

## **Session 3**

### **Correction Ideas that Touch the Heart**

#### **Summary of the Video** (from the Leaders Guide, page 17)

“The Bible uses the term ‘repentance’ to describe a change of heart. Many children change their behavior but you can tell by looking at them that their hearts are still in the wrong place. This session suggests practical tools for correction that put the responsibility for change on the child instead of on the parent. Use these tools alone or in combination with consequences to bring about lasting change in your child.”

#### **Introduction**

When it comes to correction, many use the anger method to decide how and when to discipline their children. However, if a parent has a plan or routine for correction, then he/she does not have to rely on anger to get the job done. Remember that discipline is a tool that touches the hearts of children.

#### **Correction is Part of the Job**

- \*Parents don’t like detours, but character is learned in the detours.
- \*When talking about correction, we need to address our expectations as parents: “We have this belief in our hearts that children should always be doing what they are suppose to be doing.... ‘How dare my child interrupt MY agenda...’”
- \*Correction is part of the job description of being a parent.
- \*View this correction time as an opportunity to touch a child’s heart.
- \*Strategize and make a plan for correcting your child so that you do not have to rely on anger to solve the problem.

### **CORRECTION ROUTINE**

#### **I. A Good Correction Routine Starts with Words**

- \*For this first step, use words only and avoid using consequences--  
This is the way God disciplines us: 2 Timothy 3:16 says, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
- \*Teach our children to respond to words of correction—that is a mature skill.
- \*But some children do not respond to words, so we have to go to the next step.

#### **II. Teach Children to Take a Break -- Use a “break” instead of “time out.”** **Three Distinctives of a Break:**

##### ***A. The child is sent on a mission to change the heart.***

- \*We want the child to understand that correction is about heart change, not just behavior change.

\*An example: “Son, you hit your sister. That is the wrong thing. I want you to go take a break. Change your heart and then come back to see me.”

\* “Change of Heart” means repentance.

**\*There are six steps of repentance:**

1.) *Settle Down*

\*Tell your child to settle down, calm down, stop fighting, stop throwing things  
Jeremiah 8:6 says, “...Each pursues his own course like a horse charging into battle.”

2.) *Admit You Have Done Something Wrong*

3.) *Admit That There Must Be A Better Way*

4.) *Commit To Doing It The New Way*

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The next two steps are generally expected of school agers, not preschool aged children.

5.) *Feel Sorrow*

\*Parents can force behavior change, but cannot force heart change. Heart change takes time and the Holy Spirit working.

\*Don’t force a child to say, “I’m sorry” when he doesn’t feel like it. Instead have the child say, “I was wrong. Would you forgive me?” That is a realistic expectation to have for our children. As children grow in developing repentance and over time, they will realize they are doing something wrong and then will say, “I’m sorry.”

\*SOME EXAMPLES OF THINGS TO SAY FROM THE SKIT: “Just a few minutes ago you were angry at me. You yelled at me. “The answer is no, you are not going anywhere. I am not taking you anywhere. I am not giving you anything until you deal with the way you treated me a few minutes ago.” ... “I’m sorry, but anger isn’t going to work to change my mind.” ... “I’m sorry, but dramatics aren’t going to work either.” ... “Manipulation won’t work either sorry.” ... “I want you to think about how I feel” ... “I would like for you to do the job without yelling at me.” .. “Go spend some time changing your heart. When you do that, then come back to see me.” ... “Imagine a world where you treat other people like you want to be treated.” ... “It would be nice if you respond nicer to my correction of you.”

6.) *Desire What’s Right*

**B. *The Child Helps Determine the Length of Time Spent in the Break.***

\*In “time out” the parent sets the timer and a child serves a sentence for the crime he commits. You are the policeman to keep the child in the break until it is over.

\*In “break”, the child determines how long it takes to change his heart. Some children may take a long time to change their hearts because of rebellion, anger, etc.

\*If the parent determines the length of time, too long of a time might discourage a child, but too short of a time might “short circuit” what God needs to do in that child’s heart.

\*Because the child decides when he has a change of heart, the role of a parent is different. This parent is waiting with open arms for the child, ready to talk to the child when the child returns. This is like the father of the prodigal son who was waiting with open arms. (Luke 15:20)

\*The burden for change has shifted from the parent to the child.

### ***C. The Motivation to Return Is That the Child Is Missing Out on the Benefits of Family Life.***

- Remind the child that he cannot have the benefits of this family unless he abides by the principles that make this family work.
- Remember that children have “benefits” not “rights” in the family.
- The motivation could be that the child could not watch a video with the family, etc.

### **The Break is modeled after the way God disciplines his family, the Church:**

**Matthew 18:15-17 (a brother who sins against you)**

**1 Corinthians 5:1-2 (expel the immoral brother)**

**2 Corinthians 2:5-8 (forgiveness for the sinner)**

God shows in Scripture that if a person is unrepentant, he is removed from the benefits of the family (the church). But, he is welcomed back when he repents and has a change of heart.

## **III. Applying the Break in Your Family**

### **A. The Break is Helpful for Young Children as Well as Teens**

- For the young child, the break place needs to be in the same room with you.
- For the elementary child, send them to a particular (preferably unstimulating) place.
- For the teenage child, the break does not need to be in a particular place.
- Let the child know that he is not going to do any fun things until he deals with the problem in his heart.

### **B. Learning the Break Takes Practice**

- Practice taking a break when you have plenty of time.
- Might need to practice this on a Saturday morning.

### **C. Even Adults Need a Break**

\*Adults benefit from a break.

### **D. Avoid Engaging with Children Who Are Angry**

\*ADVICE: If your child has a meltdown or refuses to put his bottom in the right place, the video suggests that you leave them there. The next step in the routine would be for the child to come back to you for the “debriefing”.

\*If your child follows you around saying, “I don’t want a break. I don’t want a break.” PARENTS: Do not engage with the angry child. Children do not want to be angry alone and they try to get the parent sucked into their temper tantrum. When the parent engages with the angry child, the focus is moved off the heart and moved to the dynamic of the relationship. It weakens the ability for the child to address the heart issue. Instead, tell the child, “You need to take a break, settle down and come talk to me when you have a change of heart.”

### **E. Some Children Need Help Learning to Settle Down**

\*Parents might need to teach how to settle down by using a soothing voice or even physical restraint.

### **Final Thoughts**

- Children change their hearts when they become uncomfortable in their present circumstances or they gain a vision for something better.
- Teaching children to take a break can be difficult at times, but it’s worth it in the end. In Jonah 1-3, God even had Jonah take a “break” for three days in the belly of a fish.