

# Raising Self-Governed Children in a Self-Centered World

*Building inward character in a culture of outward control*





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President

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Great American Outpost



Great  
American  
Outpost

# Why Does Everything Feel Harder?

Obedience  
Feels harder

Responsibility  
Feels harder

Simple Things  
Feel like big battles



# "It Was Just a Simple Chore..."

| *Why did this turn into a full event?*

The struggle isn't really about the chore. It points to something deeper — a **self-government issue**, not merely a behavior issue.

# What Is Government?



Rule

Direction and order



Responsibility

Ownership of actions



Accountability

Answering for choices



Restraint

Regulation and control

**Before order in society...  
there must be order in the  
individual.**



Proverbs 25:28

# The Real Parenting Goal

Not just...

- Educated children
- Successful children

But rather...

**Self-governed children** – those who carry order within themselves

# Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary

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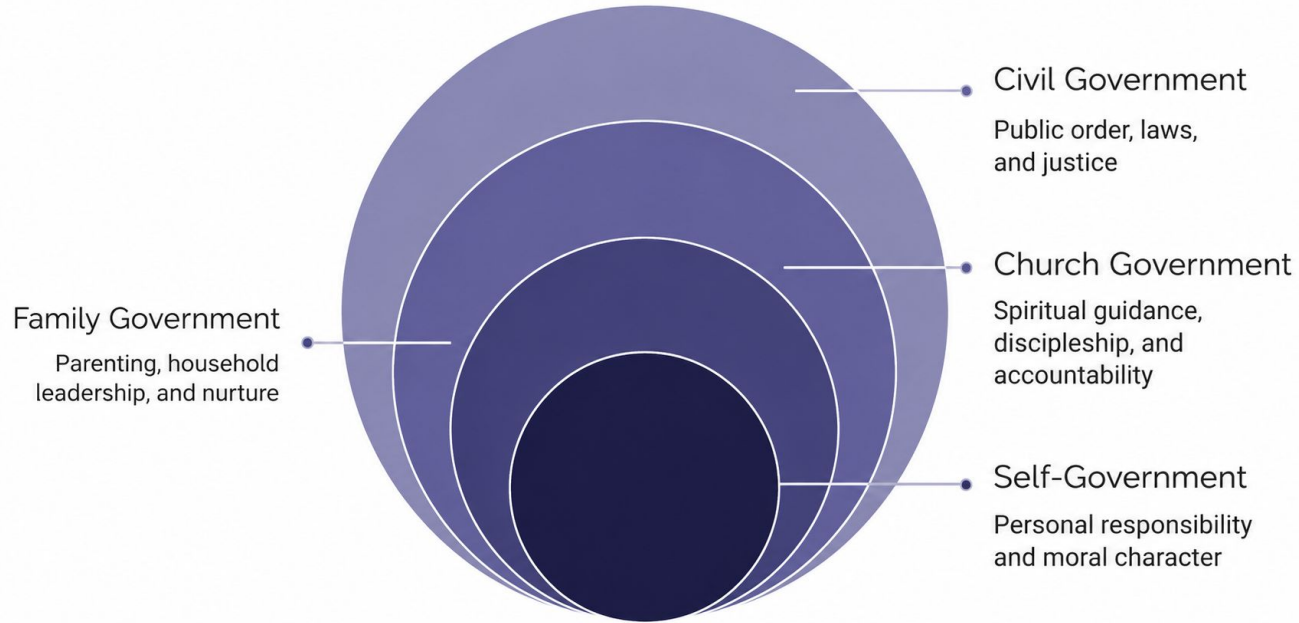
## Government

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**GOVERNMENT**, *noun* Direction; regulation. These precepts will serve for the *government* of our conduct.

1. Control; restraint. Men are apt to neglect the *government* of their temper and passions.

# Four Spheres of Government



Healthy societies are built from the inside out – beginning with the individual, then the family, then the church, and finally civil government.

# 4 Spheres of Government



# Self-Government

The rule of the soul

"A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls."

— Proverbs 25:28





# Family Government

The training  
ground of  
responsibility

"Children, obey your  
parents in the Lord:  
for this is right..."

— Ephesians 6:1–2

# How the Spheres Connect

1

Self-Government  
Weakens

Family government  
expands to  
compensate

2

Family  
Weakens Too

Church struggles  
to build conviction

3

All  
Weaken

Civil government  
grows to fill the  
void

📌 **Key Idea:** When internal control disappears → external control increases

"Effective government begins by **an individual learning to govern himself.** The more internal self-government a person possesses, **the less external government he needs.**"

— Beliles & McDowell



**"Public virtue cannot exist in a nation without private virtue."**

— John Adams

"Those who will not be governed by God will be ruled by tyrants."

— William Penn

# What Culture Says About Freedom

*More  
Options*

Freedom  
means  
unlimited  
choice

*Fewer  
Restrictions*

Rules are  
obstacles to  
happiness

*Follow Your  
Heart*

Do what  
feels right —  
you be you

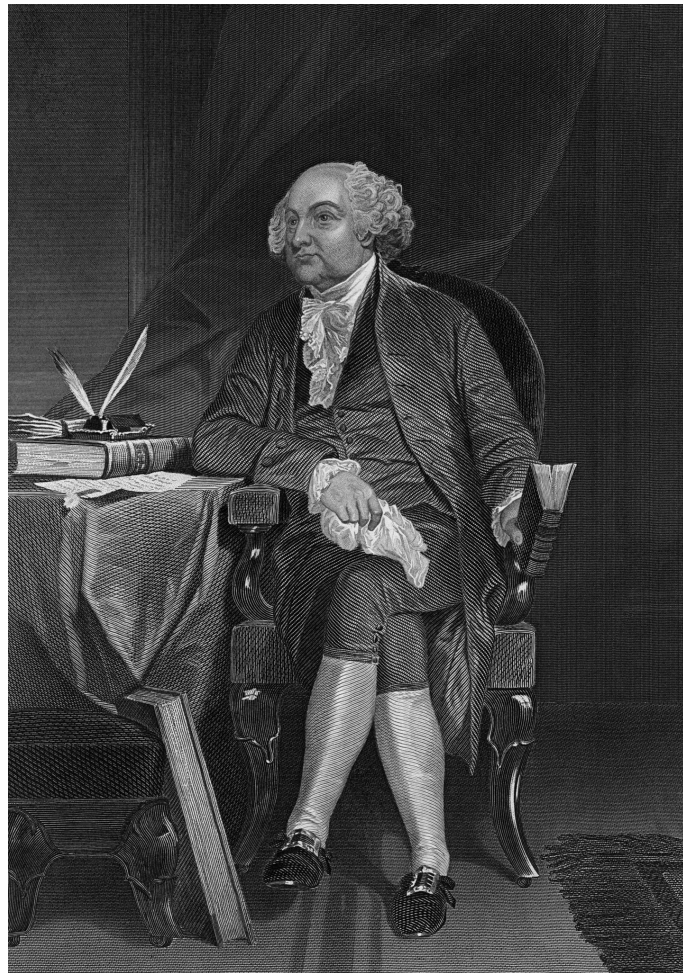
**Biblical liberty** is not the absence of restraint.

The ability to **choose what is right** even when it is hard.



- A man without control is not free
- A child who cannot hear "no" is not free
- A teen who cannot put down a screen is not free

***They are being governed – just not well.***



"A general dissolution of principles and manners will more surely overthrow the liberties of America than the whole force of the common enemy."

— Samuel Adams

***Loss of inward virtue destroys freedom faster than outside pressure.***

# The Parenting Shift

Old Question

"How can I **control** every moment?"

*New Question*

"How can I build enough **inward control** that external control can lessen?"

# Why This Is Hard

Our children are being disciplined by culture toward:

Immediacy

Comfort

Self-Expression

Convenience

# Parent Reality

Many of us drift into **survival mode**:

More Negotiating

Bargaining instead of leading

Lowering Standards

Adjusting expectations downward

Repeating Ourselves

Saying the same thing again and again

**Hard Truth:** If we're not careful, we stop training self-government and start managing reactions.

# The Key Shift

Culture  
Teaches

- Self-focus
- Entitlement

Home Must  
Teach

- Self-denial
- Duty
- Endurance

# 5 Practical Ways to Build Self-Government

01

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Train  
Conscience

02

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Let  
Consequences  
Teach

03

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Give  
Responsibility

04

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Train Emotional  
Restraint

05

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Cast Vision

# 1. Train Conscience



*Instead of only "Stop that" or "Go apologize," ask:*

- What was going on in your heart?
- Was that truthful? Was that loving?
- What would have been right?

Build **awareness**, not just compliance.

## 2. Let Consequences Teach

"Choices have weight."

Rescuing every discomfort often **postpones maturity**.  
Let natural consequences become the teacher.



# 3. Give Responsibility

**Contributors  
grow  
differently than  
consumers.**



Family government is the daily training ground where self-government gets exercised. **Give children real responsibility.**

# 4. Train Emotional Restraint

*"God gave us... power, love,  
and self-control." – 2  
Timothy 1:7*

Handle Disappointment  
**Without falling apart**

Wait  
**Without demanding**

Do Hard Things  
**And respond  
respectfully**

# 5. Cast Vision

We...

- Finish what we start
- Tell the truth
- Serve others
- Are joyful, we are not complainers

# We, As Parents, Must Model It

"Be a model of good works."  
— Titus 2:7

Children learn more from the **climate** than the speeches — and they feel secure with a steady anchor.

*"Public virtue cannot exist in a nation without private virtue."*

– John Adams

It starts at home. It starts with us.

# Stay Steady. Stay Faithful.

When it feels  
repetitive...

**Stay steady.**

When it feels  
unnoticed...

**Stay faithful.**

When it feels  
easier to give in...

**Hold the line.**

**You are shaping a soul.**

"The future of liberty may be sitting at your kitchen table."

