

Child Shaming

I remember the first time I saw this. A father discovered that his daughter, using profanity, said something very mean about him on her Facebook account. He took her laptop and recorded a message to her Facebook friends, after which he took a gun and shot the computer.

It went viral.

And like many others, I thought to myself “Right on! That’ll teacher her!”

Soon afterward, I would often see pictures appear in my feed depicting children being **punished** by being made to hold signs – sometimes on street corners – broadcasting the nature of their crime.

That is when it occurred to me that this kind of **punishment** (which should not be mistaken for **discipline**) doesn’t teach them what I had originally thought it would.

Oh – it teaches them some things.

It teaches them what bitterness tastes like.

It teaches them that their actions are more important than the character from which their actions grow.

It teaches them to suppress the motivation behind their actions.

But is that truly what we want our children to learn?

Child shaming doesn’t teach a child to evaluate why he steals, lies, cheats, uses profanity, skips school, or any of the other myriad of things that earned him a mean sign, a street corner and a viral picture on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

For a child to learn to evaluate the nature of his actions, his parents must have to want to engage in the process of

teaching him, training him, and spending the time and energy necessary to enter his world if they will hope to understand that these actions are merely symptoms of a deeper problem.

It does your child no favors to resolve stealing if he still has a heart that is filled with envy. He will not learn to stop lying if never learns to deal with his pride. He will not learn to stop using profanity if he never learns to confront the root of his anger or rebellion.

This is true **discipline**. **Discipline** teaches and trains a child that it is what is in their heart that matters most. For if they are to be the spiritual and moral leaders of their generation, they must first have a heart full of God's Word and desire good **character**.

Oh yes, we can mold and modify behavior. But if proper behavior doesn't stem from a heart that is right with God, we have only raised puppets destined for hell!

Is this the picture of our Heavenly Father?

Does He shame us? Even when we willfully sin?

Does He make a spectacle and open shame of us?

Is not the purpose of true discipline to lovingly guide our children to repentance and a change of heart?

Does not the Word say that it is His kindness that leads us to repentance?

Are we not the first picture of God they have in their little lives? Is this not how they will relate to Him as adults?

But why have parents resorted to such extreme measures of punishment? Are they desperate? Do they feel they have exhausted every other form of punishment and see this as their last resort?

Perhaps.

But from my vantage point it simply appears that they are narcissists looking for a bunch of likes, shares, and comments applauding them for their “Extreme Punishment”.

For why else would a loving parent heap shame upon their dear child, photograph it, and then plaster it all over the Internet where it is forever embedded to hound them for the rest of their days.

It grieves me that we are raising a generation of children who are being taught that the consequences given them from the ones who ought to love them most are nothing but shame and mockery.

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