

Published based on [It's All in How You Use It](#)

# **It's All in How You Use It**



*Have you ever “used” the Word of God for your own selfish purposes? Ever used it to prove your point, not caring whether or not you hurt someone else as long as you were proven right?*

Although I am normally a very “nice” person, yesterday I almost crossed out of my good little boundary box to tell off a woman in the orthodontist’s office.

She was sitting just across from me with her son, who appeared to be about 14. I noticed she had a Gideon Bible in her hands. Then I heard her say, “That’s not right!” as she scanned a text using her finger to guide her reading. She was obviously in the first couple of chapters of Genesis. Her son looked at her incredulously and said, “In the Bible? You’re saying something in THE BIBLE is not right???”

“Oh, here it is,” she said, as if almost validating that she knew the book so well that if there was an error, it was definitely the printer’s fault and not hers.

Well, you will have to trust me for this story. I was there. Attitude was *exuding* from this lady, and I don’t mean a good one.

So I am already kinda ticked at her. Then she did it. I watched and listened in horror as she began to take God’s Word and beat up her son, not literally, but emotionally. It was emotional, spiritual abuse as far as I was concerned.

She had located the Ten Commandments which she began to read LOUDLY to her son. Well, she began to pick out the commandments which she thought he needed to improve upon. “Thou (KJV) shalt honor thy father and mother.” Then she began her LOUD commentary. “That’s what you need to hear. You need to honor your father and mother.” Everyone in the office could hear her. There was no quiet elevator music playing. She had her audience and she meant to use us all to help her shame her son.

She went on even *louder*, “...so that your days will be long upon the earth.” Well, you might just imagine her commentary on that part.

I was aghast. How could she do this to her son in this very public forum? Then she continued. She outlined for him all the ways that he was falling short of the Ten Commandments. She even included adultery, which she said he was guilty of for the way he talked to his girlfriend on the phone.

I was so angry. I mean, I wanted to let her have it. It was just so wrong to use God’s Word in that way!

I finally stepped outside the office to get away from her and to avoid telling her off. I figured her son was already sufficiently embarrassed without me causing any additional hurrah. Then she came outside to use her phone!

UGH! I’ve gotta admit I didn’t even think to pray for her or her son until just right this minute.

What I wanted to say was, “You self-righteous *#\*+&#* ! How dare you humiliate your son in public that way? How dare you use God’s Word against him in that way? Don’t you know you are turning him against the Word when you misuse it that way! You might need to read it for your own self-reflection.” And I think it made God mad, too! And sad, of course. (Okay, I know this might offend you, but that is what I thought.)

And I thought of how the Word of God is meant to be used with our children, to train, to encourage, to give life,

and yes, to correct in love. How tragic, and yes I mean tragic, when God's Word is used in a way which is exactly the opposite of His purpose! I couldn't help but believe that this mother was turning her son away from God and His Word by the way she was using the Word to embarrass and shame her son. I am not saying that her son didn't need any correction; I am just saying ***she was doing it the wrong way and in the wrong place with a wrong spirit behind it.***

This morning, while still brewing over the incident, I thought of Hebrews 4:12 which says, "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

I've taught that verse many times, but this morning I sort of entered the back door of the verse. I am going to pass by the thoughts which so many have wonderfully supplied about this verse and add a few from a different perspective.

**The Word of God is meant to be used in *life-giving* ways.**

**It is to be used as a good surgical instrument which is able to do very precise work on the body without causing *collateral damage*.**

**As the Word divides between soul and spirit, it is able to bring true correction. The Word, used correctly, gets right to the heart of what we need in ways that are healing and life-giving. Yes, sometimes the truths of the Word are painful to us, but they draw us to God, not *shove us away from Him*.**

You see, only the Word of God is able to judge the deepest parts of our nature. Only the Word through God's Spirit is able to expose and sift and analyze and judge the thoughts and purposes of our hearts.

Okay, I know some of you are thinking at this moment that I have done this very thing. I have judged the woman so I will admit that she probably has her own long list of hurts that would lead her to behave in the way she did so forgive me if I seem harsh.

Finally, let me say that **God's Word is meant to be used to divide between soul and spirit so that we can not only finding spiritual healing, but find healing in our soul, our mind and emotions.** The root of the problem is not always a spiritual one, although as the problem lingers and grows, its tentacles affect our spiritual life. But the root of the problem is oftentimes in our soul. The problem is often an emotional wound or a problem in our ways of thinking which can come from so many places including wrong parental teaching (i.e., the woman in the orthodontist office).

So I ponder if I should have been an advocate for the young boy, but maybe in some ways I am now with my thoughts and my prayers.

Perhaps some repentance is in order for many of us.

*Have you ever used the Word of God to prove your point, not caring if you inflicted emotionally wounds along the way?*

*Or perhaps, you have been hurt by others misusing God's word and misrepresenting His heart? Has their wrong caused you to become bitter?*

*Do you "proof-text" with God's Word, using it to prove you are RIGHT?*

*Have you ever embarrassed another human being when you had an unfair advantage over them like this mother did in the office, using the power differential to your advantage?*

*Have you misunderstood God's heart and believed that He only wanted you to know His Word so that the Law would fall on you?*

*Have you ever set yourself up as the judge (okay, ouch) when God's Word is the only true judge?*

*Have you ever thought God didn't care about your emotional or mental well-being?*

Well, there is much, much more I want to explore in this context but that can wait for tomorrow so check back for more thoughts on the subject!

You can also find this article published on [It's All in How You Use It](#), and on the tag pages [child-rearing](#), [Hebrews 4:12](#), [proof-texting](#), [Ten Commandments](#).