

WHY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?

The Christian School movement has been with us since the founding of this nation. However, since 1970, it began exploding to the point where it was stated that in 1978 a Christian school was beginning one in every 7 hours in America! Now, the Home School movement may be topping this statistic!

Three reasons often given for the start of these private and church run school were (1) lack of discipline; (2) falling academic scores; and (3) the rise of secular humanism (declared a religion in 1973 by the Supreme Court) in public schools. The bottom line seemed to be the fact that the public schools in this nation were failing. Although these were legitimate concerns, and many have documented the serious problems in the public schools of America, they do not represent adequate reasons for starting or sending your child to a Christian school.

God does not call us to do something as believers because of how bad it is “out there” in the world. We need positive, Scriptural reasons for doing things. We are not to walk backwards, away from evil, and hope to stumble into the Kingdom of God! After all, if failure of the public schools is the right reason; why not try to help them or reform them; why abandon them by taking your children out? Isn't a free public school education as American as baseball and apple pie?

Either Christian and Home schools are called by God to exist everywhere by principle or they are cop-outs for weak children or merely alternatives to certain places where the schools are really bad. In order to answer the

question – why should you consider a Christian education; we need to define one and answer some of the more common objections

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it” – Proverbs 22:6

This verse means more than correction or casual instruction. In its context of Hebrew life, it meant that the entire life of the child was immersed in God's view of things. It was the parent's duty to see to it that a child developed a desire for that which pleases God. This was to occur in the morning, noon and night, or consistently all day in the life of the child, (see Deut. 6:6-9).

According to Biblical tradition, context and teaching, it is impossible for Christian education to take place by merely exposing one to Christianity on Sunday mornings, at Sunday schools or youth gatherings. It is to be a formal, consistent training that puts God's view in the midst of every aspect of life – it is a complete discipleship. ***Thus, Christian Education is the consistent practice of training a child in his formative years (0-19) to see every aspect of life from a Biblical point of view.***

COMMON OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

Objection Number One – “Giving my child a Christian Education shelters him from the real world.”

The first thing we must understand is the real world. If Jesus is the truth (Jn. 14:6) then anything that does not give Him first place is a

lie, (Col. 1:16-18). The word secular means “without God” and produces a reprobate mind, (Ro. 1). Thus, the real world is only understood when Jesus is central to it all, (Ro. 11:36).

The nature of our children is not good, but evil. They need a pure training process in order to be able to discern between good and evil, (Ro. 16:19). This was the kind of training Jesus received, (Is. 7:14). ***Thus, God's command is to sow good seed in our children about the real world so they can bear fruit and discern between good and evil, (Ga. 6:7-8, Heb. 5:14).***

Objection Number Two – “My children should learn to witness; be lights where there is the greatest darkness.”

The purpose of school is not for children to change the philosophy of curriculum or teachers, but to be trained by them. No Hebrew parent would have thought of coming to Moses to ask that his children be trained by the Philistines so they could help them obey God's Law. Moses himself had been trained in the best government school of his day, only to spend forty years in the wilderness being retrained.

God's Command: Parents must be equally yoked with the training process of their children in order to prepare them to be salt and light in society, (Amos 3:3, 2nd Cor. 6:14, Mt. 5:13).

Objection Number Three – “It is the state that should educate; leave religion to the churches; isn't this lawful separation of church and state?”

In America, home schools and Christian schools were on the scene 200 years before the government schools. They are no longer public since they are run by the State and not local communities. They are not free either, since supported by taxation. They represent an unconstitutional abuse of our free choice in education. Religious freedom was to be without federal intervention.

Biblically, education rests on the responsibility of the parents. It is also part of the church's mission to disciple the next generation. The State's purpose is to protect and defend God-given rights. ***We must return the responsibility of educating to families and churches in obedience to Christ, (Eph. 6:4, Mt. 28:19-20).***

Objection Number Four – “State certified teachers and facilities give such quality, how can the church or homes do this?”

To certify means to give credence, or believe in something. Parents are the ones who should certify schools by choosing one over another. A state monopoly on education only reduces quality. Children taught at home or in private schools consistently score higher in academic excellence.

Our priorities need to be correct. The fear of the Lord is that which equips a child to apply His faith academically. Athletics and other programs are secondary. ***We need to restore proper priorities in education, realizing the consequences of disobedience, (Pr. 1:7, Mt. 18:6).***

GOD'S ULTIMATE PURPOSE FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

God's purpose for Christian education is not negative. It has nothing to do with how bad things are, or being negative about the public schools. His purpose is not to isolate our children, but rather insulate them so they are prepared to dismantle humanism and conquer the enemy.

The desire of every Christian couple and parent should be the preparing of their children to receive the torch of God's vision and purpose for the generation in which they live. God desires for our children to produce justice and judgement in the earth (Genesis 18:18-19), which is more than mere exposure to Christianity. It involves equipping them to see how Kingdom principles and purposes affect every area of life. They must be disciplined to be productive, seeing every vocation as full-time Christian service where one can occupy for the cause of Christ.

Can this be done after school hours and separate from the academic subjects? No, we must see each subject as a tool of discipline that teaches them how to discern and reason by Biblical principles. To ignore this is to produce inept believers who understand their salvation but know nothing of replacing error with truth based upon the Bible.

OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMANDS

When all is said and done, obedience is primary. We must willingly embrace God's commands and goals as our own; for ***“to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” – James 4:17***

WHY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?

Why Christian families should educate their children from a Biblical Christian perspective in obedience to the Word of God.

by Paul Jehle