

How Does God Want Me to Reprove My Child?

I. What is Reproof?

- James 4:3
- If teaching is educating our kids in what is right and what is wrong, then reproof is confronting our children when they're wrong.
- Reproof — in and of itself — is teaching. But it's *more* than teaching. It's teaching, convicting, and warning all mixed into one. Whereas teaching is theoretical, reproof is actual.

II. Reproof

- John 3:20; Matthew 18:15; I Timothy 5:20; Proverbs 29:15
- This word is translated as convict, convicted, convicts, expose, exposed, rebuke, refute, reprimanded, reprove, reproved, and show...fault.
- It's this convicting element of reproof that makes this stage of parenting the stage where we often have to give consequences.
- Don't we want our kids to be wise? Well, then they need both reproof and consequences when they sin. And this coupling of reproof and consequence is why warning is such an integral part of this parenting responsibility.

III. Warning

- Luke 12:4-5
- This Greek word is translated show, showed, warn, and warned.
- Because Jesus loves His creation, He warns us of the consequences of our choices. Yes, reproof often involves consequences, but it also requires that we warn our children of *future* consequences if they don't learn the lesson God has for them.

IV. Admonishment

- I Corinthians 4:14; Colossians 3:16
- Merriam-Webster defines admonish in this way, "to express warning or disapproval especially in a gentle, earnest, or solicitous manner."
- Admonishment is teaching coupled with warning designed to steer someone away from the very real immediate and future consequences.
- Even though people hate to be told they're wrong, and even though many people weaponize reproof in order to hurt the individual they're reproofing, God is showing us that biblical reproof, warning, and admonishment is done out of a heart of love for the other person's best interest.

V. Rebuke

- Matthew 16:20; Mark 9:25; II Timothy 4:2; Matthew 20:31
- This word is translated rebuke, rebuked, and rebuking the most, but it's also translated warned, sternly telling, and sternly told. This word is frequently used to describe how Jesus rebuked evil spirits, but He also rebuked winds, a fever, and His disciples.
- Reproof in the form of rebuke may have to be strong.
- It makes perfect sense that someone in repeated and unrepentant sin would need a stern rebuke. They have already not listened to the impassioned teaching, and they've decided that their sin was better than God's righteousness. Impassioned reproof may definitely be in order.

- Reproof has many different layers that need to be understood if we're going to do it well.
- Reproof is the process of telling someone that they're wrong, and it often involves giving consequences. Reproof also involves warning our kids about the future consequences they will receive if they don't submit to the Lord. And reproof is often just as stern and impassioned as our teaching needs to be. Spiritual truth is literally a life or death issue.
- That doesn't mean we have to be grim, unfriendly people all the time. But it does mean that when someone digs their heels in and consistently rejects God's truth, it may be very important to transition from lighthearted and low-key reproof to something more attention-grabbing. Still, regardless of whether our reproof is calm or passionate, both our rod and reproof must be motivated by love for God and others. It's not about us.
- And we must remember that biblical reproof always has to come from the Scriptures.
- Most parents know how to reprove all too well, the problem is that they tell their child that he or she was wrong because the child disagreed with or contradicted or disobeyed mom or dad. It doesn't really have anything to do with God and His Word, mom and dad just don't like being ignored.

VI. Conclusion

- Ezekiel 3:17-18
- We parents cannot hope to glorify God in our parenting if we don't help our kids understand when they're wrong. It may be wrong actions, words, feelings, thoughts, desires, or beliefs . . . we must reprove them.
- We must help them interpret their choices in light of God's revealed truth. We must help our kids submit to God's reality when they've chosen to walk in their own delusion. That means that reproof, warning, admonishment, and rebuke need to be tools we can use well.

Parent.

... a part of the Evermind Ministries family.