



Clanking Chains: Volition is the Cause of All Overt Behavior; Principles Regarding Sin, Forgiveness, Breaking the Law, & Corporal Punishment

- 26) The law of volitional responsibility is designed to reward compliance with the laws of divine establishment and later with the mandates of Scripture. It is also designed to punish noncompliance in both categories.
- 27) The latter is designed in grace to correct wrong thinking which in turn corrects wrong behavior. However, for the believer there is the additional measure of divine punitive action.
- 28) But children are unbelievers who are born *tabula rasa*. They must be taught how to think correctly; develop honorable motivations; make good decisions, and produce right actions. Thus parents are delegated the responsibility of using their child's failures as a means of training him about the ramifications of poor decisions.
- 29) These ramifications always involve self-induced misery because of the punishment associated with the violation. From this the child learns from his mistakes.
- 30) When a believer does not learn from his mistakes he falls under the second level of divine management of carnality. This is called divine punitive action: warning discipline, intensified discipline, and terminal discipline.
- 31) However, a child is an unbeliever who is under divine judgment. It is his parents' objective to lead him to a place where he can give an objective hearing to the gospel.
- 32) Using the two results of the law of volitional responsibility—reward and punishment—helps train the child to use his volition to make good decisions from a position of strength.
- 33) He learns the difference between right and wrong by being allowed to make mistakes, be punished for them, and eventually come around to right thinking.
- 34) During these periods of corrective discipline, the parents must point out wrong thought, decision, and action. When it involves sin the child is to be taught rebound. When it involves a violation of house rules the child must admit this error to his parents.
- 35) The child is to be taught that God forgives his sins and his parents forgive his violations of house rules.
- 36) However, rules have consequences. Thus a principle emerges which parents must drive home: God forgives you and we forgive you but the system must forgive you as well. And the way the system forgives is by fulfillment of its punishment clause.
- 37) Point to the penalty clause on the blackboard which has been signed by parent and child. Once this punishment is administered the child is set free from all obligations associated with his "crime" whatever it happened to be. The discipline removes all guilt. The debt is completely paid. He moves on with a clean slate.
- 38) Rebound has resulted in forgiveness from God; admitting his mistake to his parents has resulted in forgiveness from them; and submitting to the prescribed punishment has resulted in forgiveness from the system.



- 39) But what of the child who is in rebellion? He chooses not to alter his behavior, is in opposition to house rules, and has not responded to increasing levels of punishment. An exercise in rebound would be meaningless.
- 40) This is where the parents become the conduits for punitive action. This is extrinsic discipline as opposed to the previous methods of intrinsic discipline.
- 41) A child who does not respond to lesser forms of discipline, does not admit he is wrong, and has demonstrated a pattern of behavior that confirms rebellion is a candidate for corporal discipline. His promise to do better in the future is simply a rhetorical veil designed to buy time. It should fall on deaf ears.
- 42) Corporal punishment is designed to change attitudes and stop behaviors. It is to be continued until submission is forthcoming and wrongdoing is confessed. Lesser forms of discipline may also be added as needed.
- 43) The objective is to break the cycle of misbehavior before criminal trends develop and to prevent increasing guilt from becoming a motivational factor for even worse behavior.