



Home : Sermons : Sep 4, 2005

The Glory of Christ in the Work of Education – Eph 6:4

Introduction – It is very important to give your children a very broad education, where they learn the thoughts and intentions of many important people outside of Christendom. For instance, Joseph Stalin said, “*Education is a weapon, whose effects depend on who holds it in his hands and at whom it is aimed.*” Stalin understood that in order to build a country according to his worldview (atheistic communism), he had to control how the minds of the next generation were programmed.

It is very important to give your children a very broad education. It is also very important to entrust your children to a very specific paradigm, a system of presuppositions about truth and reality, upon which all of their education will find its foundation.

The Text - *And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*

The Context and the Contrast – Because of all that we are in Christ, because of all that we have in Christ, and because of where we are in Christ (Eph 1-3), we are instructed as to how we should then live in Christ (Eph 4-6). A deep contrast is found in this verse which we sometimes miss. If we do not bring up our children in the training and admonition of the Lord, we will provoke them to wrath.

Fathers – As husbands, you are to reflect our Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ. As fathers, you are to reflect the Everlasting Father, the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. You will answer for your children just as He has and will answer for His. You may faithfully delegate your duties, and in fact this is part of the reason you have been given your helpmeet. But just as Jesus is never far from His children, so you must provide hands-on, Spirit-led “*nurture*” to your children as well.

Training – The training of the Lord is His *paideia*. Translated “*instruction*” in 2 Tim 3:16, and “*chastening*” in Heb 12:7-11, this is what Moses received (Acts 7:22), as did Paul (Acts 22:3). *Paideia*, understood from Deut 6, is the complete enculturation of the mind, body, soul and strength of the child in the Lord.

Admonition – This word means to impart understanding, to warn, to set right, and to lay on the heart – it is what we are called to do to one another in our singing (Col 3:16) and what we are to do by the Word with our children.

Of the Lord – When we really understand what education is, we can see that there is no such thing as religious neutrality in education. When the state provides us ‘for no cost’ an education that implicitly and explicitly says, “if there is a God in the universe, He certainly does not matter when it comes to these subjects,” we ought to be just a little bit suspicious if not incensed. We are to render our children to the Lord and not to Caesar (Matt 22:21).

How Have We Provoked Children to Wrath (Rom 1:18-31) – When we refuse to acknowledge where truth comes from, we suppress the knowledge of God and all of God’s knowledge. We become barbaric in our thinking and actions, and our children are turned over to wrath and destruction with our blessing. Either we magnify the glory of Christ-the-Creator and Redeemer of all things, openly thanking Him (the Triune God by name) or we descend a dark staircase of unbelief, superstition, and finally outright paganism – and that is exactly where our secular educational system is taking us.

Wrath of God’s Judgment – God has given us over to our desires and we have lost the next generation. Christians must not only address the symptoms of lost children by putting together ministries to go out and get them. It is a good thing to help those scorched by the fire – but someone’s got to go put the firestorm out. We must address the cause – there must come a day when Christians with one voice remove their families from the government’s secular humanist educational system and say, “*not with my child you won’t.*”

Wrath of Unlawful Living – “*I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which men are not increasingly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt...I am much afraid that schools will prove to be the great gates of hell unless they diligently labor in explaining the Holy Scriptures, engraving them in the hearts of youth.*” – Martin Luther

Education is a Weapon – Those were Stalin’s words, and I think he was right. As we take this weapon back, we need to remember who are our friends and who are our enemies.

Friendly Fire: Homeschoolers vs Private Christian Schools – The devil has not seen it necessary to attack headlong these two educational methods in our land, partly because we do such a good job of “*biting and devouring one another*” ourselves. Clique-ism is simply pride, the sins of factions, envy, and judgmentalism. Stop it. Stop judging them when they are busy working together and stop avoiding them because they have some different convictions.

Friendly Fire: Moral Character vs High Academic Standards – Deut 6:4 requires that there be no dichotomy at all between these two important issues. To be explicitly Christian in our education is to nurture our children in the highest levels of character and knowledge. Rigor is part and parcel to moral character, and knowledge without love puffs up.

Assisting in Warfare Preparation – Remember the posters of WWII women working in the factories, sleeves rolled up, dirt on their smiling faces? They were not actually on the front line, but they knew that those who were depended upon them. If you do not have children of school age under your care and responsibility right now, what are you doing to help the effort today?

True Reformation Before Us (Is 65:23, 11:9)– Do not miss the forest for the trees. Do you see what God is doing among us? Do you realize how far we have come in so few years? There is much more labor and maturity before us – granted. But as you roll up your sleeves, children and parents and congregation, for another year of school, you should see with eyes of faith all that the Lord is giving back to us. It is truly the knowledge of the Lord, and the glory of this knowledge will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. It is worth every drop of sweat from your brow.

Dave Hatcher - September 4, 2005