

Answering A Foolish Child

According to his folly (Prov. 26:4)

1. You are drawn into a conflict by your child.
2. Your child is allowed to successfully employ sinful, manipulative behaviors.
3. You react with a snappy comeback motivated by emotions other than love for your child.
4. You resort to defending yourself, justifying your actions, blameshifting, answering “why” questions, argumenations, etc.
5. You allow your child to terminate the conversation by having the last word before biblical correction has taken place.
6. You walk away feeling guilty, intimidated, frustrated, exasperated, like a failure, and/or out of control.
7. Your child walks away with the satisfaction of knowing that he has punished or manipulated you.

As his folly deserves. (Prov. 26:5)

1. You are in control of the conversation with
2. Your child is confronted biblically when sinful, manipulative behaviors are employed.
3. You respond out of love with a well thought out biblical answer that aims at driving out foolishness from the heart of a child.
4. You identify and effectively put an end to behavior.
5. You do not allow the conversation to end until biblical discipline and/or correction has taken place so that your child acknowledges and repents of his sin.
6. You walk away confident that by God’s grace you are in control of and successfully accomplishing the training of your child.
7. Your child walks away knowing that you have successfully thwarted his attempts at disrespect and manipulation.

Elements of Manipulative Behavior

The Behavior	Desired Emotional Response	Parental Reaction	Desired Controlling Effect	Sinful Motives
Accusations	Guilt	Defend self	To procrastinate	Love of pleasure
Criticisms	Shame	Justify actions	To avoid obligation	Love of power
Crying	Embarrasment	Blame shifting	To change parent’s mind	Love of praise
“Why” questions	Hurt	Answer “why” questions	To lower parents’ standard	Love of money
Obligatory Statements	Anger	Yelling back	To rescind parental punishment	Love of (anything)
Sulking, Putting, Whining, Withholding Affection, Cold Shoulder				... Food, safety, no homework, comfort, toys, freedom, a car, etc.

**Taken from THE HEART OF ANGER by Lou Priolo*