DISCIPLINE, BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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The bible is very clear in its instruction to the parents about, “Training up a child in the right way he should go so that when he is old he will not depart from it”. This precept is all about the role of parents in inculcating discipline among their children. Discipline affects students behavior, his grooming, respect to authorities, health & study habits, and even their ambitions in life.

I was able to visit some private schools around the province and even outside of Bataan. The first thing I noticed was their uniform, the haircut, and the wearing of their ID’s. I have this impression that these are just indications of a consistent enforcement of school rules & regulations, and presumably a collaboration between school authorities and parents.

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary; Discipline is the control gained by requiring that rules or orders be obeyed and punishing bad behavior: a way of behaving that shows a willingness to obey rules or orders. : behavior that is judged by how well it follows a set of rules or orders.

The English Oxford Dictionary defines it this way; The practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behavior, using punishment to correct disobedience. Discipline therefore is espoused with some sort of a “sanction” if not punishment for it connotes negative meaning.

The Latin word “disciplina” or instruction, or knowledge has its origin from the word “discipulus or disciple. A word which is very familiar to the Christian world. A term undoubtedly connected to our faith and or belief in Jesus Christ, the Master of the twelve disciples.

I would like to mention in particular the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), located at Brgy. Alas-asin, Mariveles, Bataan. More than four times I visited
this school and how I wish we could have the beauty of their students wearing their uniform, the way they move and greet visitors, their neat @ clean haircut, clean surroundings, and how they observe punctuality. These really reflect a unified effort of imposing and practicing discipline from the top of the management down the line to the least member of this prestigious institution. Still I’m convinced and would like to remind the reader that the behavior of an individual wherever he is, is just a carryover of his character at home.

Thus, a disciplined individual at home is likely to become a responsible individual in the community. Parents and authorities therefore must know the lyrics and tune of the “music of discipline”. Let us remember that following regulations is a form of respect, and respect is discipline. This is one reality that sets up the standard and quality of these private educational institutions mentioned compared to our public schools.

In our elementary, junior and senior high schools however, we are facing all sorts of problem due to lack of student’s discipline, and how we implement it. Boys have fashionable haircut and colors, earrings, smoking inside the campus, vandalism, cutting @ skipping classes, and absenteeism. Girls have multiple earrings, anklets, bracelets, all sorts of accessories, too much makeup and eye shadows. Tardiness is but a normal habit to the majority of students and even pupils in the elementary. Seems that the school became a venue for fashion statement, resulting to the “disregarding of school rules and regulations”. They don’t want to be checked either, just plain insistent on their rights as an individual without responsibility. Discipline is so relegated to the sideline because we over-emphasized children’s right, and we disregard our duty to impose disciplinary actions because of fear of politics in school, or worse we don’t know our duties and its boundaries.

I have to blame myself as a school authority, and as a parent at the same time regarding this problem. At school we are afraid to take effect disciplinary actions against erring and troublesome students. The institution suffers for we only emphasized student’s right, but don’t have the heart to make them do their responsibility to follow
rules. We are now facing a major conflict on how to control students, whom parents, teachers and even our policies developed them to be loosely liberated and freewheeling, and of how to impose our regulations without encroaching and denying them of their “rights”. The result, discipline is disarrayed. When discipline is absent, learning is affected. In an environment where discipline is not established, that environment is not conducive to learning. Are we going to blame the students/pupils? Or the parents, the institution itself, or policies?

The bible says in Hebrews 12:11 “For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” Simply put; every erring student or pupil must feel that pain of his/her misbehavior. That pain can be guilt feelings, or embarrassment while undergoing counseling. We can’t consider it discipline if we do not point out the negative behavior committed by an individual. And by pointing it out has a negative impact to the wrong doer. This negative impact is the unpleasant feeling for the moment the bible is referring to in Hebrews 12:11. Don’t worry, it is only for the moment, later it will yield the fruit of righteousness, as the bible guarantees.

Are you willing to take full responsibility? Are you a teacher, school head, administrator, guidance counselor or a school security personnel? As a group being mentioned, we are not sufficient. Our badly needed HELP and HOPE is the HOME (3H). The home, through the parents, is where character and behavior is being molded. The schools only serve as reinforcement of discipline practiced at home. But the school must stand firm with the rules and its implementation. Our utmost hope that both the school and home must teach students the true meaning of responsible democratic ways of being a student. These two entities need to collaborate with each other. What is right and wrong at school must also be the same in every home. That is COLLABORATION.
References:

Merriam Webster’s Dictionary  The Bible, Proverbs 22: 6