Home Schooling

By: Assistant Pastor Gray Clark

The Church of Israel, in its attempt to be obedient to Biblical precepts, encourages Christian parents to educate their children with a Christian education. "Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth" (Pro. 4:5). "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom" (Pro. 4:7).

Christian schools, private Christian tutoring, and home schooling are acceptable ways of teaching children widsom. Giving them a wise education is noble and Biblical. Of these three methods, home schooling is receiving growing attention. What we are seeing is a return to the old tried and true ways. Teaching children at home is the method of antiquity and is more natural than may first appear. This Church is using its resources to support and advance the teaching of Christian children at home. Because this church emphasizes home schooling does not mean that Christian schools and tutoring are opposed. They are encouraged as alternatives to public schooling. They are better than public schools because of the better control of sinful influences upon children. In spite of the many advantages Christian schools and private tutoring provide children, home schooling provides more. Consequently, growing numbers of parents are removing their children from public schools and Christian schools to give their children the best--home schooling. It holds the greatest rewards for parents and children. No other method gives the greatest hope for building self-disciplined children who are free of sinful habits and strong families.

Ideally, home schooling is the best of the Christian methods of education if for no other reason than it builds a bond between parents and children that cannot be built as closely by any other means. Children who learn thusly see mother and dad as teacher and minister. It is good for parents to be teachers and ministers of their children. Who can do better? Who has a greater interest in children than their parents? The less children look beyond the doors of the home for "expert" advice and instruction, the stronger the family grows. The potential for strong ties knotting together children, mother, and father is the highest under home education conditions because of the close working relationship that continues day and night. But this is ideal. Christians live in a realistic and pragmatic world. Consequently, Christian schools or private tutoring may be the best choice for some families. Circumstances can dictate methods. I caution all who are involved in Christian education that those who do not do it "the ideal way" be not criticized. The goal is Christian education of children, and not method. The focus of this article, however, is home schooling; let us look at some reasons parents are switching to home schooling.

Concrete Values of Home Schooling

Home education for children is a wonderful children-saving opportunity that is exploding before the eyes of parents. Why the attraction?

1. Children learn to look to mother and dad for everything--not just somethings needful. "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of Yahweh" (Ps. 34:11).

It can be said that parents who home-educate are providing the whole meal rather than an incomplete one. The healthy relationships that build between parents and children over the years is desirable. When people work together, they grow together. Home schooling promotes positive growth between family relationships. So, parents are giving their children spiritual and academic leadership while concurrently meeting the usual and expected physical needs of the children. To put it another way, the trichotomous dimension of the child is completely directed, controlled, and fed by the parent in a close relationship. Life is shared together rather than lived apart. Under relationships of this nature, children learn to face the world and stand alone with Yahweh. When children see parents spend valuable time with them, this demonstrates a commitment that will repeat itself when they rear a family. Children learn by parental action more than parental words.

Do your children, parents, see you as the source of all their needs?

2. Children learn the full meaning of the "cover of protection" provided by the authority of the home. They in turn will build families that provide as complete a cover as received. Mother and dad learn what it truly means to cover their children in protection. Children, in my view, need a good and complete cover during their home years. They need complete nuturing, not partial. Children want this cover because it provides the sturcture they need but lack within themselves. They, of course, will not say this to the parent.

Are your children, parents, under your protective cover, always?

3. Parents are in complete control of the subject matter taught.

This prevents humanism and sinful curriculum from guiding minds away from you and Christ. Even in a Christian school, parents can have subject matter conflicts. The potential for these conflicts is numerous but normally can be expected in the arena of Bible truth, i.e. rapture doctrine, missionary focus, law, and the people of the Book. But at home or with a tutor, parents are free of this problem. Unlearning is not necessary. All necessary corrections that will be necessary from time to time can be done quickly and comfortably in the home. So an offensive paragraph or chapter in a book can be skipped or taught in its true light. Control is so important. Parents can concentrate on weaknesses of their children to bring them up to his or her capability in an atmosphere of parental love. A slow learner can be nutured into a good learner without being tagged "LD-Learning Disability". A quick learner can move quickly. When parents control the input, they see a desired output in their children.

Do you, parents, control the subject matter taught to your children?

4. Parents are in control of the children's free time.

Home schooled children generally have more free time than classroom schooled children. This is because there are less distractions and fewer children for the teacher to teach. Parental time, then, is available to do other valuable things with and for the children. There are field trips, hobbies to develop, skills to teach boys, and homemaking skills to teach girls. Starting a home based business for the children to operate can become a reality. Children can help around the house with so many things. Concern about what is happening on the school bus is eliminated. There is no school bus. Concern about who the children are with at school or when walking home is eliminated. They are already home. Negative peer pressure influence is mitigated because age mates are parent screened. Peers are limited and controlled by parents exercising protective cover.

Do you, parents, know at all times where your children are, what they are doing, and who they are with?

5. Older children learn to be teachers and leaders by assuming these roles.

At home the older children can help teach the younger. The classroom situation does not offer this valuable opportunity. Youth help lighten the teaching load upon mother and dad, giving freedom to them to better focus upon the needs of the older as he or she helps with the younger. We learn more by teaching. Only home schooling offers these broadbased teaching opportunities. This effort becomes a total family one. The feeling of belongingness is developed when this happens.

Are your older children, parents, learning good habits of responsibility under your parental supervision?

6. The final point is that families grow toward reaching Biblical goals more completely than by any other method.

This is because parents have a "hands on" investment in their children rather than "payment" investment. Payment investment is hiring someone to do a job. To pay someone to teach your children may be a realistic and pragmatic necessity, but these values we are discussing will fall short outside home schooling. Families who must go a non-home school route should strive by even extraordinary means to approach the advantages of home schooling. In other words, get as much "hands on" time with your children as possible.

Are you, parents, reaching Biblical goals with your children?

Reach For Six "Yes" Answers

Six values have been shared that gives home schooling a decided edge over other methods of education. Six "yes" answers mean that that family is well on its way to building a strong