

What tool does God recommend?

While the Proverbs start out by recommending words and sound advice, the writer acknowledges that words aren't always enough. After all, it's awfully hard to "reason" with a 3-year old!

"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him."

– **Proverbs 22:15**

The rod and rebuke give wisdom....

– **Proverbs 29:15**

¹³ *Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die.* ¹⁴ *You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.*

– **Proverbs 23:13-14**

With discipline that starts early, stays consistent, and includes spanking, a parent can stay in control of the child's development, and "rule" his or her house well.

The child, too, will benefit from learning to respect authority, and from knowing that the parent has enough love to set and enforce rules.

God is our heavenly father, battling in our lives against bad attitudes, disobedience, and all manner of foolishness.

Will you keep fighting against Him, like a child playing "King of the Hill" against the parent?

Will you leave the TV on [i.e., stay in your sins], or submit to His divine will?



Did you ever play "King of the Hill"? It's a game involving lots of pushing and pulling and tussling and wrestling with each person trying to stay on top of a dirt pile. Only one will be victorious.

Imagine playing with someone half your size. Imagine an adult playing against a child. The adult is sure to win, right? Not always!

“Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses will...”

– 1 Timothy 3:12

“Ruling” implies imposing one’s will; leading.

Let’s analyze the following interaction between a father and his child. (Note that the interaction was complicated by the presence of visitors.) As we think about this interaction in a living room, let’s imagine that it’s really a game of “King of the Hill.”

Kid: *[Reaches to turn on TV]*

Dad: No

Kid: Yes! *[Turns on TV]*

If playing “King of the Hill,” Dad would go to the “bottom of the hill.”

Dad: No – turn it off!

Kid: *[Screams]*

Aaaiiiiiieeeeeee!!!!!! [Note: Dad was trying to avoid such a ruckus with others present. Kid has embarrassed Dad. Now kid runs to Dad; leans over his lap.

Obviously, he fears no punishment. Having embarrassed Dad, Kid now appeals for sympathy.]

The TV stays on, and the kid stays on top of “the hill.”

Dad: ...I’m not going to play with you.... *[Kid stays touching Dad’s arm. Dad obviously didn’t mean what he said.]*

The TV stays on, and Dad stays at the bottom of “the hill.”

Visitor: *[To child]* What did your dad tell you?

Dad: *[Realizing his failure, says to Kid]* Turn it off.

Kid: *[Does nothing]*

The TV stays on, and Dad stays at the bottom of “the hill.”

Now an interruption occurs when another visitor shows up, and Dad signals to the visitor to turn off the TV.

The “battle” is over. **Outcome?**

VICTORY for the KID!!

- Parents are at WAR.... but not with the child.

- “Battles” are often decided in 30 seconds or less!

- Parents MUST be VICTORIOUS But the goal is NOT to crush the spirit, or to break the will.

Rather, the goal of parental discipline is to drive out FOOLISHNESS.

“Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child....” – Proverbs 22:15

Foolishness results in a bad attitude and disobedience. [Remember King Saul. (1 Samuel 15)]

A parent’s “weapons” or tools of discipline in the battle against foolishness:

- **Redirection** = Shifting the battleground
- **Words** = Warning salvo
- **Timeout** = Cease-fire
- **Letting the child blow off steam** = Unconditional surrender
- **Complaining to other adults** about the child’s behavior = Admitting defeat