

# Family Ministry – The Education of Our Children

**Introduction** – To say to this group that Christians should not put their children in agnostic, government schools (often referred to as ‘public’ schools) is, as they say, preaching to the choir. However, we must not be haughty if we have been granted some measure of light here, for we stand connected to ‘the church’ before the Lord, not simply as EEF. God’s word comes to us as individuals, yes, but also as families, as a nation, and as the church, one body, in covenant with our Lord.

**“Public” Schools** – Let’s call them what they truly are. They are government schools (compulsory education, centralized, statist curriculum). They are polytheistic schools (multiple gods, multiculturalism, pluralism). They could be called agnostic schools (You may believe in whatever ‘god’ you want, but he/she/it is irrelevant to all that is being taught here). But there is nothing ‘god-less’ about agnostic education. It is deeply religious at its very core.

**A Horrific Example** – Give a bunch of people flight manuals and simulators so they can learn to fly commercial jets. Neutral education, right? Now add any god at all – any worldview, including the religion of *jihad* at all costs. We don’t teach *jihad* in our schools, though, do we? No, we teach that we are all bags of highly developed protoplasm with no destiny or purpose other than what I ‘find within myself’. And what if I find dark, depraved desires?

**Promise, Authority, and Depravity** – The education of our children is connected to the other issues we have discussed with regard to our parenting.

**Promises** (Psalm 78:1-11) – Education must be a story and a song. It must be about what God has revealed and done. It must be the passing on of a culture and a heritage and a worldview from one generation to the next. It must be done by grace, through faith – in the promises of God to His people and to their children.

**Authority** (Deut 6:1-9) – Education is commanded of parents who have been granted the authority by God to brainwash those little minds every step of the way.

**Depravity** (Prov 22:6) – They must have those brains washed because they are descendants of Adam. If they are going to love God with all their minds, they will have to learn how. This is not a call to a Sunday school class or family devotions. This is a call to life, worldview, vocation, in short – everything. Jesus is Lord of all (Matt 28:18, 12:30).

**The Paideia of the Lord** (Eph 6:4) – In the NKJV, it is ‘training’ here, it is ‘instruction’ in 2 Tim 3:16, and ‘chastening’ in Heb 12:7-11. Moses received it (Acts 7:22), as did Paul (Acts 22:3). Paideia is the work commanded in Deut 6. It is the complete enculturation of the mind, body, soul and strength of the child in the Lord. And you, fathers, have been given this task.

**Homeschooling and Day Schools** – It is a glorious thing to see principles adhered to with varying methods. As we live in community with one another, we must respect the diversity of approaches to living the Christian life. Because both methods have produced some wonderful results, we should laud and encourage both. Because both methods have also produced less-than-appealing results (and because we are still only at best a couple of generations into recovering that which we have attempted to destroy for many more), we should be accountable to one another and allow iron to sharpen iron. Both must avoid pitfalls –

**Abdication** – Sending your kid to school with a check doesn’t qualify as faithful parenting. Neither does keeping them home without the father’s oversight and direction. Paideia requires thoughtful, ongoing oversight.

**Peer Pressure** – Putting them in a Christian school does not keep them from sinners. But keeping them at home doesn’t isolate them from sinners, themselves included. Paideia requires a disciplined character and godly standards.

**Either-Or Thinking** – Two applications here. First, we are not to choose between character and academics, for academics is a character issue (Prov 6:9). Paideia is broad. Secondly, it may be true that one method is superior than another in a particular situation, but we must be careful of over-generalizations (Rom 14:10).

**More Than Just Decent Children** (Phil 4:8-9) – Pagans can bring up well-behaved, and even in some respects, well-educated, children. But our job is to raise up our children with souls impassioned with the things God loves. But they won’t do that if there isn’t anything to imitate from their parents. Do we know how to wonder (Prov 30:18-19) and declare the glory of God in everything (Psalm 19)? We have a grip on being dogmatic about truth, but what about aesthetics (Psalm 29:2) or ethics (Gen 1:31) or love (John 15:13)? Having rejected the modern culture around us, we will invite seven more wicked spirits if we leave our children with a cultural void.

**Repairing the Ruins** – The work is going well and much should be commended here. Let us not rest on our laurels nor think more highly of ourselves than we ought. There is much more to recover. As you do the work, know it will be hard (Gal 6:9-10) and we must look for opportunities to encourage and help our brothers and sisters here. Make sure it is all being done with joy and thankfulness unto the Lord (Col 3:17). If so, we can expect to see the Hand of blessing upon our labors (Deut 7:9).