

## WHAT NORTHSIDE TEACHES STUDENTS ABOUT DISCIPLINE

As people who accept the Bible as both true and authoritative, we understand that every human being comes into the world with a sinful nature that will eventually reveal itself when that person commits acts of sin. Sin, by definition, is any rebellion against or lack of conformity to the law of God. Precisely, we do not believe children are innately good nor that improving their environment will substantially change this condition.

The Bible also teaches that children are a stewardship from God to parents, who will answer to Him for their development. Mom and Dad may construct as extensive a network as necessary for their complete training in academics, fine arts, sports, etc. Northside Christian School functions as one valuable component in that network and thereby shares the responsibility for developing character and self-control in the members of its student body.

One skill necessary for success in school and all other endeavors is the art of self-discipline. Discipline is the process of teaching another to do the right thing, regardless of feelings or peer pressure. This life skill is an essential stepping-stone in developing self-discipline, which can be defined as making oneself do the right thing.

In the Secondary School we control behavior with demerits. Possible offenses and a range of penalties are listed in the Student Handbook. Letters, phone calls, counseling, and parent conferences support the Demerit System.

In the Kindergarten and Elementary Schools we use a wide variety of teaching techniques, such as verbal correction, time-out, loss of privilege, tallies, notes to parents, calls to parents, student conferences, administrative conferences, suspension, and expulsion. We also balance these elements with a wide variety of positive incentives for good behavior, culminating in public recognition of outstanding behavior in year-end awards ceremonies.

One effective component in teaching younger children to control their own behavior is corporal punishment. This is often caricatured as hitting or abusing children, which we vehemently oppose. Quite the contrary, God Himself counsels us to discipline our children physically:

Proverbs 29.15            The rod and reproof give wisdom.

Proverbs 23.14            Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from hell.

Furthermore, chastening is a demonstration of His love for us and of our sonship and, by extension, of our love for our children and their sonship:

Proverbs 13.24            He that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

Hebrews 12.6            Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son.

Finally, we see many instances in which God Himself chastens by means of corporal or even capital punishment in order to teach His children to control their own behavior and to learn from the example of others. For example,

Genesis 32.25            God crippled Jacob because of his lifetime of deceit and pride.

Numbers 12.10            Miriam was smitten with leprosy because of her insurrection.

Acts 5                      God slew Ananias and Sapphira because of their sin of lying

I Corinthians 11.30      Many were sick and some died because of desecrating the Lord's supper.

When parents are supportive, Northside has significant success in improving student behavior with these procedures. Students and parents truly understand that we love children enough to do the unpleasant things which are necessary to bring them progressively into conformity with the image of Christ. The proper use of Biblical means is the only sure way to achieve this Biblical end. The process determines the product.

In conclusion, our goal is not conformation to external standards; rather, it is transformation of the heart, which always makes a visible difference in behavior. We pray and strive to that end. Ultimately, the indwelling Holy Spirit becomes the motivator, monitor, and rewarder of proper conduct.