

“How Do I Stop Losing It With My Kids” by William P. Smith (A Review)

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I have four children seven years of age and younger (with twin toddler boys as well). So any Gospel-centered, God-honoring, Christ-exalting words of wisdom I can find on parenting are like gold to me.



William P. Smith recently wrote a short work called [How Do I Stop Losing It With My Kids? Getting To The Heart of Your Discipline Problems](#). He poses these questions:

- When you lose control because your child is disrespectful (or disobedient, or ungrateful, or anything else that annoys you), whose agenda for your child has become most important? Yours? Or God’s?
- When you lose control, are you most concerned with your child obeying God’s will, or your will?
- Whose desires (for peace and quiet, comfort, respect, obedience, etc.) are most important at the moment you are losing control?
- When your child disobeys you in front of others, are you most concerned for God’s reputation or your own? (p. 5)

Smith notes that “children’s hearts are not won by force” (p. 9) and that we must not “demand their worship” by teaching them to “live according to every word that proceeds out of [our] mouths,” but by every word that proceeds out of God’s mouth (Matthew 4:4).

Soak in this paragraph:

Children’s hearts are not won by force. When your children are physically, emotionally, and socially mature, their true nature and attitude toward you will come out. You have taught them that their relationship with you is not built on Christ and his way, but on you and your rules. When they reject your rules, it is likely they will also reject you, and you will be left without a relationship with your child. Is there any hope? Yes, there is. **Jesus came to free you from the demands that turn his good gifts into your selfish rights. He takes clenched fists and opens them. Jesus doesn’t remove your good desires. Rather, he reorders you on the inside so that your ungodly, twisted demands become godly, righteous desires.** As this happens to you on the inside, the way you relate to your child will start to change also. (p. 11)

Look at the great strategies put out by Dr. Smith.

1. Ask for forgiveness.
2. Open your life to God’s people.
3. Make a plan for how you are going to relate to your child in the future. (He even calls for parents to take a “time-out” to pray about how to deal with the issue and to direct your child to Christ.)
4. Set positive goals. (Don’t just look at your child when they are doing something wrong. Realize that when your child sins, they are running from Christ.)
5. Tell stories about your own struggles.
6. Look for ways your child is changing.
7. Focus on one specific behavior over the next two weeks.
8. Depend on Jesus for daily help.

You can purchase this excellent resource online at: <http://www.whitewingbookstore.com/>