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## **RAISING FAITHFUL CHILDREN**

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In New Testament times, Rome had something called the *patria potestas*, which granted the father of the house absolute power over his children. He had the power to scourge his children. He could sell them into slavery. If he decided to do so, he could order their execution. What does this have to do with raising faithful children?

This is the backdrop of total fatherly authority wherein we find a man who loves his children enough to discipline and correct them in God approved ways. “Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?” (Hebrews 12:9).

What concept is the Hebrew writer trying to get across? Discipline, when it is administered God’s way, is a tool of “correction” and a sign of “affection”. (Proverbs 13:24) “He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him discipline.” (Proverbs 29:15, 17) “The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother”... “Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul.”

While considering this subject we must remember that when discipline is administered God’s way, it is done very carefully – “Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.” (Colossians 3:21) and (Ephesians 6:4) “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” God desires that we raise our kids as children of the King, not like subjects of the Roman Empire.