

## What is a Christian Education?

A Christian education is one in which the infallible truths of Scripture reign paramount. They form the foundation upon which all academic pursuits are built, and for that reason, students are often better able to reach their full educational potential. As Solomon writes, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Proverbs 9:10).

God expects children to be taught the truth in every subject. That requires educators to approach their craft - and

*“When God is excluded from the classroom, we are not merely remaining silent about God. We are teaching children that they may safely disregard Him.”*

their lives - from a biblical worldview. Otherwise, teachers are wholly incapable of instilling or reinforcing that worldview in the lives of their students.

Rigorous academics, no matter how thorough, will miss the mark if the reality of God is denied. Conversely, augmenting a secular academic program with a religion class – no matter how true – will fall short. Students need a challenging, *comprehensive* academic

*Doug Wilson*

curriculum built on a foundation of biblical absolutes. Some institutions prepare students for a job. Others equip students for life. Only a Christian education has the potential to do both, because only a Christian education is grounded in the knowledge of our Creator, who grants wisdom and understanding to anyone who seeks Him first.

## Can My Children Get a Quality Education at a Christian School?

Time and again, students in Christian schools have proven their academic mettle. Their test scores exceed the national average. Their grade equivalency soars high above the curve. But inasmuch as education is a two-way proposition, with students shouldering part of the responsibility themselves, we’d like to offer a word of caution.

It’s true that, generally speaking, students at Christian schools out-perform their public school peers. Reliable statistics bear that out. *But that doesn’t mean every child in a Christian school will excel.*

**“in (Christ) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”**

**(Colossians 2:3)**

The important thing for you as a parent to remember is that attending a Christian school in no way prohibits your children from getting a quality education. In many cases, it will enhance their experience, because in addition to solid academic training, they’ll be continually reminded of the spiritual foundation upon which all intellectual pursuits are built. As the Apostle Paul writes, “in (Christ) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3).

Regardless of the academic setting – public, private or distinctly Christian – there are no guarantees. But there are opportunities. And almost without fail, your children will be given plenty of them at your local Christian school. Much of the rest is up to them.

## What If We Can't Afford A Christian Education?

This is a very real problem, and one of the most common parental objections. Christian schools cost money. A lot of money. However, before we get too carried away with fiscal concerns, we need to ask ourselves an important question:

Do we have a moral obligation to give our children a Christian education? If so, then God will do for us what He does anytime He gives us a command. He’ll give us the means to obey it.

Statements like “God will make a way” or “If He’s called you, He’ll equip you” may sound a little trite. However, they happen to be true. If you have a biblical mandate to provide your children with a Christian education – and

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”*

*(Matthew 13:45-46)* all of us have to make that determination for ourselves – God won’t let a little thing like insufficient funds stop you from obeying Him. Not if you’re committed to hearing and obeying His will in the matter. He may give you a raise. He may show you how to cut a few corners. But one way or another, He will make a way – because if educating your children in a Christian setting is a genuine responsibility, the financial cost becomes a genuine need. And God has promised to supply *all your needs* according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

There are other ways God may provide the necessary funding. In some cases, churches have been known to assist their members. Talk to your pastor and see if that’s a possibility. In addition, many schools offer financial aid to needy families or scholarships to academically-gifted students. Contact the admissions department at your local Christian school.

At the end of the day, God may ask you to take a step of faith. Then another. Then another. Pretty soon, you’ll be walking in a promise that’s been repeated so often it’s become the quintessential Christian cliché. When God calls us to a task, He equips us to fulfill it. The Red Sea was no match for Him. The red in your checkbook won’t be, either.

## What Does God Tell Us To Do With Our Children?

The first part of this answer has to do with your role as parent. You are the God-appointed leader of your children, so it should come as no surprise that the overwhelming task of raising and educating them is in your hands. The Apostle Paul put it this way:

*“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord”* (Ephesians 6:4).

The question is, what are you supposed to teach them? And God has a great deal to say about that. In Deuteronomy 11, for example, He says the education of children is a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week process that must take place from birth through maturity.

*“Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds ... . Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers ...”* (Deuteronomy 11:18-21).

Here we see God instructing His people how to live as they prepare to go into the Promised Land. Critical to the life and health of His people is

the teaching of the Word of God by parents on a daily basis in every situation.

*“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”* (Proverbs 22:6)

Here’s the problem. Public schools have banned the book upon which you, as a Christian, have based your life. The question is not, “Should I consider Christian education?” but rather, “Why should I consider anything else?”

The education of children and youth must be based on God’s Word as absolute truth. If the school your children attend adopts any other approach, it is competing directly against your training at home, and ultimately, against the training God wants you to give them.

## I Went To Public School & I Turned Out Okay.

### Can't My Children Do The Same?

The short answer is yes. Just like you did, your kids can turn out okay. Maybe even better than okay. But our arrival at a place called “okay” does not necessarily mean that all our choices along the way were the right ones, or that our educational experience was the best one.

The real questions are these: Are you the same person today that you would have been had you attended Christian school? And what about the journey that brought you here? Might it have been a little more joyful, a little less troublesome? Is it possible that God could have used you for His glory even more than He already has?

These are questions only you can answer, and if you haven't already, why not do it right now? Give this issue an honest, thoughtful look, and then ask God what His will is regarding your children's education.

*“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*

### Many Of My Friends Say They Want Their Kids To Be Salt And Light In The Public Schools. Shouldn't We Do That?

Many Christian parents share this sentiment. And it's a noble one, too. Every one of us should strive to be salt and light wherever we find ourselves. But we have to be mindful that young children (before high school) are generally not equipped to defend their faith and influence others. Even with high schoolers, it is the unusually well-grounded student who can impact others for the Kingdom. However, even with the strongest testimony, we would not recommend that "salt and light" be the primary reason for sending your child to a public school.

No matter how well-grounded your children are, it's highly unlikely they can be the kind of salt and light Jesus was talking about. Can fifth-  
*“How much salt and light can untrained, silent Christians be? Must we not rather train our children in Christian schools that they may become salty and brilliant lights to transform a society wandering in darkness?”*

*Dr. Wayne Grodin* In the vast majority of cases the answer is no. Simply put, most kids are not mature enough for the job, emotionally or spiritually. They are still at a time in life when they need to receive salt and light, not provide it.

And in those rare cases in which a young person might be up to the task, placing your child in public school for that reason would put him or her under tremendous pressure. Sending a child into an environment that is anti-Christian in philosophy subjects the mind of your child to daily teaching that is determined to replace God in every area of life. It's a dangerous experiment, one that could have lasting repercussions.

## **If I Put My Children In Christian School, Will I Be Sheltering Them From The Real World?**

There's no denying it. You'll be sheltering them from *part* of secular society. But even Christian adults have been instructed to keep the world at arm's length – to be in it but not of it. How much more should we endeavor to protect our children, most of whom are nowhere near ready to withstand the more sophisticated worldly temptations.

But make no mistake. We haven't bought into the common misconception that Christian schools shield children from every temptation

*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."* (Romans 12:2)

and all exposure to sin. This is not only untrue, it's impossible. Christian schools have the same type of kids non-Christian schools have. Sinners. They're all prone to offensive behaviors such as selfishness, anger, and malicious talk. And no matter where your children attend class, they can hardly escape the worldly influences found in movies, books and television.

The difference in the Christian school is that it can apply the Bible to every instance of sinful thought or action, and with God's help, renew the mind of the child. By doing so, Christians schools have a better chance of helping parents produce adults who have been trained in the fine art of godly living and thinking. And when they finally enter the "real" real world, they'll be much more equipped to handle it.

## **My Child Wants To Play Sports, And The Local Christian School Has A Weak Athletic Program. What Should I Do?**

Let's clear one troublesome hurdle right from the start. Not once does Scripture even hint that athletic competition is sinful or immoral. You and your children are no more prohibited from playing sports than you are from eating a hamburger. In fact, the Bible encourages healthy competition.

Unfortunately, too many Christians presume that once the lawfulness of an activity has been established, they are free to pursue it the same way the world does. Many Christian parents place their children in secular schools *solely* because of the athletic program. For them, the pursuit of sports has taken precedence over the pursuit of wisdom. This is an anti-biblical mindset.

*"That athletics is far too important to many families is evident in the simple fact that it is used to justify disobedience to God in how our children are educated."*

*Douglas Wilson*

While we sympathize with parents who want their children to have every opportunity to succeed in athletics, the truth of the matter is that they can participate in sports without attending public schools. Many Christian schools offer sports programs, as do parks and private leagues. And for those of you who have particularly gifted children, it may help you to know that college and professional sports rosters are dotted with graduates of Christian schools. If your kids are good enough, the scouts will find them.

## **My Children's Friends Go To Public School.**

### **What Should I Do?**

If your children have good friends at the public school, it's only natural that they'll want to join them. And it's a given that they'll fight against the alternative. As a parent, this is a difficult problem to have.

But if you know what the Bible says about training your children, and if you're familiar with the origin and history of public education, you know the environment there is unhealthy – spiritually, emotionally, relationally and intellectually. It's unhealthy for your children. It's unhealthy for your children's friends. The fact that their parents have chosen to send them there should never deter you from sticking to your educational guns.

Ultimately, the decision is yours. Or at least it should be. The Bible makes it unmistakably clear, in both the Old and New Testaments, that the primary responsibility for educating children rests with their parents. Make the decision God asks you to make, even if it hurts a little. Your children may fight you now, but they'll thank you later.

*“School is where we learn to think. It's where we learn how to work and relate to others and influence the world. But if that whole process excludes God's own viewpoint in Scripture for twelve years, our Christian witness grows accustomed to being mute, and it remains uneducated, never growing beyond the 'Sunday School' level.”*

*Dr. Wayne Grodin*

## **Is A Christian School A Safe Place?**

There's no question about it. Christian schools are a safe place for your children to spend eight hours a day. While not devoid of problems – even severe ones like drug and alcohol use – Christian schools are far less likely to tolerate this kind of behavior.

At a public school, your child will witness more frequent occurrences of theft and physical violence, not to mention of course profanity and open rebellion in the classroom.

In addition to physical well-being, Christian schools offer a much safer emotional and spiritual environment. Because teachers approach all of life from a biblical worldview, the politically-correct, socially-tolerant attitudes that pervade secular classrooms never see the light of day at distinctly Christian institutions. Anti-Christian behavior such as homosexuality and abortion is exposed for what it is, which helps guard your children's minds against the licentious attitudes fostered by popular education.

*“I know of no verse of Scripture that tells me that secular training will 'strengthen' Christian children. It may callous them so they view sin as more 'normal.' It may harden them so they care more about the things of the world and less about God. It may desensitize them so they are more comfortable living in the midst of repeated sin against their Lord. But it will not strengthen them as Christian men and women.”*

*Dr. Wayne Grodin*

## **Will Attending Christian School Make My Children Christians?**

While there are no guarantees on this score – God has not promised that everyone who hears the Gospel will embrace it – it is true

*“For God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9)* that faith in Christ “comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17). Because Christian schools share God's Word with their students daily, your children will have more opportunities to accept Christ than they would in any other educational setting.

Of course, whether your children come to faith in Christ during their school days or not, one thing is clear. Their time in Christian school will give them a better understanding of the Bible, and should they eventually accept Christ, they will be better able to defend and share their faith with others

*Information provided by [www.discoverchristianschool.com](http://www.discoverchristianschool.com)*