

Educating Children - Whose Job Is It?



According to the Bible, whose responsibility is it to educate children:
the government's job?
the local church's job?
the parent's job?

The government wants to teach children secular humanism, sex education, so-called safe sex, alternative lifestyles, evolution, situational ethics, and contemporary views on the roles of men and women. The local church usually wants to segregate people by age and wants to make sure that their programs are worldly enough so that they are not boring.

Who is more truly concerned about your children's spiritual welfare than you? Hopefully no one, other than the Lord.

Reasons why parents alone should educate their children:

1. It is biblical.

The Bible makes it very clear that parents are the ones who are to teach their children. This not only insures that the children will get a Christian education but an education that will train them for all areas of life, as they observe their parents throughout the day, every day. Rather than learning the values of some stranger and some heathen (i.e. the average public school teacher) they will learn the values of their parents. This makes it all the more imperative that their parents be the best role models possible, and that they model Christ as best as they can. Keep in mind that by spending such a tremendous amount of time with your children you will have an opportunity to form relationships with them that would not be possible if they were sent off to school every day and spent that time with someone else. Here are some verses from Proverbs

that highlight the need and the importance for parents to teach their children...

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

Proverbs 23:26 - My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

Proverbs 1:8 - My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Proverbs 4:1 - Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

Proverbs 13:1 - A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.

Proverbs 7:1 - My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

We see also in Deuteronomy how important it is for children to be in a home-based, family-centered teaching environment throughout the day:

Deuteronomy 11:18-21 - Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And **ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.** And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates: That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

Notice that parents are to teach their children **continually throughout the day** - "when thou sittest in thine house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up". A parent's job is not just to feed and cloth a child. The Bible states that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God (Matt 4:4). Certainly almost all Christian parents are capable of teaching the Word of God (verbally and by example) to their children and such instruction is a large part of educating Christian kids. The problem that may be in the back of the minds of many Christian parents is that they know that if they are to adequately train their children, then *they themselves* will have to get educated in areas that they may not have diligently studied. The consequences of parents being put into a position where they have no choice but to become better educated Christians is good news for the local church because...

THE BYPRODUCT OF HOME EDUCATED CHRISTIAN CHILDREN IS BETTER EQUIPPED CHRISTIAN PARENTS AND A LOCAL CHURCH THAT IS HEALTHIER SPIRITUALLY.

2. Negative peer pressure needs to be avoided.

Learning to stay away from vipers and alligators is far better than trying to learn how to handle them and we see this philosophy stated in scripture:

2 Timothy 2:22 - Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Proverbs 4:14 - Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. 15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

Proverbs 19:27 - Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.

Proverbs 28:7 - Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.

3. It is wrong to have double standards.

The Bible warns us about false teachers and false gospels and tells us to take note of them and **avoid** them:

Jeremiah 10:2 - Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

Romans 16:17 - Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Ephesians 5:11 - And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

2 Corinthians 6:14 - Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

If believers are commanded to avoid false gospels and false doctrines, why would we send our children to schools that promote such things? Do we want to follow the bad example of king Ahaz?...

2 Kings 16:3 – But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.

Sending an impressionable young mind to a public school nowadays is not too different from what king Ahaz did.

4. Children need to be disciplined and disciplined promptly.

Parents rarely expect the local church or the public school to discipline their children on a regular basis, especially according to biblical guidelines. Yet why do they expect the church and the government to educate their children? Part of the biblical education and training of children is the requirement that **parents** administer discipline as noted in these verses that refer to “thy son” and “his son”:

Proverbs 19:18 – Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

Proverbs 29:17 – Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

Proverbs 13:24 – He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

5. Children need clear-cut guidance, not mixed messages.

We get a good picture of hypocrisy from the following verse. It is a picture that we should hope would never apply to us...

Matthew 23:3 – All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

We should never want our children to get the idea that money, our job, our time or anything else is more important than teaching them to grow up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. After all, we are teaching them how to be future parents. When parents send a child off to school be it public or “Christian”, and then tell the child that what they are learning is biblically wrong, that child is getting a mixed message from their parents. They are liable to wonder why they are being sent somewhere where the teaching disagrees with their parents teaching and beliefs. Instead of trying to get kids to unlearn what they are learning incorrectly from some school, shouldn't parents teach them correctly right from the start by doing the teaching themselves? Also, how is a child to respond to secular “testing”? By parroting

lies back to their teachers for a good grade or by answering in truth?

6. Good children don't happen by accident.

Like seeds planted in a garden, children need to be nurtured, cultivated, weeded, watered, and fertilized. We are taking a huge risk with precious souls when we entrust the welfare of our children to others. The biblical law of reaping and sowing says that if we sow to the wind we reap the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7) but when we sow unto righteousness we reap mercy (Hos 10:12). We should have no regrets for making our children's spiritual welfare our own day-to-day concern as we personally raise them in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Perhaps if more Christian parents looked at raising their children as their primary ministry, it would be a lot easier to tell the Christian children from the children of the world... and maybe there would be more peace in the home:

Proverbs 3:1-2 - My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Very real and serious threats exist to our children's welfare

Obviously no parent would give their child a snake bite kit and then send them into a pit of cobras OR would give them a box of Band-Aids and then send them into a lion's den. And yet, spiritually speaking, there is not much difference in sending children off to school somewhere where their parents are not around to supervise what is being taught. We need to be realistic about how dangerous a society we live in today. Never mind the public schools... the Christian schools are certainly not free of incompetents, liberals, child molesters and just plain biblically ignorant teachers. It is a regrettable situation but all too true.

Common stumbling blocks for parents: not enough time & not qualified

1. Not enough time

Many parents think that they don't have time to tackle the task of educating their children themselves. Do they have time to undo the damage? If we send our kids to someone else for their education we are still ultimately responsible for finding out what they were taught, for correcting error they learned, and for teaching things that were just not taught (biblical principles, how to be a future spouse, future parent, future Christian). It can be helpful and encouraging to talk to parents who have been home schooling for many years and find out if they think that their investment in time was worth whatever

sacrifices they had to make. We should find out how they budgeted the time into their daily schedules. Perhaps one parent had to leave the work force. Perhaps another parent had to turn down promotions to be able to leave work at a decent hour. Perhaps the family started a business and worked towards becoming self-sufficient to have more control over their lives. Perhaps some families had to adjust their lifestyles - probably to a more godly one, anyway - to fit the requirements of properly raising a child. This may mean living a less materialistic life (to eliminate the need for a second job), no TV (Isn't TV a form of secular education?), and spending more time in biblical study and family worship.

2. Not qualified

Who is more qualified than you to raise your children? Do you think the government shares many of your concerns about what your children are exposed to or what you think about God and the Bible? Even the local Christian school is not going to know exactly what all your priorities are and concerns are with respect to educating *and disciplining* your children.

Quality help is available

Do you know that there are some excellent resources available to parents today to greatly simplify the task of teaching children at home? Many home-schooling ministries are accessible on the Internet and through the mail nowadays. They offer excellent teaching materials including computer aided instruction, workbooks, textbooks and even support groups.

Click [HERE](#) to see some home-school ministries and suppliers of teaching materials you may wish to investigate.

Children's Church

The idea of "children's" church is unscriptural and should be avoided. The Bible does not teach that children should be separated from their parents during a church meeting and neither does it teach that they should be segregated by age. Children belong with their parents while their parents worship the Lord. If a parent is not directly doing the teaching, they should at least be overseeing what is being taught to their children.

When a child sees their parents bowing in prayer or singing praises to the Heavenly Father, the child will be more apt to realize that there is a higher authority than their mother and father and they will be more apt to learn, by example from their parents, how to behave in church. Having the children in the midst of the congregation, for all to see, will also give parents an incentive for raising well-behaved children. In addition, God is the one who gives the spiritual understanding, not the intellectual ability of the child, so there is no reason to believe that a regular church service will be of lesser spiritual value to a child than some kind of children's church. One final point: the focus of coming to church Sunday mornings - for both children and parents - should

be to worship the Lord as a collective and complete body.

Food for thought:

God commands parents, not someone else, to train up their children. It also commands each believer to make disciples. Whose job is it really to make disciples of our children? Is it not an honor and a privilege to make disciples of our own children?

To get the proper biblical perspective, we should ask ourselves if we think we can really give God a satisfactory biblical reason for abdicating our responsibility to train up our children ourselves.

Regarding public schooling in particular, it is a very serious thing to give that which is holy (our children - 1Cor 7:14) to the dogs (the unsaved and ungodly - Php 3:2)... "And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." [Mark 9:42]

May God help us all to do what is right and to make the sacrifices necessary to raise children God's way. May the local church provide the support necessary for us to accomplish that which God has commissioned us to do. We must not forget that God knows what is best. As with all sound investments, there are wonderful rewards to be reaped from investing our time and energy into raising future men and women of God.

"Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life." [Prov 4:10-13]
