

HOME SCHOOLING – IS NOW THE TIME?

By Lenora Hammond

As responsible parents in the midst of educating our children, the time has arrived when we must ask ourselves several questions. Most concerned and involved parents grapple over issues regarding the size of the classrooms, peer pressure, the personality of the teacher, the safety of the school environment, sports programs, etc. These indeed are practical concerns. But the time has arrived to start asking more underlying questions that will affect the very moral development and character-shaping of our future generations. It is time to consider the bigger picture.

As Christian parents, a good place to start is by asking ourselves what our own worldview is. Scripture is clear about this, and while there is room for disagreement of nonessentials, God's commands must be clearly obeyed regarding the education of our children. Armed with this knowledge, the most logical question to ask is whether or not your school is in agreement with this Biblical Worldview. We tend to have higher and stricter standards for the babysitters we employ some evenings than we do for the teachers that teach our children every day. To assume that the exposure of 40 hours a week in an institution that does not reflect your worldview will not affect your child is folly at their expense. Doing the basic maths will show that our children spend more time amongst teachers, coaches and peers than they do with you. It is therefore essential that the philosophy espoused by your local school be in agreement with yours.

Even a Christian school, staffed by sincere Christian teachers cannot stem the tide of secular humanist textbooks. Removing objectionable material, memorising Bible verses and singing hymns in assembly are only cosmetic tokens of Christian education. It is not enough to merely baptise secular curriculum, and in fact it should be rejected by Christian educators seeking to offer a serious Biblical education.

Every subject covered must have as its basic premise the existence of a Sovereign God Who created all things. To teach Science apart from this is folly. To assume that maths or history can exist without this fact as a foundation is to be ignorant. Doug Wilson writes: *"Those who through the promotion of political correctness would return us to polytheistic paganism have come to realize that they must entirely throw out the study of western culture if they are going*

to reshape the thinking of our students. "Western thought has been permeated with Christian monotheism and thus a persistent concept of objective and universal truth.

Another serious though more complicated question is the style in which your children are being taught. Dorothy Sayers, in her well-known essay, *"The Lost Tools of Learning"* said: *"The sole true end of education is simply this: to teach men how to learn for themselves; and whatever instruction fails to do this is effort spent in vain."*

Educating groups of 30 children at a time means that routine structures and discipline must be incorporated for this to function. The school bell either brings to an end any creative work in progress or mercifully ends a very boring lecture. Children move like herds of sheep from one activity to the next. In the home environment, creativity and expression can flow freely. Most of the academics required of even high school age scholars can be accomplished in half the time it takes in a school setting. The result of this style of learning is a self-disciplined, self-governing student.

We live in an instant, media saturated society. Without intervention on the part of wise parents, our children will learn that the totality of life's meaning can be found in a sequence of images flashed before us in high-resolution colour. We have a generation that wants learning to come through fun. Our children are entertained to death and then we wonder in confusion why they determine that truth has become a barrier to the pursuit of a blithe and happy life.

The Bible is our truth. Educational choices must be made with Scripture as our foundation. Thanks to the hard work of pioneers in the area of Home education, we have choices today. Home schooling parents have taken charge of the education of their children. They want God to have His rightful place in the training of their children. As Michael Pearl says: *"We are taking our children to the tree of life growing beside the fountain of knowledge, to be refreshed by the Author of life."* You do not need to stoop for anything less.

May God give us wisdom as we consider the education of our children. The schools will not, one day, answer to God for the education of your child. You will.

[Lenora Hammond](#) is a home schooling mother of 2 sons and 2 daughters.