

# (Godly Home) Part 11 - the Rod Is Love

by Denny Kenaston

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*Denny Kenaston teaches that spanking, when done with love, is a vital and biblical aspect of raising children properly.*

**Duration:** 41:18

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:32, Proverbs 13:24, Proverbs 19:18, Proverbs 22:6, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 6:4, Hebrews 12:6

**Topics:** "Godly Home Series"

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## Description

In this sermon, Brother Denny discusses the importance of disciplining children through spanking. He shares a story of a family who struggled to control their children's behavior and eventually decided to implement spanking as a form of discipline. The mother followed Brother Denny's advice and prepared to spank her son, but he pleaded with her to wait. Brother Denny emphasizes the biblical principle of using the rod of discipline to show love and guide children towards obedience. He also highlights the promise of God being our loving father in the new covenant.

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## Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. All right, this evening we're in the last two sessions, the ones last evening.

We have been laying the foundation for the sessions this evening and for tomorrow evening. That is the use of the rod. We want to talk about spanking your children this evening.

One of the families that I met just before the meeting, they said their son was really excited about the message last night. And the dad said, well, what were you excited about, my boy? And the son said, well, the part where Brother Denny said not to spank us. And I thought, oh, my boy, you're in for it tonight.

We are dealing with two balancing principles here. Last evening, the heart issue of love, relationship, an overwhelming blessing upon the children that they have no question about, that their father and their mother loves them. And on the other side, this matter of disciplining the children when they need to be disciplined.

It's very important. The title this evening of this first session is The Rod is Love. The Rod is Love.

When we take these two principles and we balance them together so beautifully, it has a powerful effect upon our children when we bring them together. But they are devastating to our children if they stand alone, either one of them. If love and relationship and no discipline prevails in your home, your children will be silly and uncontrolled and bring you to shame.

That's what the Bible says. On the other hand, if you allow discipline to prevail in your home and there's no love, you will raise children who will despise you, obey you out of fear and be like robots. The hidden dynamics of God and his love is this outflowing of blessings upon us.

Think about it. That is what God uses to draw us to himself. A people who will willingly serve him out of love instead of fear like a robot.

Remember the Garden of Eden? When God made man in his own image, God made man with a free will. But while God gave man a free will, he did that because he wanted man to serve him with a willing heart. He also poured out his love upon man, which drew man to want to serve God with his whole heart.

Oh, dear parents, that works the same. That very same dynamic works in every one of our homes. When we bring the two of these together, it works so beautifully.

May God help us to understand. God does not want us to have robots in our households. And if you think about it, you really don't want that either, do you? Just children that will perform because they're afraid that you're going to spank them if they don't or that you're going to scold them if they don't.

Is that the kind of children you want? Wouldn't you rather have children who love you, who serve you, who do what you want them to do because they love you, because you love them, and they desire to please you with all their heart? Surely that's the kind of children we would like to have in our homes. My goal for this session is to convince you that using the rod is one of the most loving things that you can do for your children. This holy exercise fits into the category of one of the most loving activities that you can do for your child.

I don't know if you believe that, but it's true. It fits into the categories like taking a fun trip to McDonald's with the family or having a special time of loving affirmation with the children or giving them some sweet discipline when they need it. Those are all in the same category.

May God help us to understand that. I would also like to convince you that it is a sin if you won't use the rod in the rearing of your children. Can I be that strong? A sin of omission with serious consequences.

Hebrews chapter 12 and verse 8 says, If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, or all children are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. There are serious consequences involved if a parent decides for whatever reactionary reason, I'm not going to spank my children. Many years ago, we had a family visiting in our home who did not believe in spanking their children.

They said quite boldly to us in the beginning of the evening, There are other ways to motivate the children to be good. And I say amen to that. There are other ways to motivate the children to be good, and we'll be looking at many of those in later sessions.

However, when we say, I'll find another way and I don't need to spank my children, I think we are in for trouble. Now, I was intrigued by watching this family all evening long. Those children were all over the place.

Those children were into this and into that. The mom and dad, they tried to convince them to sit down. They said nice words to them.

Would they please sit down? Would you pretty please quit getting into all the things? I mean, they tried everything that they knew of in the book to try to convince those children to be good. But guess what? The children were in charge all evening long. And I felt for those parents.

I knew they made that statement in ignorance. I knew they didn't understand some of the inner dynamics of what makes a child a happy, obedient, free, peaceful child. They did not understand those dynamics.

All evening long they pleaded with those children. All evening long. I prayed for the parents.

They had no rest to visit whatsoever in our whole evening of sharing. They were constantly up and back and this way and that way. Now, since then, they've changed their minds.

You see, when they were in our home, they had a couple of girls. God gave them a boy a couple of years after that. And things changed quite a bit.

And all of a sudden the father decided he would take a look at this spanking aspect a bit more closely. And sometimes it's that way. With boys more than girls.

Not always, but sometimes it is that way. Well, I get many different responses when I speak on using the rod. It has shocked me at times to see the different responses that I have received.

I remember speaking to a group of people about this size. Sharing with them how I spanked my children. And I saw a dozen adults sit there in that meeting and weep as they listened to how I spanked my children.

The reason why they were weeping is because they were remembering how they were spanked when they were children. And it wasn't very pleasant the way that they were spanked. So I get many different responses.

Some people react. Some people get uneasy. Some people get afraid.

And you can be sure the children always sit up on the edge of their seat when it's time to talk about spanking the children. They're very interested in what the preacher is going to tell their mom and dad on this subject. And I don't blame them.

Many people have had bad experiences in their childhood. And this makes it difficult. You may be one of those.

You may be one of those who had one of those bad experiences. And because of that, whether you did it willingly or whether it just happened a little at a time, you have closed your heart to the whole aspect of spanking a child. Some time ago, I was in a distant state sharing on several different subjects.

And I think I preached on the home once that weekend that I was there. And a mother came up to me and shared with me a testimony that I got a kick out of it. I think you will, too.

So I'll share it with you. She said, Brother Denny, we received your tapes, oh, about three years ago. And we opened them up and we started listening to them.

And God just began to change our whole view of what it means to raise children. And, of course, somewhere there in the middle of those tapes is a message on spanking your children. Well, the little boy in the house, he was about three, maybe four years old.

He wasn't real excited about these tapes that came into the house and he wasn't sure about all these things. He noticed that his mom and dad were getting more enthused every tape they listened to. And he wasn't sure about it.

And the parents decided spanking is the right thing and we're going to do it. And sure enough, the day of this little boy's fate came and it was time for him to get a spanking. And the mother shared with me that she went through all the things that I told her to do there.

You know, you talk to the child and all that. And I'll share it a little bit later on in this meeting. And she said she got to the place where the little fellow was over her knee and it's time to give him a spanking.

And she's just about ready to raise up whatever she was going to use to spank the little fellow. And he said, wait, mom, wait. And, of course, she stopped, you know, and he looked up at her and said, Mom, I'm not sure about this brother Denny.

I think he might be a false prophet. I thought you smart little fella. Boy, if he didn't know what he was doing, let's check him out a little more before I get this spank and make sure he's sound.

Now, that's natural humor. And isn't it beautiful? And, you know, God fills every one of our homes with things like that all the time, doesn't he? Hallelujah. That's what a little child would do.

Now, she went ahead. He didn't get out. He still got his spanking.

But I'll tell you what, that mom and dad, they chuckled over that one a few times to see the ingenuity of that little mind. Let's see. How can I undo this guy? Praise the Lord.

Well, you check it out in the Bible. What I'm going to say, you check it out for yourself and see if it isn't true. I just want to remind you this evening, as we move into this sensitive subject by some, let's not react because of a bad experience that we have had in our past.

We must be open to the truth of the Word of God. I want God to show you that it is not some mean thing to give your child a spanking, but rather a tender expression of love and care for your child. But for you to be able to understand that and receive it, you must open your heart.

Just like in any other truth, you must say, OK, Lord, I open my heart. You teach me what I need to learn. We use the rod in our house and the children love and honor us.

There are times when I often feel they honor us way more than what we deserve. I truly believe one of the reasons why they honor us is because we spank them in a right way, in a biblical way, in a loving way when they needed it. I believe that.

It may surprise you, but sometimes they even come and say thank you after they get a spanking. You'll see later that's biblical to do that. So, that's a good goal to have.

We never set out to make that happen, but it happens pretty often. And you will see it is biblical for your child, if you're doing it right and they're getting the results that God wants them to get out of it, that they will come back and kiss your hand. You will see.

I remember when Samuel was just a little tyke and he would get a spanking. He would say these words. He would come back to me later and he would say, Papa, I don't enjoy the spanking.

It hurts, but I sure like the clear feeling that it makes inside of my heart. Thank you for spanking me. Smart boy.

Smart boy. Many have believed the devil's lie on this subject. We think that spanking is a negative form of discipline.

It is not a negative form of discipline, but one to be looked up to. Many people look down on it and say, oh, well, they spank their children. They think it's a negative form when it is a powerful, positive, love-building method by which God gives us to train our children.

Lord, open our eyes. Open our eyes. If you feel yourself reacting, even now as you sit here, pray to God, Oh, Lord, help me to see this whole thing right.

Many times when I share on this subject, people will come to me afterwards and say, I just turned you off as soon as you started. Don't do that tonight. Keep your heart open.

Allow God by his spirit through his word to enlighten the eyes of your heart concerning the subject. It's very important. The devil is working hard to make it illegal in this land of ours to spank our children.

There are other places where it is already illegal. We have a brother here in this meeting from Holland. It is against the law to spank your children there.

The devil does not want us to spank our children. You need to remember that as you react to teaching. The world says it's cruel.

It is oppressive. And if you spank your children, your child will hate you. Many of God's people are flirting with these notions these days.

In fact, I am shocked at times to hear who is flirting with thoughts like this. They are reacting from maybe their own parents' failures. We cannot do that.

That is a mistake. Whenever someone fails and distorts the truth of the word of God, we make a mistake if we react to that and let the pendulum swing way over to the other side. Your children will suffer for it.

Spanking with a flow of love, like I spoke about last evening, makes bright, happy children who love and respect their parents. Let's talk a little bit about natural love and spiritual love. Natural love says, I couldn't

spank my child.

I wouldn't want to hurt him. This is a normal, natural response. When you look at the whole subject of spanking, I mean, it's painful.

The child cries. You don't feel good while you're doing it. This is a normal, natural response to spanking a child.

But with Christians, we are supposed to be spiritual. And Christians not only have natural love that feels compassion at a time like that, but a Christian is supposed to have spiritual love, which is agape love at the same time. This love rises above the natural love and does what is right according to the word of God for the good of the child.

That's spiritual love. If our natural love is stopping us from spanking our children, then that natural love must be crucified. That spiritual love, which is agape love, can rise up and help the child.

That's true love, isn't it? Spiritual love is love that loves by godly principles, not by emotional feelings. The Holy Spirit has inspired powerful words in this book. We cannot question that.

We cannot doubt that. What God has revealed in this book called the Bible concerning the subject of spanking our children. The question is, what do you want for your children? This is the question.

The Bible says, if you will lovingly spank your children, here are some of the benefits. It will give them wisdom. The rod will cleanse away evil from their hearts.

It will express love to them. It will produce a clear conscience. It will keep your child from going to hell.

It will bring calm, quiet order to your home and to your child. And it will drive foolishness away from the heart of your child. These are some of the beautiful benefits that God gives to us as He reveals these scriptures on spanking our children.

Proverbs 13 and 24 says, According to this verse, Either the message, I love you, or the message, I hate you. Let's look at this verse a little more in detail. Four words we'd like to look at.

First, let's give a definition of them. The word, spareth, it means to hold back or use sparingly. The word, hateth, it means to stand and face your enemy.

That's what the word, hate, means. The word, loveth, here's the picture here. It means to stand with outreached arms to receive.

So here it is. Hateth, you're standing there with your weapon, ready to face your enemy. Loveth, you're standing there with your arms open wide, ready to receive.

Those are the two messages that are given, depending on whether you choose to spank your children in a loving way, or whether you choose to give in to your natural feelings and say, I just can't spank my child. And the last word in the verse that we want to look at is the word, betimes. It means early in life.

Some say it means early and again and again. Let's look at the word, spareth, first. If we hold back, according to this verse, we hate.

Now, I want you to notice, brothers and sisters, it's not saying he who doesn't spank his child hates. It says he who holds back hates. If holding back is hate, how much more then is no spanking at all hate? Because the scripture says holds back.

In other words, you should have spanked the child there. But I just couldn't do it. You should have spanked the child there.

But I was just too busy. That's holding back. The Bible says you hate your child if you hold back the rod from the child.

God who made us knows our weakness. Therefore, he warns us not to hold back because he knows. You know, you don't want to do it.

It's not pleasant. It's not joyful. Nobody likes to see their child hurt.

So God, knowing our hearts, knowing that we have this natural love, he warns us in the word and says, if you spare the rod, you are hating your child. There are many reasons why we spare the rod. Some are too busy to do it.

Some don't want to be bothered with it. Some hold back in ignorance. Some draw back from the difficult task of it.

Some feel guilty for their own sins and don't do it. You must be spiritual to spank your children properly. We will see that later.

So here we have this word spirit, which means to hold back and not spank when we should. The next word is hated. In the Hebrew language, it is often defined in word pictures.

We get into the Greek, it's defined in words, literal word understandings and definitions. But the Hebrew, it's often in a word picture. And the word picture here is a man standing before his enemy.

What kind of a look do you think is on the face of a man who's standing before his enemy? There is a spirit of hate coming out of him. There is a spirit of fighting coming out of him. He hasn't lifted up his sword yet.

He hasn't reached out to try to hurt his enemy. He's just standing there before his enemy. And the enemy gets the silent message.

Get your sword out. This guy's going to fight. That's the picture that God uses.

There is a silent message that goes forth. When we do not spank our children when they need it, the spirit of hatred is manifested. When we hold back, we silently say, I don't care.

You know, when I used to work with the bus children in Chicago, we saw them a little bit on Saturdays. And then we spent a lot of time with them on Sunday. You know, some of those little fellas would come to me on Sunday with a sincere heart and look up at me and say, Brother Denny, would you give me a spanking? I need one.

My dad never gives me a spanking. Would you give me a spanking? I need one. You know what? That little fella knew that I loved him.

He knew it. And I gave a few a spanking, by the way. Now, there was a few homes that I went to and I walked in the door.

There was no dad around. The mom said, Johnny needs a spanking. He's hiding under the bed.

You know what? He got a loving spanking from Mr. Denny. That's what they called me then. There is a practical hatred.

When we neglect correction, we tend to get frustrated with our children. So it's not just a silent hatred. It is a practical hatred.

When you put it off and you put it off and you put it off, what happens? The child gets a little more out of order. You start speaking to him and you start nagging. You raise your voice a little bit more.

Finally, you say, that's enough. Yeah, well, you just put a wall up between you and your child. So there is a practical side to that also.

It's not just a silent message that says, I really don't care. But there is also a practical, real message. Now, the next word is the word, love it.

The spirit of love is manifested when a parent gives proper correction and clearing to the child. The Hebrew word picture is very clear. A person standing with outstretched arms.

When little Hannah and Esther were little girls, if I would be away on a weekend preaching trip, coming home on Monday afternoon, those two little girls would run to meet me when I came home. I would always get down on my knee like this and hold out my hand just like this, and they would run into my arms. That's the picture of the word, loveth, in the Scripture.

There is a spirit of love in that picture, isn't there? And there's no question about it. It's there. And that silent message said to those two little girls, Come give me a hug! And they felt free to run right into it.

My dear brothers and sisters, that is also the message that comes across to your children when you choose to spank them in a loving manner as we described last evening. There is a silent message. It's very clear in the Bible.

In this verse, spanking is an expression of love. A beautiful expression of love. It says to the child, I care about you.

What security this breeds in the life and the heart of a child. And the last word here we have is the word betimes. And it seems to me that it means early in life.

Don't wait too long, God says. And some say it means again and again, because betimes is plural, not betime, but betimes. So maybe it means early again and again.

Either way, it's good sound interpretation. But many people ask me this question. Brother Denny, when do you start spanking a child? How old should a child be when you spank them? This is a good question.

You spank them when they need it. But may I quickly say, if you do your homework in directing that little child, they may not need a spanking as soon as they would if you neglect them and let them go their own way. You spank them when they need it.

When you see that your guiding words are not being heeded, but don't make the mistake of neglecting to train the little ones and then spanking them when they don't comply. This is not right. I have heard of parents spanking a one-year-old child over and over and over again, because they won't be quiet in church.

I don't think that's right. I think you're not doing your homework. If you spank your child five times on a Sunday morning service, you're not doing your homework at home.

The need is not more pain. The need is some time and some attention and some direction and some teaching. By the way, we taught most of our children to sit quietly at home.

Then when they came to church, it was no big deal. Do it at home. You know, you won't be so embarrassed at home.

You know how it is? The child's screaming and Brother Denny's preaching. You won't be so embarrassed. Work with the child at home.

Let me give you a paraphrase of this verse then. He who holds back the use of the rod manifests a spirit of hatred. But he who wants to manifest a spirit of love will use the rod early in life again and again.

In the New Covenant, God promises to be our Father. Amen? One of the most beautiful parts of God promising to be our Father is that He overshadows us with His love. In fact, most of the promises of the New Covenant fall underneath the major promise where God says, I promise to be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

So, that covers so many other promises. But in that promise, we also have to remember that being a Father, sometimes God must chastise us. Amen? God spans His children.

And for that reason, if no other reason, we should open our heart to the teaching about spanking our children simply because we're supposed to be like God and God is a Father and He spans us. If God loves us so much that He would spank us, we ought also to love our children so much that we would give them the care that they need. Hebrews 12, verses 5-13 is very clear.

Spanking is an unquestionable expression of God the Father's love. And the fruit that comes out of it is proof of His love. You remember what He says? It brings forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto those that are exercised thereby.

And I tell you, dear parents, spanking your children, if you do it right, it will also bring forth peaceable fruit in the children's lives. I'm telling you, it will happen just like that. If we do not spank our children, our children are children without a father, according to Hebrews 12.

If you be without chastisement, ye are bastards or children who do not have a father. And this is a grave mistake for a father to make. And many children grow up mixed up and confused about God because of it.

I wonder this evening, what kind of picture of God are we giving to our children? What is their perception of God like as they watch us in this area of spanking? How do we spank our children? If we spank them in a tender and a loving way, they will learn that God loves them enough to correct them. And they will respond right when He does. Because, let's face it, God warns us there in Hebrews 12, you must respond properly to the spankings that I give you.

We are the ones who teach our children how to respond to the spankings that God is going to give. By teaching them how to respond to the ones that we give them. And by giving them the way God gives them.

There are many paradoxes in the Bible, and this whole matter of spanking is one of those paradoxes. You know, like the way up is down, and give, and it will come back to you again. These things, they don't make sense in our mind.

Well, this is the way it is with spanking. We would look at that naturally and say, how in the world you say my children are going to love me if I spank them? Spanking is painful. Spanking doesn't feel good.

Spanking feels bad in the heart when it's happening. How can that make my child love me? That's what a paradox is. It doesn't make sense.

It doesn't make sense that the way up is down, but the way up is down. Amen? And so also this may not make sense, but that doesn't matter to us. God's ways are not our ways.

They're very different than our ways. Proverbs 19 and verse 18 says, Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for its crying. Now the first thing we want to look at in this verse is this.

God gives us a clear command. Chasten thy son. That's what God says.

And I think we all obey the Bible. What do you think? David said, I will run the way of your commandments, God. David said, Thy commandments are my delight.

That was David's heart. And this is one of the commandments, brothers and sisters. Chasten thy sons and thy daughters.

The next little portion we want to look at here is where it says while there is hope. Now, while there is hope means that there will be a time when there is not hope. And that's why God even said it.

God wouldn't need to say it if that time would never come. But that time will come when there will be no hope. So God says, Chasten your child while there is hope.

God is encouraging us to seize the day. While they are pliable, chasten your children. While the clay is soft, use the rod at the time that it is needed.

While the concrete is soft, before it sets up and is hard, do what you need to do. While the tree is young and bends easily, bend the tree. There will be a day when the concrete gets hard.

There will be a day when the clay gets hard. There will be a day when that little sprig will be a big, fat tree and you won't be able to do much with it. You know, we have a couple of trees on our property.

Our little piece of land is kind of on a hill. And you plant a tree on the side of a hill. It's not a real steep hill, but it's enough of a hill.

If you plant that tree on the side of the hill and you don't train that little fella, when it's small, guess what? In about five years, you'll have a tree standing like this. And we have a couple of them on our property to prove it. But what you're supposed to do when that tree is little, you can just take a little piece of string and tie it around that little sprig and put it in the ground, pulling it this way a bit, and that tree will be standing nice and tall in five years.

But if you wait five years and say, okay, we're going to straighten this tree out, you better get yourself a chain and a bulldozer. You can straighten it out. You can, with a chain and a bulldozer.

Which way would you rather do it with your children? With a string and a little stake? Or a chain and a bulldozer? Chasten thy son while there is hope. The day is coming when there will be no hope. And then God goes on to say, And let not thy soul spare for his crying.

Spare not for crying, God says. God put this in here again because He knows our natural tendency. You know, the child is crying? How many times our child begins to cry when it's time to get a spanking and we come up with another way to give the correction, huh? How many of you ever did that? Let me see your hands.

Yeah. Here comes the child crying and oh, well, maybe we can, well, I'll give you one more chance and you know, we come up with a way to get out of it. It's because the crying affects the heart.

That's why God put it in there, so that we wouldn't yield to that. Well, some parents spank softly when they hear their child crying. Some parents just give a couple of swats when they hear their child crying.

But God says, Spare not for their crying. Don't hold back when you hear them cry. And this is very interesting.

You know, whenever I preach on the home, I will ask the children in the meeting, How many of you have cried extra hard hoping that you could get Mom not to spank you so hard? Let me see your hands. I wonder how many of you children would be honest enough to say that you cried extra hard hoping that Mom wouldn't spank you so much. Let me see your hands.

You children. You children. Let me see.

Come on, be honest. Look at all those hands. See? They got you.

Mom, Dad, they got you. They're no dummies. They know your heart goes pitter-patter when they hear you cry.

And some of those children, they can cry and make it sound like they're dying. They're not dying. And we're talking about doing this right.

We're not talking about being mean and beating a child. But look. God knew.

God put that in there because He knows a parent's heart. And He also put it in there because He knows a child's heart. You little ones.

He knows your heart. He knows what you're going to pull on Mom and Dad. God says, let not your heart spare for the crying.

Adam Clarke says this, and we'll close. It is better that the child be made to cry when the correction may be helpful than that the parents should cry afterward when the child is grown, the habits are formed, and it is too late. Let us pray.

God, our Father, we thank You that You're a loving God. You're a loving Father. And Father, we do, even tonight, we thank You for the times that You have spanked us.

And Lord, we know You did it so beautifully that we did thank You when You were done. O God, I pray, teach us, Lord, how to do it so right that the children will kiss our hand in Jesus' name, Amen.

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