

## 080808 - Education

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When you think of the word ‘education’ what do you think of?

Perhaps you think of students sitting in neat rows watching the board as a teacher explains a new concept.

Perhaps you think of students sitting around a table working collaboratively?

Over the past 150 years the word ‘education’ has increasingly been used to refer to formal teaching mostly organised by the state: from pre-school, through kindergarten, primary school, high school, and on to university. Add child-care, TAFE and apprenticeships and it is plain to see that much of what is called ‘education’ is organised by government.

It wasn’t always that way!

### **Dictionary definition: education**

1. the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life.
2. the act or process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills, as for a profession.
3. a degree, level, or kind of schooling: *a university education*.
4. the result produced by instruction, training, or study: *to show one's education*.
5. the science or art of teaching; pedagogics. Dictionary.com

### **What is God’s view of education?**

What is the ‘big picture’ view of ‘education’?

Learning from parents, from the Bible, from nature, from others...

What does ‘education’ mean for Christians? What does the Bible say?

How do we respond to the notion: [‘Christ’s Kingdom Coming in and through Education’](#)

Education is not limited to formal schooling. In fact, we need to be wary of what is taught by the world... many ideas taught today in schools and universities are not in accordance with the Scriptures and God’s values.

We need to take heed of these words of Paul to Timothy:

“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.” Colossians 2:8

### **Instruction**

Starting in Genesis, God instructed Adam and Eve about what they could – and could not – do. God said they could eat the fruit from every tree in the Garden of Eden, including the Tree of Life, EXCEPT the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Genesis 2: 15-17 “The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

### **Knowledge**

Today much focus is placed on knowledge – learning facts, information.

### **Study the Bible – the Word of God**

Christians need an 'education' in the Word of God.

The Bible says

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV)

The Authorised version says “Study to shew thyself approved unto God...”

We need to have answers for others...

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.” 1 Peter 3: 15-17

## **Wisdom**

The wisdom of God is spoken of in the Bible, especially in the book of Proverbs. Wisdom is an essential characteristic for Christians. The world's view of 'education' - having degrees, vocational training and knowledge are not enough.

“Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.” Proverbs 4:7

“The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honour.” Proverbs 15: 33

## **Danger of wisdom:**

Wisdom on its own, outside of following Jesus and being in relationship with God, can be dangerous:

Eve: Desired wisdom from eating the fruit

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining **wisdom**, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.” Genesis 3:6

Solomon: Chasing wisdom for its own sake brings grief

“I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven. What a heavy burden God has laid on men!

I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind. What is twisted cannot be straightened; what is lacking cannot be counted.

I thought to myself, "Look, I have grown and increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me; I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge."

Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom, and also of madness and folly, but I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind. For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief. (Ecclesiastes 1: 15 - )

## **Knowing about God v Knowing God**

As Christians it is essential that we know the Bible. However the Bible says that knowledge about God is not enough!

Jesus reminds us that we need to KNOW God, not just know about Him.

“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.” John 5: 39-40

## **Relationship**

It is not enough just know about God... or even to have wisdom. We need to understand and be in relationship with God.

## **Revelation**

The Bible speaks about 'revelation'.

### ***Special revelation***

There is 'special revelation', about God's nature, about Jesus Christ his Son, about salvation and His divine plan, etc.

### ***General Revelation***

God also gives general revelation.

Romans 1:18-22 says "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles."

### **Role of parents in 'education'**

The Bible highlights the role of parents in educating their children.

Solomon: "Listen, my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many. I guide you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths." Proverbs 4:10-11

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

This doesn't just mean teaching them the alphabet or how to count. It means giving a total framework for living, especially in following Jesus Christ and God's instructions.

Ann Bergen – WCTU President - decision not to drink alcohol. Her children have followed her example and do not drink. Fifty years ago – 20,000 members – now 500.

### **Role of formal education**

Victoria – church denominational or private schools prior to 1872.

Government provided education – Vic 1872 – free, compulsory and secular.

Universities – mostly started by churches for theological training.

Education and curricula are increasingly implemented by the state and officials/experts.

Does formal education match Biblical teaching? How has this changed over time?

### **In conclusion: Education for Christians**

Christianity is a worldview – it covers every area of life...

In 'education' it covers training, vocation, relationships, Scripture, revelation.

The whole person – spirit, soul, body.

The Bible provides a guidebook for living. We need to know what it says and put it into practice through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Influencing the world for Christ.

Salt Shakers: Watchmen on the wall - alerting, training, educating...

