

convince you of the truth, then take a look at the curriculum in any local government school. Even the most cursory review should suffice to prove that public government, decidedly anti-Christian, by design “indoctrinates” rather than “educates” children. That the majority of public-school educators are non-Christians who often bring an anti-Christian bias to the classroom creates not only an anti-Christian environment but also an academically counter-productive and morally bankrupt one, sometimes even physically unsafe for a child of God.

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Every hour a child sits in a public-school classroom undermines any semblance of a Christian worldview which parents have instilled in their children at home. And, those same schools suppress the witness of the Christian teachers and administrators who work there, as well as their Constitutional right of free speech, whether they realize it or not.

Christian parents are commanded to place their children under godly and Christian teaching, not neo-pagan or humanistic instruction. Whether we acknowledge it or not, only two choices remain-- obedience or disobedience to God’s commands. (See Col. 2:8; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Deut. 6:1-9; Mal. 4:6; 2 Cor. 6:14-19 along with Luke 6:40. Matt. 22:37-38 and Eph. 6:4)

Kindergarten-through-grade-12 education, either by Christian home schooling or through a solid, biblically based Christian day school, conforms to the overall responsibility for Christian families to engage in biblical parenting. Placing a child in a government school does not!

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Frontline Ministries

***Salt & Light:*
The Great Commission
and
Who’s Responsible for Educating
Your Children**

E. Ray Moore, Jr., Th.M.

One of the foremost criticisms from Christians who oppose the Exodus Mandate’s agenda of encouraging Christian parents to remove their children from the public education system is the desire that Christian children should serve as “salt and light” to their classmates to carry out the Great Commission. (See Matt. 5:13-14 and Matt. 28:18-20)

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It goes without saying that ALL Christians have a responsibility to be “salt and light” and help fulfill the Great Commission as commanded by our Lord. The church, however, has grossly misapplied the salt and light theological argument to children at the K through 12 level.

In fact children at the K-12 levels do not have the maturity nor the properly apologetic equipping to exist in a humanistic religious environment that is hostile and contrary to their Christian faith. Some may question the validity of calling public education a “humanistic religious environment,” but according to Joe R. Burnett, the editor of The Humanist magazine in 1961, “Public education is the parochial education for scientific humanism.”

The fact remains that ALL EDUCATION IS RELIGIOUS. No neutrality exists in education, and the public- education system has been officially godless and humanistic in both design and practice for a long, long time.

If you question these facts, then consider the dozen U.S. Supreme Court cases since the Everson case in 1947 that have expelled Christian doctrine, practice and now, moral behavior, from public schools. If that does not

Children Missionaries?

The same basic justification for Christian parents keeping their children in the public education system is made using the Great Commission. (See Matt. 28:18-20) The thrust of this argument is that Christian children at K-12 levels are or can be missionaries in public schools.

Christian adults bear this responsibility, not their children. Nowhere in the Old or New Testament does the suggestion exist that God permits Jews or Christians to have their children educated in a pagan institution. In fact, the Bible clearly requires nurturing and training children and even setting them "apart for a season." In other words, childhood is a time of discipling.

Being a missionary is not kids' play -- it's adult work and certainly not for children not yet prepared or trained apologetically to defend their faith and beliefs. Christian parents who send their children as surrogate evangelists to public schools may sincerely believe they are doing right, and I certainly don't believe them willfully or consciously disobedient to God. Rather, I believe they do so for any one of a number of misguided reasons. It could be a case of not taking the time to investigate what the Scriptures say regarding their responsibilities to protect their children; they're unaware of the facts regarding public education. They haven't taken a long, hard look at the potential consequences of their actions, or perhaps they follow the advise of someone or some misguided program. Regardless of the reason Christians send their children to government schools, they are either being deceived or deceiving themselves if they believe their children can act as missionaries in the public-education system. It is only by the grace of God that in some cases He protects their children from harm.

Conclusion

For 2,000 years, the Christian Church has based all its preaching, teaching and educational enterprises such as Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, AWANA, seminary education, higher education, pulpit ministry and Bible studies on texts like Matt. 28:20 where Jesus says, "Teaching them." This text along with many others is the basis for all Church educational and teaching programs.

Very simply we want to put K-12 education BACK INTO THE GREAT COMMISSION. We believe Jesus assigned the teaching or the education mandate to the family and the Church, not to the state or government. The state or government has usurped the role of the family and Church in operating K-12 public schools. We don't want the government to offer the sacraments or ordinances of the Church, to preach the Gospel, or to take over the pastoral role; and we don't want it to teach children at the K through 12 levels either. The state shouldn't run our Sunday Schools and neither should it run our Monday through Friday schools.

Our case is as much religious and theological as educational and academic. Christian theology does not allow us to compartmentalize or separate areas of knowledge or disciplines such as teaching and education from the anchor or foundation of God's Holy Word. May God's Church embrace the challenge of complete obedience in education and so honor Him.

Who's Converting Whom?

Realistically, very few Christian children can actually give a clear witness in public schools. As with everything else in life, this reality, too, has some exceptions.

Without question, the public-education curriculum and peer pressure from other children, most of whom are non-Christian, accomplish the lion's share of converting and witnessing. Moreover, educators implant either subtly or obviously and consciously or unconsciously humanistic, neo-pagan or new age doctrines within the minds and hearts of Christian children. These children, I might add, are a captive audience with little or no opportunity to speak up or to rebut their teachers.

The research data overwhelming reports on the success of the public schools in indoctrinating Christian youth with humanistic or neo-pagan worldviews. The Nehemiah Institute's worldview PEERS test shows that 83-percent of the children from committed Christian families in public schools adopt a secular-humanist or Marxist-socialist worldview. At the SBC's 2002 annual meeting, the Southern Baptist Council on Family Life reported, among other disturbing findings, that 88-percent of children raised in evangelical homes leave church at age 18. Barna Research reports that only 9-percent of born-again teens believe in moral absolutes, and more than half believe that Jesus sinned while He was on earth. A substantial factor for this lost legacy is that 80-percent of Christian families send their children to public schools.