

Educating Our Children At Home

Transcript of a Sermon
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Introduction: (A mock dialogue between a friend and myself.)

Ernie is a father whose kids go to the government school.
And because I just met this Christian, he doesn't know yet that I
am a home-school father. But it is obvious that he is so frustrated:

Ernie: I am so frustrated with my school district!

Phil: Why, what's wrong Ernie?

Ernie: Oh, I went to a Parent Teacher Association meeting
last night and got absolutely nowhere with my teachers. They
seem so unmotivated to change the system, to deal with trouble
makers, or even to promote quality education.

Phil: Well, you can hardly blame them, the way kids are
nowadays.

Ernie: Oh, I know! The kids seem to have no respect for
authority. One of the teachers was telling me that she wants to quit
because of how unruly the children are. You should see the bad
attitudes my children have picked up from school.

Phil: Ah that's too bad. Where is your school district?

Ernie: I send them to the Philistines, disctrict 2, just like all
the other Christians in my neighborhood.

Phil: District 2, huh? My school district has highly motivated
teachers. For the most part the children seem to be fairly well
disciplined, and one of the studies that was done on our school
showed that the children had better social adjustment and better
self-image than the average school. I have to admit though, that
there is occasional lack of respect for the teachers, but all around, I
would rate the kids fairly high.

Ernie: Wow! That's impressive! How does the academic
side line up? I might move to your school district.

Phil: Last year our school was ranked in the 95th percentile. I
think my children's school has always insisted on a better
academic education and better text books.

Ernie: Yeah, I know. The textbooks have really gone
downhill, haven't they? I think the school disctrict needs to be
more receptive to parental input.

Phil: Oh, ours is. They are very receptive to parental input.
In fact, one of the neatest things about our school is that all the
teachers are Christians. They have all kinds of liberty to pray and
to read the bible.

Ernie: Yeah, right!? Where do your kids go? To a small
country school?

Phil: No. We homeschool.

Ernie: I can't believe you've been pulling my leg this whole
time! But aren't you concerned about your children getting poor
socialization? And what about the academics? Aren't you afraid
that your children will be unprepared for the world?

Thank you Curt, for helping with the dialogue. The three questions that he ended with are just a tiny sampling of the questions that people have about homeschooling. And we will try to answer questions about homeschooling and Christian day schools. But isn't it amazing that Christians will gladly pay high taxes so that the civil government can pay the Canaanites to disciple their children? While spending very little time teaching their children a consistent Christian worldview, they insist that the unbelievers do a thorough job of training the children in a consistent pagan worldview.. Isn't it amazing that they will put up with inferior education, larger teacher student ratios, poorer preparation for life and give up parental control, all in the name of doing what is in the child's best interests?

I think there is a lot of confusion in the minds of sincere believers on this subject. For example, I doubt that most of these parents would even dream of allowing a liberal homosexual activist from a mainline denomination to teach their children in Sunday School. They would be shocked that any parent would allow an apostate Sunday School teacher to teach their children for even one hour a week. Yet they will force their children to spend 7 hours a day, five days a week, with the same humanist on Monday to Friday. He can't be a Sunday School teacher for one hour, but he can teach their children for 30 plus hours at school even though he is just as surely undermining the Christian worldview these parents hope their children will maintain. And these parents think that devotions at night will somehow undo the damage. Christians must wake up and no longer throw away the best years of their children's development and training to the devil.

Now every one of you agrees with me on this, so I won't preach a sermon trying to convince you to repent. Instead, I want to give you ammo to use with Christians who don't know better. And there many good Christians who don't better, but who could perhaps easily be convinced of the imperative of Christian education if they could be presented with the Biblical facts. And hopefully this material can be multiplied in encouraging a return of the hearts of the children to the fathers and of the fathers to the children as Malachi 4:6 words it. We are nearing the end of our foundation series, and I thought that I could not leave out our view of education as one of the distinctives that this church holds to.

Now, there are many objections that you don't even have in your outline, but these are the main ones, and I want to start with the objection that makes the most sense to people who aren't even supporters of government education.

I. “But what if I'm not a great teacher?”

- A. **Answer: informal education begins at age 0. A parent is a teacher whether he/she likes it or not. (2 Tim. 3:15; Hosea 11:3-4; Joel 2:15-16; Josh 8:35; implication of Psalm 8:2; 22:9-10; Ruth 4:16; Psalm 58:3; Is. 48:8).**

Their objection is, “What if I’m not a great teacher?” And there is a certain degree of plausibility to that. We want our children to have the best, don’t we? And we will get to the use of tutors and in certain circumstances, of Christian Schools. But the first thing that I wanted to point out is that all parents are inescapably teachers. In other words, you can’t help but be a teacher. And if you don’t start thinking about what it is that you are teaching to your newborn, you will not be a very good teacher; which means, you won’t be a very good parent.

Well, put into those terms you begin to realize, “Well, it’s something that I need to work on; maybe get help on; maybe get a parenting class from the pastor on how I can train my child even from the time of birth. And yes, children do need training right from birth. Psalm 58:3 says, **they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.** And you’ve probably experienced the remarkable phenomenon of newborns learning how to manipulate their parents within a matter of days with the kinds of cries that they have. And parents need to be molding that young one’s character. If the child is picked up the moment it cries, every time it cries, no matter what kind of cry it is, it will begin to figure out that it is the center of the universe, and when the parents on occasion fail to treat it as God, the child will let all hell brake loose until the parent cooperates. Those of you who have been through the parenting class know how training of children begins immediately. And the longer you put it off, the more remedial teaching you are going to have to do down the road.

That’s why 2 Timothy 3:14-15 says to Timothy, **from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures...** The word for childhood is the Greek word *Brephos*, meaning a newborn infant. Infant through toddler. The Scriptures governed his life from infancy. How can that be? Let me give a couple of examples: Our children learned some of the catechism before they could talk, using sign language. But even before that they picked up Biblically appropriate behavior and avoided Biblically inappropriate behavior. They developed Biblical habits. They certainly picked up non-verbal cues like folding hands, knowing when to laugh and when not to. And I think you are all familiar with that.

Trust in God is another thing that children pick up as being the most natural thing to do in a covenant home. Trust in God was instilled in David before he was weaned, which means before three

make sure that Christians don’t add to the problem through distance. Sometimes in God’s providence it is impossible to do otherwise. But it is my hope that as this sermon is disseminated outside this church that it would turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers so that God’s blessing can come upon society.

I. Parents are uniquely qualified to train the whole child (as opposed to just the intellect). We are called to give training in at least the following areas:

- As Rational Beings - give students a hunger for knowledge, understanding and wisdom. (Prov. 2). Show them who is the dispenser of all wisdom (Prov. 2:6,7; James 1:5-7; 3:15). Be sure to stress that true wisdom bears fruit (James 3:13-18)
- As Stewards - give them responsibilities appropriate to their age and explain that they are accountable to God (Col. 3:23,24).
- As Prophets - help them to develop their speaking skills and their ability to apply Scripture to new situations.
- As Priests - give them opportunities to pray and minister to others.
- As King/Rulers - give them responsibilities over God’s creation and stress that with more authority comes more responsibility.
- As Security Seekers - stress that you love them for who they are, not for what they produce.
- As Social Creatures- need opportunities of expressing and growing in social skills. Teach listening skills, conversational skills, non-verbal communication, speaking etiquette, and let them practice.
- As Responsible Citizens.

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children are receiving a godless education is a mark of apostasy."⁵ If he is right, then it is no wonder that so many children of believers do indeed apostatize. I have talked to numerous parents who have lost their children, or whose children have lost their faith after they started attending pagan schools. God's covenantal way is that children usually walk in the way of their parents. But unfortunately the parents for these children for 30 plus hours a week are strangers. J. Gresham Machen said, "I can see little consistency in a type of Christian activity which preaches the gospel on the street corners and at the ends of earth, but neglects the children of the covenant by abandoning them to a cold and unbelieving secularism."⁶ How do you want your child to be 30 years from now? Then make sure your training is pointing him toward that. Don't allow expenses, time pressures or inconvenience pressure you into giving away the training. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

E. We need a context all day in which God's Word can be applied to walking, eating, sitting, sleeping and working (Deut. 6:7; 11:19). This is hands on education, not ivory tower education that occurs in the classroom.

F. Homeschooling gives a better teacher/student ratio. If Jesus, the master teacher, didn't take on more than 12, who are we to try 30-50.

G. It gives better parental control of education. (Deut. 4:9-10; 6:7-9; 11:19; etc.)

H. It strengthens the family and thus the society (Mal. 4:6).

Let me just deal with one more point. It's subpoint H which says that home schooling strengthens the family and thus the society. Though society does not appreciate it now, homeschooling really has the potential to do the most lasting good for culture. And Malachi 4 explains why. Malachi 4:6 says, **Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.** I see America as being a cursed land now already. Society is disintegrating. Statistics seem to show lasting marriages to be a thing of the past. Fathers are absent or unknown. And we need to

years of age. He said, **You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts. I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb, you have been My God.** He said that he trusted while on his mother's breast.

And there are many Scriptures which show various facets of teaching that are done before the age of three. For example, Hosea 11:3-4 says, **I taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms... I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love, and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck.** That last phrase was an image taken from cattle being trained how to pull the plow. He is saying that these little tikes were being trained how to do easy tasks. We had our children bringing diapers and other things to us as soon as they could walk. It took us longer to have them to it than to just do it ourselves, but teaching someone else to do something always takes longer than doing it yourself. But it pays off, right? And there is even training Scripture talks about going on in church. Joel 2 says, **gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and nursing babes.** Joshua 8 shows the little ones being trained in church. The little ones are being trained to bow their heads and pray before they know much about what that means. They are trained to sing (Psalm 8:2). So let's set to rest once and for all whether parents can teach. They can and they must, simply because they are parents. And most parents have been teaching their children for six years, and suddenly they feel unqualified when first grade rolls around. But if they had been trained in how to teach the children when they were younger, a service that I offer as part of the parenting class, then it would be a natural and smooth transition.

B. Formal education begins at the age of weaning or at three (Isaiah 28:9-10; Neh. 8:2; Psalm 131) and is coupled with play (Zech. 8:5; cf. Job 21:11-12; Luke 7:31-32)

So anyway, there is informal education from age 0. Now, believe it or not, formal training in the bible began at age three, which was usually the time of weaning. Isaiah 28:9-10 is an example. It says, **Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk. Those just drawn from the breast. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little."** Education is repeated over and over again as principles are laid down like building blocks. And that started at weaning. It is fashionable in Homeschooling circles to postpone education until eight or nine

⁵ R.J. Rushdoony. God's Plan for Victory: The Meaning of Postmillennialism. (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1980), p. 30.

⁶ J. Gresham Machen, Forward in Faith (Chicago: National Union of Christian Schools, 1934).

years of age. There are obviously some subjects that you will want to put off till then, but children must start formal education at early ages. In fact, there's a great book called *Never Too Young*, written by an educator that I greatly admire down in Florida. Now that is a Christian school that I think is outstanding. For the most part I am sold on homeschooling as being the best option, but there are some schools around the country that have done a phenomenal job and might be options for certain parents.

- C. *All parents have the responsibility to teach, but we are not automatically good. However, with the use of study, wise counsel from others and the use of tutors, any parent can homeschool well. We just need to take our responsibility seriously so that we do not cause our young ones to stumble (1 Tim. 1:7; James 3:2; Heb. 5:12-14; Matt. 18:6).*

I won't cover point C. It just gives verses encouraging us to be ready to teach and to make sure that we don't cause our children to stumble.

II. “But shouldn't a teacher be licensed by the state?”

- A. *Answer: God has already licensed the parents to teach: Gen. 18:19; Deut. 4:9-10; 6:6-9,20-21; 11:18-21; Psalm 78:1-7; Prov. 1:8-9; 4:1-13; 22:6; 23:19-26; Hos. 11:1-4; Eph. 6:4 and we should not be impressed with man-made accreditation (1 Cor. 4:15; 2 Cor. 2:13; 3:1; 10:8,12; 12:11; Rom. 2:19-24)*

But a second objection that you frequently hear is the question, “But shouldn't a teacher be licensed by the state?” And my response would be twofold. First is the obvious question, “Why?” Why would an institution that has proven itself to be an absolute failure in education have to control parents who have for many decades way outperformed any government school in the country. Why should they license? It makes no rational sense. That's a great way of destroying successful homeschooling by introducing failed secular methodologies.

But the Biblical response is more important to me. And that is, “Where does the Bible give the state the right to say anything about education?” Nowhere. God has over and over again commanded parents to teach their children. I have a long list of verses in your outline. And there are literally hundreds more. This means that God has licensed us to teach, and Scripture is not impressed with attempts of men to have their man-made accreditation.

Turn to Romans 2 and look at an example of a synagogue school that God didn't like. And if you are thinking of sending

- A. *Answer: Jesus indicates that a good parent won't give his child a scorpion or a serpent, but will give what is best for the child (Luke 11:11-12). Part of training is knowing what is best for your child.*

XII. “But will your children really know how to deal with the real world?”

- A. *Answer: This is a good argument for Christian education. The Bible is the “key to knowledge” (Luke 11:52). Without Biblical insight on every subject of life they will not know how to deal with the real world. For example, the father in Proverbs 7:6-27 doesn't need the harlot to teach her son. The son needs the wisdom of the father as he is exposed to this evil slut who he sees outside the window. The bible does not encourage isolation from the world. But neither does it advocate abandoning an untrained child to be picked off by the world.*

XIII. “But wouldn't a Christian school be better than homeschooling?”

- A. *Answer: In some circumstances, yes. But see comments under point 6.*

XIV. “Are there any other good reasons to homeschool?”

- A. *Young children need a wholesome social environment (1 Cor. 15:33)*
- B. *We are called to never lean on our own understanding (Prov. 3:5-6)*
- C. *Everything we do we are to do in the name of Jesus (Col. 3:17,23,24) and to God's glory (1 Cor. 10:31)*
- D. *The training of a child will profoundly impact his future (Prov. 22:6). The question is, “Who will have the most impact upon my child? Will an unbeliever, or will I?”*

Proverbs 22:6 says, **Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.** If you value what your children will eventually be, you will not give up the bulk of a child's training to total strangers. R. J. Rushdoony said, “For a church or for parents to have no regard for the fact that their

You’ve all heard this next one. “But shouldn’t our children be missionaries in the public schools?” And if I’m feeling ornery I will say, they aren’t public schools, they are government schools. But what these Christians fail to realize is that no soldier enters a battle until he is prepared for battle. The Scripture is clear on that. And education is the process of preparation. I’m not going to go over every point in your outlines, but the second one should be intuitively obvious: You just don’t have the enemies training your soldiers. We train our own soldiers, thank you. Allowing the enemies to train your soldiers would be disaster. Thirdly, the purpose of education is not for the child to teach, but for the child to learn. They are engaging in the logical fallacy of switching categories in mid argument. They start by talking about the education of the child and then move into the child teaching – which is what being a missionary is all about. I’ll let you look at the other answers for yourself.

X. “But won’t our children miss out on the socialization process?”

A. Answer: I would rather not have my child socialized into the foolishness which is bound up in the heart of every child (Prov. 22:15) and which has a tendency to corrupt newly formed good habits (1 Cor. 15:33). Even pagans are frustrated with the bad socialization going on in the government schools.

I think people frequently answer their own questions with regard to point number X, and don’t even realize it. Point X asks, “But won’t our children miss out on the socialization process?” Kathy experience one lady loudly protesting how inconsiderate and terrible children are nowadays. They have no manners, they beat on each other, they are lazy... She was going on and on. But when she found out that Kathy’s well mannered children were homeschooled, she went on and on about how poorly socialized these children would be. And Kathy calmly asked her if she preferred the socialization of the children she was complaining about or the socialization of the well manner children that were presently before her. She didn’t quite know what to say. Socialization is one of many good reasons for homeschooling. We don’t want our children turning out that way. I’m going to skip over several points because they are fairly self-explanatory in the outline, and I want to skip down to the last Roman numeral, and subpoint D.

XI. “But what if your child wants to go to a government school?”

your kids to Christian schools, you might evaluate them in light of these verses. Romans 2:19 speaking to these Jewish teachers he says, **and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes** [babes = *nepion* which is the next step up from brephos. This would refer to weaned children all the way till a child passes from minor to legal status], **having a form of knowledge and truth in the law. You therefore who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say “Do not commit adultery,” do you commit adultery?** And he goes on to show the hypocrisy of their teaching. Their lifestyle disqualified them from teaching in God’s eyes. Now we have many today who say that the lifestyle of a teacher shouldn’t enter into whether or not he is hired. In America you can no longer discriminate against a homosexual, a marxist-leninist traitor, or others who have destructive lifestyles. And that very fact should give you a hint about the anti-Christian philosophy of education. And its even starting to come into Christian schools. Some schools are more concerned about certification by the state than they are about quality of life. There is a conflict between two accrediting boards here. God’s accrediting board looks at the character of the person, the other accrediting board refuses to.

The verses listed in your outlines demonstrate very clearly that God is the one who licenses educators, and He licenses parents to teach. God obviously believes that parents are capable of learning how to become teachers. Deuteronomy says that they can teach the theory: **“speaking to them while they sit”** and they can teach the practice **“and while they walk by the way.”** They can teach their children how to love God with the mind, soul and with their strength. It is to the parents, and to the parents alone that God says in Proverbs, **“Train up a child in the way he should go.”** And all the screaming in the world that the NEA makes concerning the lack of credentials, and the parent’s lack of ability to teach, does not change the fact that God expects the parents to teach. There may later be some aspects that you will delegate, but as we will see, while you can delegate authority to teach, you cannot abdicate your responsibility or your accountability to God. You parents are teachers, and if that is the case, you had better work hard at being good teachers.

III. “But there isn’t any Scripture which rules out government education, is there?”

A. Answer: Psalm 1:1; Jer. 10:2a; Matt 18:6-7; 1 Cor. 15:33; Acts 19:19; 1 Cor. 4:6; Job 21:16; 22:18; Is.

**19:11; 1 Cor. 1:20; 2:5-7; 3:19; Is. 8:20; Matt 11:19b;
Col 2:8)**

The third objection is the question, “But there isn’t any Scripture which rules out government education, is there?” I preached a whole sermon on the regulative principle of government which shows as part of the warp and woof of the Scripture that the family retains to itself all powers that are not explicitly given to church or state. If the Bible doesn’t authorize the state to teach, it may not teach. And I will let you review the materials from that sermon.

But there are plenty of Scriptures which would forbid parents from sending their children to a government school today. Why don’t you turn with me to at least a couple of these. Turn first to Psalm 1. Government schools are not taught by Christians for the most part. There are some Christians who teach there, but by far the majority would be unbelievers. Well, look at what Psalm 1 says about this situation. **Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.** And he goes on to speak of the blessings that come on those who follow this pattern and the cursing that comes on those who don’t. God doesn’t want us walking in the counsel of the ungodly. Job said, **the counsel of the wicked is far from me.** (Job 21:16; 22:18)

Jeremiah 10:2 says, **Thus says the LORD: “Do not learn the ways of the Gentiles...”** Well, that’s all we are doing in government school, is learning the ways of the Gentiles.

Colossians 2:8 says, **Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.** He contrasts learning that springs from Christ and learning that springs from the basic principles of the world and of the traditions of men.

I won’t go through all the verses in the outline. But let me read you Isaiah 8:20. **To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.** The touchstone of education according to that verse is the Bible, and if they do not speak according to that Word, it is because there is no light in them. Christ blasted the lawyers for substituting human tradition for the Bible, and he said, **“Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge.** Why would we go to teachers who have no light in them and who reject the key of knowledge? Matthew 18:6 warns about causing our little ones to stumble. 1 Corinthians 15:33 warns about the corrupting influences of having unbelievers as the influencers of our children **evil company corrupts good habits.** And there are

government schools shut them down?”

A. *Answer: Amen. We are looking forward to a time when there won’t be government schools since idolatrous beast-like kingdoms will be taken away (Dan. 7:12) and all nations will follow the restrictions placed upon governments by God’s laws (Micah 4:2; cf. Matt 28:19-20).*

I have had at least two people unbelievably tell me, “But won’t taking too many children out of the government schools shut them down?” And my answer is, “Amen. Let it be Lord.” People think that without government schools the whole population would be reduced to ignorance. But literacy was much higher in America before government schools than after. Government schools should never have existed in the first place, and there is coming a day when they won’t exist. Micah 4:2 says, **Many nations shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.** Nations will never become jealous of the Gospel and give up their humastic ways until the church teaches God’s ways, walks in His paths and has His law and His Word going forth out of Zion into the world. Let’s influence our culture to promote competition in the free market for schools. The government has no business having a monopoly.

IX. “But shouldn’t our children be missionaries in the public schools?”

A. *Answer: A soldier should not enter battle until prepared for battle (2 Chron. 17:18) or he will be slaughtered. Secondly, the purpose of education is not for the child to teach, but for the child to learn. Who is doing all the talking during class? Not the student (hopefully). And the remaining time (lunches and breaks) are very small for the price paid. Third, it is very easy for good habits you have instilled to be corrupted by bad company (1 Cor. 15:33). Fourth, if even adult Christian teachers are intimidated to speak truth in a government school environment, how much more so the children? Do you send your children on mission trips without strong adult supervision? Fifth, missionaries are teaching a new worldview or paradigm. In this situation it is the government school teachers who are being missionaries to your children.*

the Scriptures must govern every discipline and every moment of training. And you can judge an education by its fruits. Jesus says that wisdom is justified by its children. If you want to see what the fruit of godly wisdom contrasted with earthly wisdom is, read James 3:1-18. Examine the huge difference in outcomes and ask yourself which fruits you want in your children.

4. Thus the parents get the blame and the shame when a child is not educated properly (Prov. 10:1,5; 19:26; 17:21,25; 28:7; 29:15; Ezek. 16:44).
5. Children suffer when the parents relinquish responsibility (Psalm 78:1-8; Prov. 29:2; Lam. 3:27)

VII. “If you don’t send your children to school, how are they going to learn to fit into a mass society?”

- A. *Answer: We are to transform society, not “fit” into it. We are commanded, “do not be conformed to the world” (Rom. 12:2) but instead to be “conformed to the image of His Son” Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29). Every thought must be taken captive (2 Cor. 10:5), and every enemy must be brought under Christ’s feet (1 Cor. 15:24-28). The nations must be disciplined to obey all God’s law word (Matthew 28:18-20). In the meantime, we are to avoid vain philosophies which are not according to Christ (Col. 2:8) and train our children to make their mark in society (not ask pagans to train our children). We are to be separated from unbelieving influence (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1)*

Let me skip over a couple and move on to Roman numeral VIII. This is the objection that some bring up in the question, “If you don’t send your children to public school, how are they going to learn to fit into a mass society.” And you can see the answer in your outlines. I don’t intend my children to fit in. Scripture commands us to not be conformed to the world but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. The only one we are to be conformed to is the image of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29). As you can see from the outline Scriptures, God’s call is to total conquest of every area of life so that all things follow the philosophy of Scripture rather than the philosophies of humanism. Fitting into society is the last thing that we want. We are called to be a separate people that hold a standard that is different – a standard that calls the world to conform to Christ and to be transformed by His grace. Fitting in has nothing to do with the equation except on non-essential cultural issues, which homeschoolers are quite adept at keeping anyway.

VIII. “But won’t taking too many children out of the

many other Scriptures which by implication rule out government schools even if the regulative principle of governments was not true.

IV. “I counteract sex education and evolution. But most subjects are neutral, aren’t they? I don’t see why an unbeliever can’t teach math or science just as well as a Christian.”

- A. *All education is religious in nature and is never value free. If God is left out of the subject, it is by definition, humanism that governs the education since man alone is the measure of truth. All things were created by Christ and for Him (Col. 1:16-17) and therefore, a failure to have all things praising him and serving Him is false education. It is a fundamental misinterpretation of reality. Christ called the Bible the key to knowledge (Luke 11:52) and cursed the Pharisees for having failed to teach knowledge in light of the Word. How much more will He curse government schools which cast the key to knowledge out of the classrooms? The “fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 1:7; 9:10).*

But inevitably someone will respond to me something to the effect of, “Well, I counteract the sex education class and the evolutionism in biology. But most subjects are neutral, aren’t they? I don’t see why an unbeliever can’t teach math or science just as well as a Christian.” If you think Math is neutral, you need to read Poythress’s Biblical critique of math, or J C Keister’s treatment of the axioms of math. Nothing in life is value free. Proverbs 1:7 says, **the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge**, so you haven’t even begun true knowledge if God is left out. Colossians tells us that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. To unlock knowledge, you need to interpret it in light of Christ. They are hidden in Him. And that makes sense. If all things were created by Christ and for Him as Colossians 1:16-17 says that they were, then when Math, biology and science is not serving Him and praising Him, it is false education. It is a fundamental misinterpretation of reality. Christ called the Bible the key to knowledge (Luke 11:52) and cursed the lawyers for having failed to teach knowledge in light of the Word. How much more will He curse government schools which cast the key to knowledge out of the classrooms? Jesus made clear that whatever is not for Him is against Him. There can be no neutrality. Henry Van Til stated, “Any organization that claims to be neutral, as do the public schools and some labor organizations, is by that token denying Christ’s claims of absolute lordship over

all things." ¹ Neutrality should be seen for what it is – exclusion of Jesus and His Word. The Earl of Athlone, who was the Governor General of Canada from 1940-1946, said, "Education without religion sooner or later marches to its doom." ² Almost a hundred years ago, Dr. A.A. Hodge of Princeton Seminary wrote, "I am as sure as I am of the fact of Christ's reign that a comprehensive and centralized system of national education, separated from religion, as is now commonly proposed, will prove the most appalling enginery for the propagation of anti-Christian and atheistic unbelief and of antisocial nihilistic ethics, social and political, which this sin-rent world has ever seen." ³ Martin Luther stated, "I am afraid that the schools will prove the very gates of hell, unless they diligently labor in explaining the Holy Scriptures and engraving them in the heart of the youth." ⁴ No. Government education is not neutral.

V. ‘But Daniel, Shadrack, Mesheck and Abednego went to public school didn’t they? They turned out OK.’

A. *Answer: Daniel 1 is the greatest argument against government schools. Nebuchadnezzar’s purpose was to:*

1. **Seek to minimize godly parental influence (Jehoiakim is a prime example, vv. 1-2)**

But another objection that I frequently hear is, “But Daniel, Shadrack, Mesheck and Abednego went to public school didn’t they? They turned out OK.” Yes, these boys were kidnapped from their parents and the parents probably never saw their children again. But does the fact that they still turned out OK justify kidnapping? Obviously not. In the same way, it does not justify the government education. But it does indicate three things. First, Daniel 1 is an indication of the power of home education in the years previous. God promises us, **raise up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.** The parents of Daniel and the parents of his three friends had obviously done an incredible job of training them. Second, this shows Lord’s fantastic mercies. These children weren’t sent to those schools – that would be presuming upon the Lord. But God was merciful to the parents and the children.

But the outline shows something else about government

¹ H. Van Til. The Calvinistic Concept of Culture (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Co., 1959),*ibp.*, 209.

² Ed. Vanwoudenberg. A Matter of Choice (n.p., 1989), p. 93.

³ Cited in Kliecka, *The Right Choice: The Incredible Failure of Public Education and the Rising Hope of Home Schooling*, An Academic, Historical, Practical, and Legal Perspective (Gresham, OR: Noble Publ., 1992), p. 45.

⁴ Cited in Christopher Kliecka. *The Right Choice*, p. 88.

you are still responsible to guide, approve and think about the education of your young ones.

B. *However, such teachers need to be carefully evaluated in their character by the following “bare-bones” prerequisites to learning:*

1. Since “a pupil is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40), it is critical that the character of this teacher be top notch. (cf. the negative statements in Rom. 2:19-24)

And I have given some guidelines to use in hiring tutors or in sending a child to a Christian school. First, Since “a pupil is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40), it is critical that the character of this teacher be top notch. He will be an influence. Jesus guarantees it. And some time you can look at the negative comments that Paul makes about the teachers of children in Romans 2:19-24. He didn’t think too highly of that synagogue school.

2. Since discipline is essential to godly learning (Prov. 22:15; 29:15), you ought not to send your children away for training unless you can also fully trust the teacher to discipline. Lack of discipline plays havoc upon a classroom, but unloving and unwise discipline can play havoc upon the child.

A second guideline is that since discipline is essential to godly learning (Prov. 22:15; 29:15), you ought not to send your children away for training unless you can also fully trust the teacher to discipline. Some people want teachers to teach their undisciplined children, but won’t empower them with the paddle, and then they lay all the blame for problems on the teacher. That’s backwards. If you can’t trust the teacher with discipline, then you either need to be in the class to discipline your own child, or you need to homeschool. Lack of discipline plays havoc upon a classroom, but unloving and unwise discipline can play havoc upon the child. I certainly wouldn’t trust many Christian teachers to discipline my children.

3. The school must be presenting education from a distinctively Biblical worldview [many Christians schools don’t] (Deut. 4:6-10; 6:6-9,20-21; 11:18-21; Luke 11:52; Rom. 1:18,23; 1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Cor. Tim. 3:16-17; James 3:1-18)

The third principle is pretty obvious. You shouldn’t be sending your children to a Christian school if they are using pagan text books and are just as humanistic in their education as the government schools are. I know sincere, but ignorant Christian teachers who don’t have the foggiest notion of what a Biblical world and life view entails. They see nothing wrong with pagan text books. But Deuteronomy 4,6 and other passages indicate that

attempt to resocialize you at work and at home.

6. Make them compromise their principles (v. 8)

And then finally, there will be all kinds of tests to make children compromise their principles as Babylon sought to do with Daniel and his three friends.

So it amazes me that Christians will look to Nebuchadnezzar as a positive example of why government schools are OK.

VI. “Is it OK to send children to Christian Schools or to hire tutors?”

- A. Answer: A parent may delegate some teaching to others, but can never abdicate his or her own responsibility to God for how, when, where, etc. the child is taught (Gal. 3:24-25; 4:1-3; cf. Matt 8:9; 21:23-46; Mark. 13:34-37; Luke 7:8; 19:17; 1 Tim. 2:12). Thus, hiring tutors in the home was allowed (Gal. 3:24-24; 4:1-3; cf. Ruth 4:16) if the teacher was a “steward” fully accountable to the parent (Gal. 4:2) and if the father determined the timing (“until the time appointed by the father”).**

A slightly different question comes up from some who are fearful of homeschooling. And you can understand their fears. But they ask, “Is it OK to send children to Christian schools or to hire tutors?” I’ve given a pile of Scriptures which give a qualified “Yes,” but I want you to notice that in every case, it is still the father who controls the education, not the tutor or school. Turn to Galatians 3 as an example. Galatians 3:24-25. **Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.** He is using the analogy of hired tutors to illustrate our progress from being under law to being justified by faith. Now take a look at 4:1-3. **Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child** [that’s the Greek word *nepion* - one who is weaned but still under age], **does not differ at all from the slave, though he is master of all but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.** Notice that the parent is still in control of the education. He is the one who determines the education, and who determines who will educate the child and for how long - until the time appointed by the father. And the basic point is that you can delegate authority to teach to someone else, but you cannot abdicate the responsibility or the accountability. Even if you use a Christian school, God is going to hold you responsible for their education. And by the way fathers, this holds true in your home school too. Even though the Bible indicates that the mother may do the most time consuming aspects of education,

schools. It shows that governments frequently have perverse reasons for trying to control education. That was definitely true of Babylon. First, they sought to minimize godly parental influence. And if you analyze the history of education from ancient Babylon to the present, that has always been a goal of government education. Dr. Pierce of Harvard University warned 2000 educators in Colorado that parents teach too much in the first five years, and government school needs to start from a younger age. Like Nebuchadnezzar, Pierce wants to minimize the influence of parents over their children.

2. Remove the children from the home influence (v. 3f).

Second, the king doesn’t just want to minimize the parent’s influence, but to remove it altogether by bringing many of the children out of the homes. Daniel 1:3 says, **Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king’s descendants and some of the nobles.** This is taking children into state custody. Jehoiakim was 28 years old at this point, and his children who were taken to boarding school for reeducation were quite young. It also mentions the children of Israel. Children are the key to a country’s future, and pagan emperors have usually been astute enough to realize that. Hitler felt it was imperative to get the children young. Stalin did the same, as did Mao Tse tung. The underlying assumption is that our children belong to the state. Now we are very on guard about that philosophy in China and other communist countries. What many people do not realize is that this has been the philosophy of American government education from the beginning. Horace Mann, the architect of government schools said in the early 1800’s, “Society, in its collective capacity, is a real, not a nominal sponsor and godfather for all its children.” He felt that children belonged to the state and that it was important for the state to step in and educate the children.

Governments around the world have either already implemented cradels to grave care or are making proposals along those lines. Day care for infants, education for three year olds, involvement of social workers in the raising of the family are indicators of how important the state thinks this is.

3. Re-educate these youth in government schools (v. 4)

But it is not just the authority issue that is at stake, but also what is taught in the government schools. Babylon was seeking to re-educate them in a new world and life view. Daniel 1:4 says that they were **young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king’s palace,**

and [notice this phrase] **whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.** Deuteronomy 4,6 and 11 mandates that our children be immersed in Biblical thinking. Everything in life needs to be viewed from a Biblical perspective. But Babylon is a competitor with God. This verse shows that Babylon wants to immerse Daniel and his friends in its own worldview.

Now most of you are convinced that we must avoid the pagan indoctrination in the government schools, but let me address how the world view of the Chaldeans can creep into all of our homes. Homeschoolers have often hired ungodly tutors in the form of textbooks and computer games. I have seen homeschool parents excited about some of the interactive educational material that is available on computer and totally unaware of the corruption their children were receiving. Some of it is great, but beware. There is a lot of politically correct brainwashing that is going on under the guise of education. For example, several of you have Compton’s Interactive Encyclopedia. Not only are many of the articles slanted; some are filled with lies. It is obvious that homosexuals and leftists had a part in putting it together. Their revisionism of the War between the States is nothing short of dishonest, as is their treatment of the War for Independence. But just to give you a feel for how slanted they are, let me read to you part of their essay on the perverted emperor Nero. They say,

“He has won the reputation of being a demented and depraved tyrant, the ruler who ‘fiddled while Rome burned’ and who instigated the first persecution of Christians; however, Nero’s unsavory reputation is almost wholly undeserved. He was certainly not the bloody dictator that Roman and Christian historians have depicted.

They go on to paint Nero as a very sensitive misunderstood man. They even went on to say, “In everything he seemed to be pursuing the goal his teacher Seneca thought impossible – to remain innocent of all crime.”

The author denies that there was a persecution of Christians by Nero, even though several enemies of Christians wrote that they thought Nero’s cruelty to Christians was a little bit too much to stomach. This is nothing short of deceitful. Historian Miriam Griffin rightly says,

Commenting on the unanimity of opinion about the Emperor Nero that prevails among ancient authorities, the historian Charles Merivale wrote, “With some allowance only for extravagance of colouring, we must accept in the main the verisimilitude of the picture they have left us of this arch-tyrant, the last and the most detestable of the Caesarean family... Nero was the first Princes to be declared a public

enemy by the Senate... Certainly no serious historian has been tempted to whitewash the tyrant.” (Gentry, p. 45.) Yet the sodomite lobby has sought to do exactly that. They have sought to identify every hero they can and claim that he is a homosexual. And this garbage is in the hands of Christians homeschoolers. So we need to ask, “What kind of language and literature of the Chaldeans are my children reading?” Are new definitions of words being foisted on our youth. He who defines the terms can frame the argument and he who frames the argument can often win the argument. Language and literature is not value free.

4. **Make them dependant upon the state (v. 5)**

A fourth strategy in Satan’s attack on the family that can be seen in Daniel 1 has been to make the children dependant upon the state. Verse 5 says, **And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king’s delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king.** With government handouts come government strings. And yet there are many, many people who willingly make themselves dependant upon the government through welfare, health care, food stamps, school loans and in other ways. I have to admit, I have done the school loan trick myself. And I regret it. Satan will do his utmost to make independant thinking and actions impossible.

5. **Resocialize the youth and give them a new sense of identity (vv. 6-7)**

A further step was to resocialize the youth and give them a new sense of identity. The king wanted to take away any remembrance of former times. Their God-fearing names were replaced with pagan names of gods so that even when they talked to each other they would be forced to think in new categories. Look at verses 6-7: **Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshch; and the Azariah, Abed-Nego.** Don’t ever think of pagan government as neutral. It is a war of ideas; a war of religious ideas. And Satan, unless he is stopped, will seek to do his utmost to remove any traces of Christian thinking in the social arena. The power to name is the power to control. It is not by accident that government agencies will no longer allow you to speak with judgmental language like sodomy, adultery, fornication. It is sexual preference. They have tried to redefine marriage as domicile partners to avoid discriminating against sodomites. And the list of changed names could go on to the hundreds. It is an