authority in your life
        - b. “*Shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits and live?*” (9)
- **Power and perspective to move beyond the present moment of discipline**
  1. **PRAYER IS A POWERFUL LIFE-LINE** in the midst of the storm
    - “Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble.” (12)
    - Struggling in parenting or chaffing as a child--**get down on your knees** and **fold your hands** to ask God
    - When parent and child gather in prayer about a disagreement, reconciliation and new direction result (heal,13)
  2. **TAKING A HEAVENLY MINDED VIEW** of your life’s journey
    - In training and following remember it is about keeping it between the eternal “white lines”  
“*The gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.*” **Matt 7: 13,14**
    - Remembering that shaping the will is only for a short time but it has such enduring results (10)

## Hebrews 12:2-13

<sup>2</sup>Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup>For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart. <sup>4</sup>You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; <sup>5</sup>and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; <sup>6</sup>FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." <sup>7</sup>It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? <sup>8</sup>But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. <sup>9</sup>Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? <sup>10</sup>For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. <sup>11</sup>All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. <sup>12</sup>Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, <sup>13</sup>and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

### DESIRE FOR WISDOM

There's a story about a proud young man who came to Socrates asking for knowledge. He walked up to the muscular philosopher and said, "O great Socrates, I come to you for knowledge."

Socrates recognized a pompous numbskull when he saw one. He led the young man through the streets, to the sea, and chest deep into water. Then he asked, "What do you want?" "Knowledge, O wise Socrates," said the young man with a smile. Socrates put his strong hands on the man's shoulders and pushed him under. Thirty seconds later Socrates let him up. "What do you want?" he asked again. "Wisdom," the young man sputtered, "O great and wise Socrates." Socrates crunched him under again. Thirty seconds passed, thirty-five. Forty. Socrates let him up. The man was gasping. "What do you want, young man?" Between heavy, heaving breaths the fellow wheezed, "Knowledge, O wise and wonderful..." Socrates jammed him under again Forty seconds passed. Fifty. "What do you want?" "Air!" he screeched. "I need air!" "When you want knowledge as you have just wanted air, then you will have knowledge." M. Littleton in Moody Monthly, June, 1989, p. 29

### SHAPING OR SMASHING THE WILL

A young man accompanied his fiancée when they met with her pastor to sign some pre-wedding ceremony papers. While filling out the form, the groom read aloud a few questions. When he got to the last one, which read: "Are you entering this marriage at your own will?" he looked over at his fiancée and said, "Put down 'Yes.'" 5-93 Reader's Digest, p. 138

### DISCIPLINED MIND

Lanny Bassham, Olympic gold-medalist in small-bore rifle competition, tells what concentration does for his marksmanship: "Our sport is controlled non-movement. We are shooting from 50 meters--over half a football field--at a bull's eye three-quarters the size of a dime. If the angle of error at the point of the barrel is more than .005 of a millimeter (that is five one-thousandths), you drop into the next circle and lose a point. So we have to learn how to make everything stop. I stop my breathing. I stop my digestion by not eating for 12 hours before the competition. I train by running to keep my pulse around 60, so I have a full second between beats--I have gotten it lower, but found that the stroke-volume increased so much that each beat really jolted me. You do all of this and you have the technical control. But you have to have some years of experience in reading conditions: the wind, the mirage. Then you have the other 80% of the problems--the mind. Sports Illustrated, August 2, 1976, pp. 31-35, quoted in How to Profit from Bible Reading, I. L. Jensen, Moody Press, p. 80

### DISCIPLINED WITH LOVE

Out of parental concern and a desire to teach our young son responsibility, we require him to phone home when he arrives at his friend's house a few blocks away. He began to forget, however, as he grew more confident in his ability to get there without disaster befalling him. The first time he forgot, I called to be sure he had arrived. We told him the next time it happened, he would have to come home. A few days later, however, the telephone again lay silent, and I knew if he was going to learn, he would have to be punished. But I did not want to punish him!! I went to the telephone, regretting that his great time would be spoiled by his lack of contact with his father. As I dialed, I prayed for wisdom. "Treat him like I treat you," the Lord seemed to say. With that, as the telephone rang one time, I hung up. A few seconds later the phone rang, and it was my son. "I'm here, Dad!" "What took you so long to call?" I asked. "We started playing and I forgot. But Dad, I heard the phone ring once and I remembered." How often do we think of God as One who waits to punish us when we step out of line? I wonder how often he rings just once, hoping we will phone home.