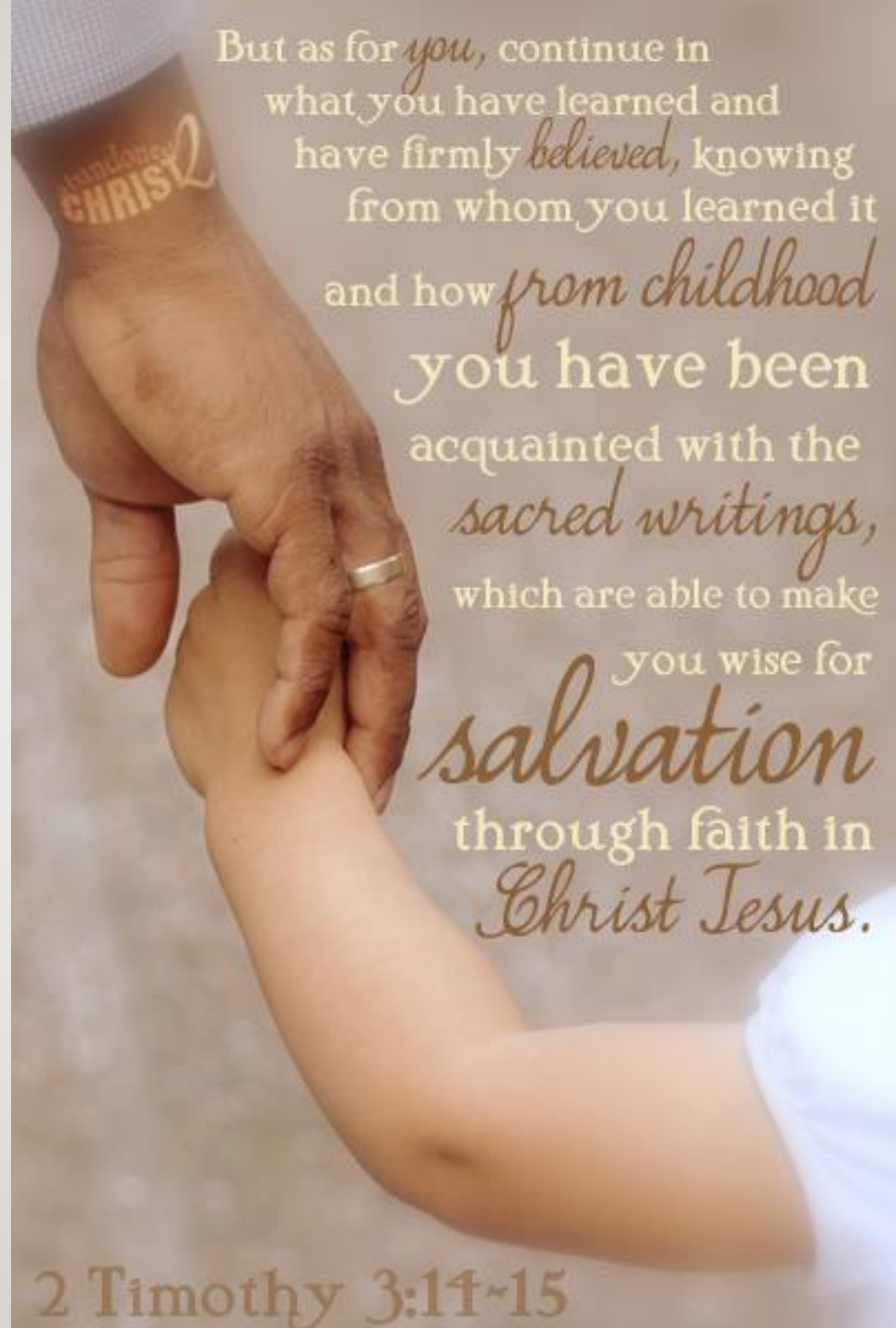


Christian Parenting

Week 3 Reality Discipline



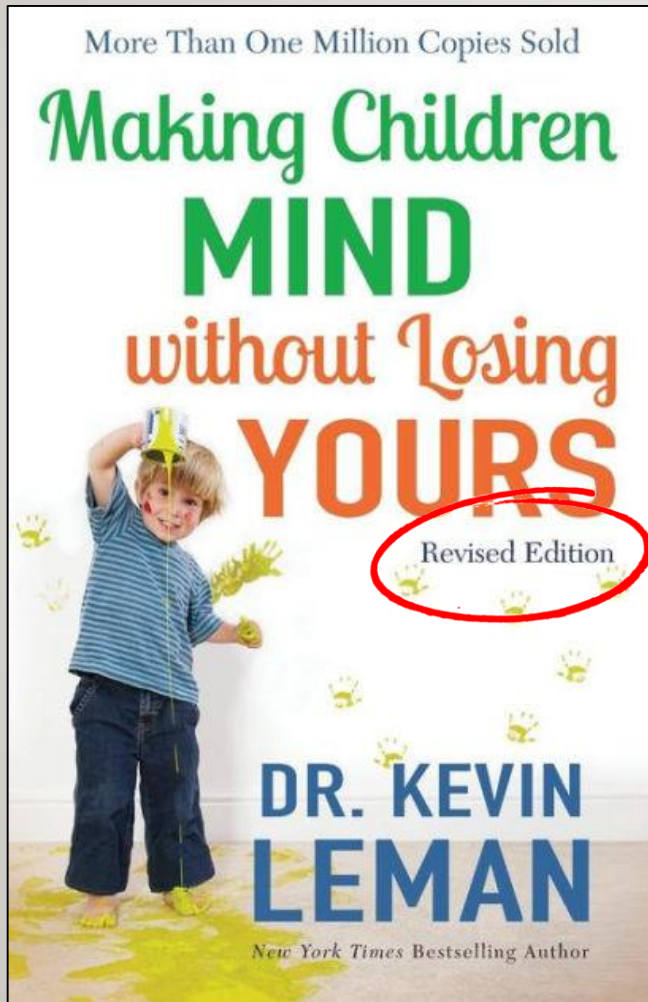
Winter Quarter, 2018
Greg (& Vikki) Nordstrom



But as for *you*, continue in what you have learned and have firmly *believed*, knowing from whom you learned it and how *from childhood* you have been acquainted with the *sacred writings*, which are able to make you wise for *salvation* through faith in *Christ Jesus*.

2 Timothy 3:14-15

Supplemental text



- Original and revised versions
 - Original is rather dated, but still good
- Several formats
 - Paperback (\$9.22 new)
 - Kindle (\$8.54)
 - Audiobook (\$14.95)
- Dr. Leman
 - Christian counselor/family therapist
 - Psychologist, speaker, author
 - Five kids, four grandkids

PDF versions of the material from this class can be found in the "Bible Study" section of www.gregnordstrom.com

More *practical baby advise* from...



Instructions:

Massaging Baby

RIGHT



WRONG



Instructions:

Playing with Baby



YES



NO



Instructions:

Walking with Baby



GOOD



BAD

Famous last words...

1. *“My kids will never behave that way in public.”*
2. *“I will never feed my kids fast food!”*
3. *“Bedtime is bedtime. Period.”*
4. *“I will never leave the house looking like that!”*
5. *“The kids will never sleep in our bed.”*
6. *“I won’t let my kids stop me from traveling.”*
7. *“My children will only watch age-appropriate material.”*
8. *“I will never use technology to keep my kids quiet in public.”*
9. *“No toy guns or other play weapons are allowed in the house.”*
10. *“My kids will never be caught out in public in their pajamas.”*
11. *“Our kids won’t spend the weekend watching cartoons or playing video games.”*
12. *“My kids are not going to end up like my sister’s!”*



Expectation minus reality equals disillusionment.

Leman (pg. 77)

"MOM, SHE'S LOOKING AT ME! MOM!! MOM!!!



“For the last time, knock it off you two!”



Leman on reality...

*Reality hits everyone eventually, including your children. Our goal is to have kids who are **thoughtful, kind, and courteous**... who **give back to the family**, who **work hard**... Kids who know they're **not the center of the universe** and that **others matter**.*

None of these concepts, by the way, come naturally to children, who are born as hedonistic suckers, caring only about themselves.

*How your children will respond to reality has a lot to do with **how you prepare them while they're still in your home**.*

Leman (pg. 78)

Leman on discipline...

*Your children **want** you to discipline them, because they want to know you **care**.*

Leman (pg. 158)

*Your job is to discipline your children in a **healthy, loving** manner, holding them **accountable** for their actions, and to **encourage responsibility and wise decisions**.*

*What your kids want most is a relationship with you. They crave time with you, your listening ear, and your wisdom. **They need to know you accept them and love them unconditionally.** Sure, you won't always like everything they do, but their place in your heart remains secure... They also need your home to be **a safe place to make mistakes and grow.***

Leman (pg. 57-58)

God on discipline...

Proverbs 13:24

Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them. (NIV)

A refusal to correct is a refusal to love; love your children by disciplining them. (MSG)

Ephesians 6:4

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (ESV)

Fathers, don't exasperate your children by coming down hard on them. Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master. (MSG)

Proverbs 29:17

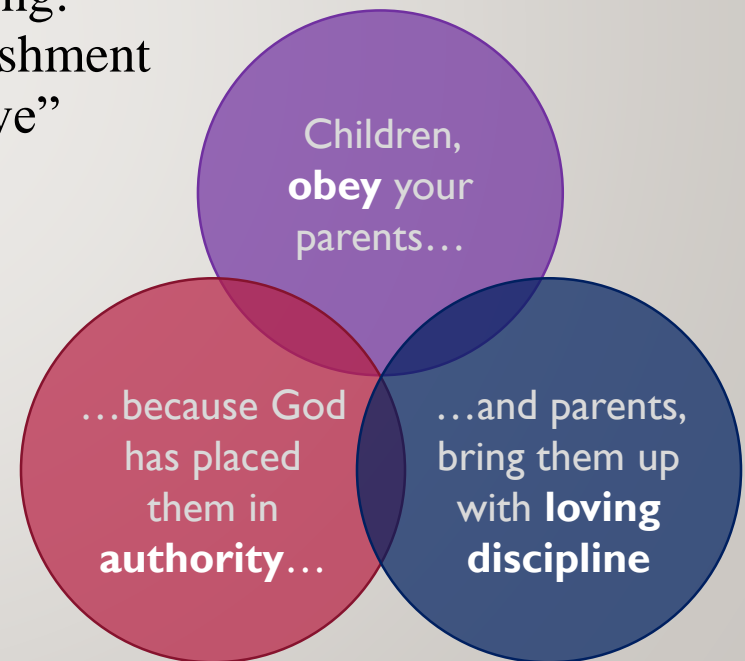
Discipline your children; you'll be glad you did—they'll turn out delightful to live with. (MSG)

“Reality Discipline”

“Letting the reality of the situation become the teacher to the child.”

- A **consistent, decisive, and respectful** way for parents to **love** and **discipline** their children
- An **action-oriented** way to hold kids **accountable** for their behavior
- Lets kids make **choices** and experience **consequences**
- A **steady, healthy middle-course** between **permissive-** and **authoritarian** styles of parenting, emphasizing:
 - **Godly discipline**, not authoritarian punishment
 - **Godly love**, not permissive “smother love”
- Based on **Ephesians 6:1-4**

*“I want to stress the **love**. Without love, the concepts of obeying, authority, and discipline won’t work. Your children must genuinely feel loved and have a relationship with you.” (Leman)*



“Reality Discipline”

- Takes **patience, skill, and a commitment to train and guide** vs. blowing your cool, venting, and calling it discipline
- Three requirements for reality discipline:
 1. It depends on *unconditional love*
 2. It is *discipline by way of action* (i.e. swift, direct, effective, and tied as closely to the violation as possible)
 3. The willingness to *take time to practice it*. It's simpler than you think if you commit to it.
- Creates predictable boundaries, and since reality is the teacher, it **removes guilt, stress, and guesswork from parents**



“Reality Discipline”

7 Principles of Reality Discipline:

1. Establish a **healthy authority** over your children
2. Hold your children **accountable** for their actions
3. Let **reality** (and life) be the teacher
4. Let your **actions** match your words
5. **Stick to your guns**, but don't shoot your foot
6. **Relationships** come before rules and activities
7. Live by your values—**model desired behavior**

Before we look at these in more detail, remember that *parenting is a long-term investment, not a short-term loan*. Disciplining your kids will still bring failure and frustration, but also the joy of success. It all comes with the territory...

1. Establish a healthy authority over you children

- Family member's have equal value, but the family is not a democracy
- Parents need to be in charge or chaos will result
- Kids need *and want* parents to be parents
- Your child's display of power/rebellion is a test of your willingness to parent them
- Boundaries and guidelines need to be firm
- But your authority must be healthy—displaying love and a desire for their well-being, not just “flexing your muscles”

And remember, if you don't parent them, who will?

2. Hold your children accountable for their actions

- “*Write me a note. I’m late.*”
- Rescuing only means you’ll be asked to do it again
- It also means you’re both condoning and encouraging the behavior (see principle #7, “Live by your values”)
- Instead, respect your child’s choices enough to face the consequences
- In short, hold your child accountable
- Whether they’re 4, 9, 13, or 17, the only way to learn responsibility is by facing the consequences of their actions



Facing consequences for their actions is one of the most important things your kids can learn.



3. Let reality be the teacher



- “*Goldfish are great pets—if you don’t feed them they die*”
 - Children need to learn to take care of their things or they lose them (yes, even goldfish)
 - Even when you *do* take care of goldfish they die
 - Opportunity to teach about the reality of life and death before they face it with loved ones, like Nana...
- Toys left outside (don’t immediately replace them!)
- Late night “movie marathon” and then missing breakfast
- *Fingers in the fan*
- Look for teachable moments to use reality discipline

Failure won’t scar your children for life, but the inability to experience failure will.

4. Let your actions match your words

- Face it, kids are smart!
- They often know what you're going to say before you say it
 - *“Hurry or you’ll miss the bus.”*
 - *“Be careful with that. I’m not buying another one!”*
 - *“I’m not going to say this again.”* (but of course you do!)
- Kids can become **“mommy deaf”** or **“daddy deaf”**
- They learn that if it's important, you'll say it again
- They also learn you'll change your tone of voice

If actions follow your words, you don't need to keep repeating yourself. Your actions speak for you.

5. Stick to your guns (but don't shoot your foot)

- Kids are marathon runners, not sprinters
 - They're laser-focused on getting what they want
 - They'll whine, plead, and argue until they wear you out and you give in
- So, when you make a decision, stick with it!
- Kids need to know that what you say goes
- *The 12-month flute rental...*
- But if you stick with something that turns out to be wrong, admit it to your child and change course. No one's perfect!

Some things are too important to allow your children to choose. Which ones? You decide...



www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZ0Icmdwhfg
(my heart says yes, but my daddy says no!)

6. Relationships come before rules and activities

- Just because your SUV is yellow doesn't mean it's a taxi
- Avoid the “activity trap”
- Your family needs to take precedence over other activities
 - Be more than a chauffeur to your children
 - Do things together—work and play
- Focus on one (maybe two) activities per semester, no more
- Keep your home a home, not a hotel where you only eat, sleep, and get ready for the next activity

Spend time with your kids individually, but don't treat them equally(!) Your expressions of love should differ according to each child's uniqueness.

7. Live by your values

- Walk the talk—kids can smell hypocrisy a mile away
- Saying one thing and doing another only teaches them to do likewise. Just as dangerous at four as sixteen...
- Model good behavior. Children learn by watching you!
- Be a consistent, pure example (because the world won't be!)
 - Returning the extra change when the cashier makes a mistake
 - Watching what you say to bad drivers
 - Keeping your speech pure (no “little” curse words)
 - What you say about people when they're not around

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Romans 12:21 (ESV)

Some final encouragement

“Parents, let’s hang in there when it comes to discipline in the home! We all want our kids to be honest and hardworking citizens. We want them to be faithful witnesses of God’s Word, living embodiments of Christ. It is our duty and privilege as Christian parents to “discipline those we love” (Proverbs 3:12) as we guide our kids in God’s truth. This is so easy to say but often so hard to do—especially as our society increasingly blurs the lines between right and wrong and dismisses moral absolutes.”

Ann Jahns, *Forward in Christ* magazine
<https://forwardinchrist.net>