



Uniting Home, Church and School in Jesus Christ

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Why Choose Christian Schooling?

By Edward E. Gamble

16,000 hours! That's the time a child spends in school from kindergarten through high school. He will graduate with two important things: a diploma and some kind of worldview. His diploma will help him get into college or get his first job. However, his worldview will shape every choice he makes for the next 60, 70 or 80 years. Decisions about faith, church, possessions, business, personal habits, character, marriage, child-rearing, politics, relationships... every action he takes will arise from and conform to the worldview he formed during his 16,000 hours in school.

Since a child's worldview is like a template or life-map for life's choices, parents should focus on two things: what outcomes does God expect us to deliver in our children's training and whom should we choose to help shape our children's worldview? Fortunately, scripture gives clear answers to both questions. Our Lord expects parents to raise *Godly seed*¹ and it takes Godly teachers to deliver Godly students.²

In his seminal book, *Kingdom Education: God's Plan for Educating Future Generations*, Dr. Glen Schultz summarizes the Biblical mandate with a simple, working definition for *Kingdom Education*: "a life-long, Bible-based, Christ-centered process that leads a child to Christ, disciples him in Christ and equips him to serve Christ".³ If parents provide a Kingdom Education with a Biblical worldview for their children they will have met the Lord's expectations (see Deut. 6:4-19).

Education is a sacred duty which God assigns to every parent. The Bible clearly makes parents, more specifically fathers, responsible for their children's training.⁴ Parents can either homeschool their children or outsource parts of the task to others. However, farming out the task does not transfer the responsibility. Parents must choose teachers, coaches and mentors with much more care than barbers, dentists or piano teachers. One can almost hear Jesus

saying, "For what shall a mom and dad be profited if their children's teeth are straight and they get a Harvard MBA, but they lose their children's souls?" In a recent Barna study, 70% of **born again** parents did not include leading their child to faith in Christ in a list of critical parent outcomes! How tragic!

Parents must heed Paul's warning not to be "taken captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition". Secular schooling produces secular-minded students whose lives will be directed by their secular worldview. Since the 1960s we have witnessed a direct link between what is taught in schools and what our children believe and do. Statistics that measure the church's and home's effectiveness against a rising tide of secular teaching all tell the same story of spiritual anemia and apathy. We are losing the battle for children's hearts and minds, resulting in churches with little impact or influence on the children or our culture.

While there are no guarantees in raising children, providing Christian homeschooling or partnering with a good Christian school greatly increases the likelihood that children will develop a Biblical worldview. Parents can choose a Kingdom Education and provide their children with 16,000 hours of teaching that compliments and reinforces what is taught at home and church. Or they can hand over the 16,000 hours to secular schools which must, by law, teach humanistic philosophy and values as truth.

Instead, consider what America might look like two generations hence if Christians took ownership of the 16,000 hours for our children, and also for those who live in the shadow of our churches if they wish to come. What if every church provided each child with a Kingdom Education all week long for 16,000 hours instead of the typical 1,600 hours?⁵ We would see unprecedented revival in America, beginning with our homes, families and children, just as God intended.⁶

¹ Malachi 2:15

² Luke 6:39-40

³ *Kingdom Education: God's Plan for Educating Future Generations*, by Glen Schultz. 1998, LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville, TN.

⁴ Malachi 4:6; Psalm 78:5-8

⁵ 1,600 hours: Estimated time children spend in church during their school years— (2½ hours a week for 50 weeks, from age 5 to 18 years).

⁶ Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 31:13; 32:46; Psalm 78:1-8; Malachi 4:6