

The Family and Education

Introduction:

The best and truest educators are parents under God. The greatest school is the family...the moral training of the child, the discipline of good habits, is an inheritance from the parents to the child which surpasses all others.¹

Hebrew education was intensely practical. The common opinion held that a man who did not teach his son the law and a trade, the ability to work, reared him to be a fool and a thief. It is said that Simeon, the son of the famed Gamaliel, observed; 'not learning but doing is the chief thing.'²

I. God, our First Educator:

Adam and Eve's education in the garden, is instructive. Having made all things in six days, God's command to Adam and Eve, was that they should "*rule and have dominion*" (Gen.1:26-28), which some have called the Dominion (or Cultural) Mandate. He gave them commands and instructions regarding their responsibilities in the garden, which was to be a proving ground for them. His law is perfect (Ps.19:7), and His education was perfect (Job 36:22), but this does not mean that life was easy for them. There was plenty of work to do in the garden, and this couple had to work at everything from scratch, without tools, ladders, a manual, a hardware shop, or a home. But God blessed them (Gen.1:28).

Adam and Eve's education, meant that they learned to obey God's Word, understanding that there would be consequences for their disobedience (Gen.2:17). God Himself provided them with their theological understanding, their epistemology (their source of knowledge), their ontology (understanding of who they were), and their axiology (their values). As part of their education, Adam and Eve would need to be taught and understand mathematics (1:28), botany (2:15), agriculture (2:5, 15), language (2:19-20), systems of classification (2:19-20), defence (2:15), human anatomy, biology and reproduction (2:23), and teamwork (2:23).

II. Noah's Educational Process:

God's plan to destroy the earth because of wickedness in Noah's day, meant that after the flood, He would be left with a couple, their three sons and daughters-in-law. The coming cataclysm required that He commence a new educational process; the eight people would need additional information. So, He began with a father.

God spoke to Noah (Gen.6:13), and gave him information, instruction and commands (6:14-8:32), and promised to make covenant with him (6:18). The survival of Noah's family required that he accept God's educational directions. His family needed to accept that he had heard from God, and in accordance with God's revealed plan, they needed to carry out the necessary work for 120 years.

After the flood, God blessed them (9:1), repeated the command to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth (9:7), and made the promised covenant with Noah (9:8-17).

¹ Rousas Rushdoony, "The Institutes of Biblical Law," 1973, p.185.

² *ibid.*, p.183.

III. God identified Education as a vital Role for Parents: Gen.18:17-19.

God had a plan for Abraham. He had chosen Abraham, just as Christ has chosen us (Jn.15:16), and this meant Abraham had authority in his family and household, which may have numbered many hundreds, or even thousands of people (see Gen.14:14), to command, direct and teach. The first aspect of Abraham's authority from God, was to "*command his children...to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice*" (v.19). If these conditions were met, the promises of God to Abraham and his seed would eventuate. These aspects of God's promises to Abraham, are applicable to parents today (Heb.13:8).

IV. Deuteronomy: An Analysis of two Chapters: Deuteronomy, chapters 6 and 11 expand on God's promises to Abraham. They have many similarities to those promises, and the two chapters are similar to each other. Time has moved on since Abraham; perhaps 500-550 years, but God, being the Unchanging One, has kept His covenant with Abraham, as He promised. Now, He is speaking through Moses, to the group of 2 to 3 million people, who are Abraham's descendents. They are ready if they'll obey to be the recipients of God's promises, made originally to their forefather Abraham, in Genesis 18.

Six significant words are used repetitively in Deuteronomy 6 and 11. A close analysis of these words is critical to understand God's purpose in educating and discipling the children of Israel, and our children today.

"*Teach*" is used 3 times, "listen," 4 times, "*sons,*" 7 times, "*possess*" or "*dispossess,*" 7 times, and "*land,*" 19 times. The word "*command*" (or "*commandments*" or "*commanding*" or "*commanded,*") is used 26 times, whilst "*Lord*" is used 33 times.

From an educational and a discipleship point of view (education and discipleship being subjects I consider inseparable), it could be said that these are the six most important words in these two chapters, about education.

Drawing on the use of these 6 words, we can construct a one sentence summary of the two chapters, which reflects and explains God's educational purpose for His people, at all times:

Teach your sons the Lord's commandments, so they can possess the land.

Abbreviated further, we could say:

Education is for possession.

We can now make a summary of points I, II, III, and IV:

The Bible teaches us, that a) God had given revelatory words within the family, to the person He had chosen to be in authority-the father. b) These words are in the form of authoritative instructions and commands, from God. c) Obedience to those words leads to life, blessing and dominion. c) God expects the father to faithfully represent Him.

V. Education in Psalms and Proverbs:

A) Without wishing to deal in an in-depth way with either of these books, the Book of Proverbs is substantially a book of a father's instructions to his son, the father being designated by God as the primary instructor. Once again, it is parents who are designated as God's choice, to educate their children. 43 times, Proverbs uses the word "*son,*" and on 20 of these occasions, the even more personal term, "*My son,*" is employed. Perhaps the most important thing a father is to teach his children, is the fear of the Lord (see Ps.34:9-11).

B) The mother's role in the education of her children, is clearly stated (see Proverbs 1:8; 6:20; 31:1, 26). The bride in the Song of Solomon, said to her husband, "I would lead you and bring you into the house of my mother, *who used to instruct me*" (Song of Sol.8:2). The family is thus the primary place of instruction.

C) Psalms and Proverbs warn us that one of the most destructive things to do to any young person, is to let them be in the company of fools (see Ps.1:1-3; Prov.13:20; 22:24-25). The Bible doesn't merely warn of the potential of bad consequences; it predicts them as being an inevitable result. Furthermore, Ps.106:34-39 is a history lesson on the children of Israel, explaining Israel's steps down into idolatry. Having failed to destroy the peoples as the Lord commanded them, they then "*mingled with the nations, and learned their practices, and served their idols*" (v.35). Like the children of Israel, children's association with others subjects them to the influence of others, leading to the formation of habits, and to lasting character change. Socialisation can be of a positive or negative nature.

The Christian person doesn't doubt that socialisation for children is important, for the scripture says, "*He that walks with wise men will be wise...*" (Prov.13:20). Socialisation is essential. The critical factors are, "*With who?*" and "*For what purpose?*" The Bible clearly teaches us here, that Christian children have no need to mix with ungodly people, whose values are qualitatively different to theirs. The consequences will be damaging, and sometimes irreparable: "*...the companion of fools will suffer harm.*" A person's moral environment (as Lot discovered, to his lasting pain) is of great importance.

A survey presented in 2001 in the U. S. showed that within two years of graduating from high school, between 70% and 88% of teenagers from evangelical families stop attending church.³ As one writer indicated, "*all too many churchmen view the undisciplined and amoral products of statist education as evidences of the failure of these schools. On the contrary, they are evidences of their success.*"⁴

VI. The Pattern of Breakdown of Old Testament Discipleship:

"Others have been with those who rebel against the light..." (Job 24:13).

The incest of the daughters of Lot: (Gen.19:30-38) What was different about the education and discipleship of the daughters of Lot, compared to that of Isaac, Abraham's son? How had they been so influenced in their upbringing, that they could conclude it was perfectly appropriate to trick their father into drunkenness, so they could have sex and fall pregnant to him? Clearly, the attitudes and behaviour of the inhabitants of Sodom around the girls during their upbringing, had a marked impact on them, and their father.

The scripture says that Lot was "*oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men... [and] felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds*" (II Pet.2:7-8). But foolishly, he did not consider these were sufficient reasons to take his family and leave the city; he required a visit from angels to persuade him. When the men of the city approached his door, wanting to rape the angels who were with him, he offered to give his daughters instead to the mob, promising that they could "*do to them whatever you like*" (Gen.19:8). The angels were able

³ Bruce Shortt, "The Harsh Truth about Government Schools," 2004, p.51.

⁴ Rushdoony, quoted in Shortt, p.57.

to save the lives of Lot and his daughters, but the girls' subsequent behaviour shows that they had already succumbed to the morality of Sodom.

*[Lot] selected a city where his children could not be disciplined and educated properly in the Bible. He wanted to live in the luxury of a corrupt society with a wicked educational system, instead of wandering around in a bunch of tents with Abraham...the long-term price was great. Lot ended up living in a cave...more importantly, he lost his children.*⁵

B) *The rape of Dinah: (Gen.34:1)* It appears that Dinah went alone, when she “*went out to visit the daughters of the land.*” Whether Jacob knew she was going is not clear, but this is not the point. While it is easy to be wise in hindsight, she should have been accompanied and protected, if she was to go at all into the company of people she knew nothing of. This instance reflects Jacob's negligence in the care of his only daughter, and his failure to be responsible in the subsequent negotiations with Hamor and Shechem. As a result, there was needless revenge and bloodshed on the part of Simeon and Levi (Gen.34:25-29), so much so that Jacob feared that they would all be destroyed.

C) *The rape of Tamar, and murder of Amnon: (II Sam.13)* The sin of our children cannot always be prevented by our diligence. But we are obliged, as much as it lies within our power and responsibility, to behave wisely and circumspectly, knowing that there is corruption in every heart, whether it names the name of Christ, or not. This David did not do, in his oversight of his children. When Amnon requested of David that Tamar be sent into him, to prepare him some food, David did not perceive any impropriety. But Amnon went one step further. Being with her half-brother in a bedroom, when everyone has been dismissed by him from the room (v.9), was itself a place of vulnerability for her. But she has no apparent inkling of any danger.

Amnon's rape of his half-sister Tamar was a family tragedy. It was the second in a series of tragic events within David's family, which relate to David's adultery with Bathsheba, and his murder of Uriah. Was David at fault in relation to Tamar's rape? He was Amnon's father, and had not successfully disciplined that young man.

David had written the Psalm, “*Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man who desires life and loves length of day that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit*” (Ps.34:11-12). Perhaps David and her mother had not trained Tamar (like Dinah), to avoid circumstances that could lead to compromise or danger. What David clearly did not do, in relation to Amnon, was to “*know well the condition of your flocks, and pay attention to your herds*” (Prov.27:23).

King David's inability to act justly after the rape of Tamar in dealing with Amnon, set in motion a further series of events, spanning a number of years. Absalom, angered by his sister's rape, is never consoled by justice being done, and being seen to be done, to Amnon. He is angry with Amnon, but also frustrated and angry with his father. There appears to be no penalty for Amnon, for an offense that in some circumstances would result in capital punishment (Deut.22:25). David was “*very angry*” (v.21), but what does Amnon care about that? The injustice is “swept under the carpet.”

⁵ Ray Sutton, “That You May Prosper,” 1997, p.116.

David is unable to act, presumably because the criminal is his own son, and he is torn between a conflicting sense of the need for justice for the Lord, for Tamar, his desire to avoid a public family scandal, and his attachment to Amnon. He fails to put into practice his own injunction, that *“he who practices deceit will not dwell within my house”* (Ps.101:7). David is emotionally manipulated by the events of the day. This may have been what Amnon was confident about, all along.

Thus Absalom murders Amnon; an awful, but in some ways, a logical conclusion (v.29). But there is one person who plays a subtle, perhaps indirect role, in both the rape of Tamar, and the murder of Amnon. The Bible describes Jonadab, David’s nephew, as *“a very shrewd man”* (v.3). Jonadab knew before both the rape of Tamar, and the murder of Amnon, something of the possible outcomes. Initially the *“friend”* (v.3) of Amnon, Jonadab was also aware of Absalom’s conspiracy against him. When King David hears the initial news, that there has been a slaughter, that *“not one [of the king’s sons] is left”* (v.30), Jonadab is able to explain to him, that *“only Amnon is dead”* (v.33).

What can we learn from these three tragic Old Testament examples?

Firstly, we are instructed that every father has authority from God to *“manage his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity”* (I Tim.3:4). This is effectively a New Testament rendition of God’s command to Abraham (Gen.18:19). Job, who probably lived in Abraham’s era, also took his obligations as a father very seriously (Job 1:5). One minister whose views I respect, has written that *“by far the majority of church families I know are not protective enough of their children.”*⁶ This is a critical aspect, if fathers wish to see their family inherit the promises of God.

Secondly, it is the devil’s classic strategy when attacking a family, to send an evil thought to a weak family member, via a person who appears to be perfectly innocuous. The devil of course, appears to be *“an angel of light”* (II Cor.11:14). Who would have thought that a demonically inspired serpent in the Garden could have brought down the whole human race, or that Jonadab (David’s own nephew), could have participated in two evil conspiracies, which ended in a rape of one family member and the death of another? Fathers need to be aware of this demonic strategy, and respond accordingly.

Thirdly, sins in the family, may not be a father’s fault; but they are his responsibility. They happen on his watch. A father’s failure to act firmly, decisively and protectively when necessary, can have disastrous consequences in his family. Sin has a remarkable capacity to intrude into the family, the most central place of human activity, as Genesis graphically shows.

We sometimes make an error in majoring on the sins of commission, such as murder, rape and adultery, sins which are addressed in the Ten Commandments. But sins of omission, which Adam, Lot, Jacob and David committed, can be just as dangerous and deadly, as sins of commission.

Adam’s first error was in not protecting his wife in the garden, from a devious, lying, slanderous interloper. That was an aspect of God’s command to *“cultivate and keep it”* (Gen.2:15). At a critical point in their families’ development when a crisis was looming, these four men failed to take initiative and act protectively. The Bible warns us that, *“like a trampled spring and a polluted well, is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked”* (Prov.25:26).

⁶ Dr S. M. Davis, “Changing the Heart of a Rebel,” 1998, p.1.

VII. Educational Accreditation:

*There was conflict between Rome and the early church. Rome's policy toward all religions was that no religion had a right to exist unless it was a licit religion, duly licensed by the Empire, and possessing a certificate which that religion or cult was supposed to hang on the wall of its meeting place. A part of the procedure whereby licit status was secured, was to appear before a Roman imperial centre, and there to put a little incense on a brazier before an image of the emperor or a battle insignia, and then to declare briefly 'Caesar is Lord!' That was all. It was an acknowledgement of the sovereignty of Caesar over every area of life and thought.*⁷

*When we say that we believe in God and in Christ, we are saying that we are putting our faith in a higher Being. When a school is accredited, the school is putting its faith in a higher institution, which grants the school legitimacy. When a school is accredited by the state, the school is putting its faith in the state and being accepted by the state. Thus, accreditation is a religious act. This explains why accreditation is one of the means used by humanistic governments to control Christian schools.*⁸

State control of education has always been a key component of humanist and socialist ideology; an article of their faith promoted since Aristotle, and espoused by Marx and Hitler. Engels, (Marx's co-writer and supporter) claimed that,

*with the transfer of the means of production into common ownership, [communism] the single family ceases to be the economic unit of society...The care and education of the children becomes a public affair; society looks after all children alike, whether they are legitimate or not.*⁹

State education has always been hostile to Christianity, and the family. As early as 1864, John Swett, the Superintendent of California state schools, claimed that

*the child should be taught to consider his instructor...superior to the parent in point of authority... the vulgar impression that parents have a legal right to dictate to teachers is entirely erroneous...parents have no remedy as against the teacher.*¹⁰

As early as 1930, humanists realised that education and in particular public education, would be a means of alienating students from Christianity. In that year, Charles F. Potter, a signatory of the first Humanist Manifesto, indicated that

*education is thus a most powerful ally of humanism, and every public school is a school of humanism. What can the theistic Sunday School, meeting for an hour once a week, and teaching only a fraction of the children, do to stem the tide of a five-day program of humanistic teachings?*¹¹

⁷ R. J. Rushdoony, "The 'Atheism' of the Early Church," 1983, p.15-16.

⁸ Robert Thoburn, "The Children Trap," 1986, p.96-7.

⁹ Marx and Engels, Selected Works, 1976.

¹⁰ Rousas Rushdoony, "The Messianic Character of American Education," 1995, p.80-81.

¹¹ Bruce Shortt, "The Harsh Truth about Government Schools," 2004, p.54.

*Since a sovereign must have absolute power, the state, where it claims sovereignty, whether a democracy or anything else, moves towards totalitarian powers. Sovereignty with such powers becomes the saving power, and the state becomes man's god and saviour. It then governs and controls man's total life.*¹²

Christian parents must understand that Departments of Education have a deeply religious reason to maintain an educational monopoly. If departmental individuals are not believers in Jesus Christ, they will be hostile to the faith, for Jesus said that *"he who is not with me is against me"* (Mat.12:30). They know that Christian faith is communicated primarily within the family. The department may give lip-service to the notion of family influence within the curriculum or a school, but that is all. That is merely the maintenance of a good façade. What counts to them, is the maintenance of departmental power.

Strong family structures are a threat to the humanistic state, as they represent an independent power base, and are difficult to control. This is one reason why socialists have always hated the family. The Australian Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, when she was the Federal Minister for Education, indicated in Parliament (25/8/2008) that *"parents of school-aged children are obligated to send them to school."* She was utterly indifferent to the wishes of the parents. This reflects a consistent socialist view.

If the child is in a government registered school (be it a state school, private, or "Christian") the child will spend a large portion of their time away from their parents and family, being progressively instructed in material which has departmental approval, in an age-segregated classroom. Over twelve years, that computes to some 14,400 hours, of departmentally approved, worldview indoctrination.

There is a second reason why education departments are keen to maintain control. Like the silversmiths of Acts 19:23-27, they want to protect their business monopoly, and their future. If a large proportion of the community was able to successfully educate their children, without any reference at all to an educational bureaucracy, that bureaucracy would clearly be irrelevant. That could mean the loss of hundreds, and ultimately many thousands of tax-payer funded jobs, the total collapse and elimination of seven state or federal departments in Australia, and a massive saving to the taxpayer. (I believe that would be a good thing, and a logical outcome of Jesus' promise, that *"every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted"* (Mat.15:13).

They cannot afford to let this happen, so they will fight tooth and nail, and coerce families by various means of intimidation (including the threat of prosecution), to try and ensure children are enrolled in a departmentally registered institution. Any other scenario would be absolutely anaethema-unthinkable for them.

*Nowhere in the Bible does God delegate the education of children to the state or to the disciples of other religions.*¹³

¹² Rousas Rushdoony, "Sovereignty," 2007, p.471.

¹³ Shortt, *ibid.*, p.55.

The Bible specifically commands that God's people are not to make covenants with ungodly people. Why? Because God's people are bound in covenant to God, through Jesus Christ, and He is a jealous God. He is jealous for the love, affections and the obedience of His people; He wants their hearts. There are many texts dealing with this, such as Ex.34:10-16, Deut.7:1-6; 12:1-4; 20:16-18, Num.33:50-56; Judges 2:1-4; II Cor.6:14-18.

Every time God's people disobeyed him in this context in the Bible, God said the results would be disastrous. (Joshua 23:11-13 is a good example.) *"The Biblical position with regard to alliances is that alliances are religious acts...a common cause and a common faith motivates the allies."*¹⁴ The most obvious application for this, is in relationship to whom we marry, but it applies to all areas of our life.

The Christian parent needs to consistently apply their faith to education, as an important aspect of life. This is a non-negotiable issue. What does it mean to be faithful to God, in the raising of children? Do I really believe I can expose my children to the influence of evildoers for twelve years, and then give a good account to God for how they have been raised? This was Lot's delusion. Is enrolment in a godless educational institution, consistent with the scriptures' command, to *"train up a child in the way they should go?"* (Prov.22:6)

*Children are a God-given inheritance for our conquest of the world for Christ. They are a means of subduing the earth and exercising dominion under the Lord. If we give our children to state or private schools which are not systematically Christian in their curriculum, we are then giving the future to God's enemies, and He will hold us accountable for laying waste our heritage.*¹⁵

In about 2002, while I was working for Australian Christian Academy in Brisbane, Australia, a church-attending woman came into our office to enquire about homeschooling. During our conversation, she admitted that she was troubled by a comment that her seven year old son (in a state school), had made to her: *"Mummy, why did you put me in a school that doesn't believe in God?"*

The issue of educational accreditation is a significant religious issue for Christian parents. It may be one of the most significant tests of their faith in life. It is really a case of, *"Who is Lord of my family?"* It is a test of our faithfulness. Because much of the modern church is syncretistic, many can find a good excuse. *"Syncretistic?"* It is an attempt to combine two religions, and it very commonly has an ulterior political motivation. Syncretism was Israel's problem, from the time they came out of Egypt. Aaron tried to maintain the façade of faithfulness to the Lord, when he produced the golden calf (Ex.32:1-8).

Ahab may have wanted to maintain the facade of the worship of the Lord, but he also wanted to maintain his grasp on political power; so he didn't want to offend others (including Jezebel), who were Baal worshippers. He tried to maintain an impossible religious compromise, with a political motivation. That was Ahab's way: compromise, rather than initiate conflict. But, as someone has said, *"the path of least resistance makes men and rivers crooked."* Ahab's syncretism only brought God's curse on his family (I Kings 21:25-29).

¹⁴ Rousas Rushdoony, "Salvation and Godly Rule," 1983, p.89.

¹⁵ Rousas Rushdoony, "In His Service," 2009, p.20.

Conflict for the Christian is necessary, and an aspect of our faith. The early church had lots of it, and it frequently led to the persecution and martyrdom of individuals. No one that I know likes conflict, but bearing in mind that we will all give an account to God at a later date, we must ensure we make wise choices. *“If we please God, who does it matter whom we displease?”*

Elijah said to the people in his day, *“How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people did not answer him a word* (I Kings 18:21).

In relation to our childrens’ education, we must make choices which a) are pleasing to God, b) will lead to their long-term benefit, assisting their education/discipleship and c) are decisions which they will see as being consistent with our Christian faith, which they can draw an example from, over time.

VIII. Educating through Homeschooling:

The decision of parents to homeschool their children means that they take complete responsibility. That does not mean that they have all knowledge about every educational possibility that they could possibly employ. Nor does it mean that decisions can’t be reversed.

What a family chooses this year, they may not choose, next year. It means that the parents, beginning with the father, look at some of the options available (and there are many), and make some choices: *“What do we want? What do we need? What do we have time for? What suits our children? What can we afford?”* This is the function of responsibility. *“Every passage in the Bible that mentions the education of children makes it clear that parents are responsible.”¹⁶*

Furthermore, parents have the opportunity to tailor their childrens’ education to their family’s needs. Family needs and circumstances do vary and change over time. The overriding issue, is that parents have a glorious opportunity and responsibility to educate and disciple their children, for a life of possession and dominion. Parents can teach a child that:

*God has a Destiny for my life
Destiny requires my Discipline
Discipline leads to Dominion.*

The fact that children are at home and are being educated under their parents’ supervision, ought not mean that their home should be a place of anarchy. Conversely, every moment of the day need not be completely regimented. Homeschool families are able to structure their day how they want, enjoying their freedoms, while making sure theirs is a home of relative discipline and industry. This could be yours!

Sue and I commenced homeschooling our children, in Dubbo (central-west NSW, Australia), in 1990. At the time, we had three sons; Jonathan aged 9, Benjamin aged 6, and Philip, aged 4. Philip commenced in 1992, and of course was the last to finish, in 2003. He never attended a school in his life. Homeschooling was an excellent experience for us all. All of our sons have

¹⁶ Shortt, *ibid.*, p.55.

been grateful they were homeschooled. We were able to do a lot of things together, which would not have been available otherwise.

To homeschool children is a marked change in role especially for women, who commonly haven't seen themselves as educators, or believed they could do it. Plenty of people believe they can't, and may say so. It certainly seems to be different in relation to other people, but we aren't told to observe other people; we are told to follow and obey Jesus Christ. About ten years ago, I heard a quote from Ruth Prince:

If women do not fulfil their God-given calling, it leaves a void in the fibre of society which nothing else can fill.

That has made a lot of sense to Sue and I, in relation to homeschooling, and the training of children. Helping her husband to train their children to “*rule and have dominion*” (Gen.1:26-28), is a vital part of a woman's role.

Is homeschooling better for students academically?

In a 1997 U.S. national study by Dr. Brian Ray, homeschoolers (K-12) were found to have outperformed their government school counterparts by 30 to 37 percentile points across all the areas tested. In reading and mathematics, for example, homeschoolers scored in the 87th and 82nd percentiles, respectively. The study showed that by the 8th grade, the average homeschooled student was performing four grades ahead of the national average.¹⁷

The Fraser Institute, a Canadian public policy think-tank, conducted research on homeschoolers' academic performance in 2001. The survey author, Patrick Basham, summarised that,

*According to the U.S. Department of Education, 'virtually all the available data show that the group of home schooled children who are tested are above average.' Such impressive results have been observable for at least 15 years...From coast to coast, and from border to border, homeschooled students in the United States surpass the national averages on both of the major college entrance tests, the ACT and the SAT.*¹⁸

As part of my study for a Masters Degree in Education (which I completed in 2005), I surveyed students who had graduated with a Year 12 Certificate, from Australian Christian Academy, between 1999 and 2002. Of the 55 graduates who responded, 96% were positive about their use of a Christian curriculum, 90% thought they had received a good preparation for life, 94% said they were glad they were homeschooled, and 74% believed they would homeschool their own children. One respondent indicated that she valued “being in a Christian environment, being *nurtured* in my education, and the flexibility to do things with my family when it suited them best.”¹⁹

Gatto seemed to concur with this respondent, when he wrote that “*the curriculum of the family is at the heart of any good life.*”²⁰

¹⁷ Quoted in Shortt, *ibid.*, p.343.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p.343.

¹⁹ Andrew McColl, “Homeschooling: the Graduates Speak,” unpublished Thesis, 2005.

²⁰ John Gatto, “Education and the Western Spiritual Tradition,” (date unknown) p.152.

One U.S. restaurant operator, who has employed 75 homeschoolers, claimed that *People assume that they [homeschoolers] will be socially handicapped because they've been homebound, but it is just the opposite...they have a good sense of humour and know how to act. Lots of kids have trouble with judgement...Not these kids. They're stable and mature, good team players and likely to stand up for what is right.*²¹

A former U.S. Department of Education researcher, Patricia Lines, who is well acquainted with homeschooling, has rendered the most telling judgment on the character of homeschooled children:

*If I didn't know anything about someone other than their educational background, I'd rather hop into a foxhole with a homeschool kid than one from a public school. The homeschool kid will be a little better educated and dependable. It's just the law of averages.*²²

U.S. Senator Dr Ron Paul commented in 2007, that *parental control of child rearing, especially education, is one of the bulwarks of liberty. No nation can remain free when the state has greater influence over the knowledge and values transmitted to children than the family...The best way to improve education is to return control to the parents who know best what their children need.*²³

Conclusion:

God gave clear statements about education to Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses. Nothing much has changed since then, as the scripture says, “*there is nothing new under the sun*” (Ecc.1:9). But God’s requirements have remained the same, for Jesus is the same, “*yesterday, today and forever*” (Heb.13:8). Responsibilities for the education of children cannot go away, though they can be ignored, but the consequences of inactivity or the wrong kind of activity are frightening, as Dabney, at the end of the nineteenth century, so ably expressed:

*The education of children for God is the most important business done on earth. It is the one business for which the earth exists. To it all politics, all war, all literature, all money-making, ought to be subordinated; and every parent especially ought to feel every hour of the day, that, next to making his own calling and election sure, this is the end for which he is kept alive by God-this is his task on earth.*²⁴

²¹ Quoted in Shortt, p.349.

²² Shortt, p.349-350.

²³ Ron Paul, quoted on www.lewrockwell.com, 2007.

²⁴ Dabney, quoted in Shortt, p.356.