

The Family Friend

A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

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Public School, Required Reading, and Christian Parenting

Editor's note: this article was found on the blog of **Cory Collins**, gospel preacher for the church in Keller, Texas. He writes this before sharing the article: *This post is written by my colleague and friend, **Spencer Ross**. I am grateful and glad to share it.*

Should I send my kids to public or private school? In this twisted world, should I just home school my kiddos? Every Christian family must honestly consider each option and choose the best route for them. A majority of Christians opt to utilize the public school option. This comes with a price (other than paying your taxes). Our schools do not teach and view the world through the lens of Christianity. For many different reasons, public education is immersed in secularism.

At the end of summer, I often ask students if they are ready for the new school year. Most of them are

hesitant to say "yes" because they have not finished their dreaded required summer reading. Most school districts have similar recommend reading lists that teachers will use for their student's required reading.

Recently, one parent at the church where I labor noticed the content of one of the books his daughter was reading. The book was *Anthem* by Ayn Rand. The messages in the book were very disturbing to this Christian father. *Anthem* promotes human autonomy, freedom from any higher authority than oneself, and the view that the author herself is "god." This book denies the need to serve others unselfishly and calls the reader instead to live a self-centered, self-serving life. It presents a philosophy or belief system regarding deity, humanity, self, others, and the meaning of life. In that sense it is a religious book. Atheism, as well as theism, is a faith system or worldview.

How should a Christian parent respond? How should a Christian parent respond to anything that the education system promotes that is opposed to Christ? Let me offer just three general suggestions that parents can specifically apply to their unique situations.



(1) Create An Environment of Open Discussion

Our teenage students are going through this fast paced age of reasoning and enlightenment stage of life. They want to understand why they have been taught to believe and act in a certain way. They are curious to what opposing views advocate. My prayer as a parent is to create an environment where my children feel comfortable to ask questions and challenge fundamental beliefs without the fear of quick retaliation. I want to use opportunities like homework about humanism as an occasion to emphasize why the Christian worldview is superior.

Jesus did not have scheduled Bible study sessions. In Scripture, he would use everyday life as classrooms to communicate spiritual truths. As a parent I can use the awkward experiences of inappropriate behavior we are exposed to on television, movies, and

music as teachable moments to discuss the Christian worldview.

God has blessed us with a mind and wisdom, and we should embrace education and learning. Paul was a well-versed student of secular studies as evidenced by his quotations in his speech on Mars Hill.

(2) Be a Concerned Parent

My position on the whole public, private, or home school debate is that we must be concerned parents. I feel compelled as a Christian parent to come across as a “nosy” father. As we grow up we can reflect on our childhood and conclude that our parents seemed to care about us by how much they invested in my school, extracurricular activities, and faith. There seems to be a correlation between uninvolved parenting and sinful activity with teenagers.

Ken Ham’s book *Already Gone* documents research about how our teens are losing their faith before they even leave the home of their parents. In the study, students did not believe in the literal Genesis account and the complete inspiration of Scripture. It is strongly recommended that concerned parents emphasize apologetics in their home. Apologetics is the study of reasoned arguments in justification of Christianity.

Teens deep down would admit that they are appreciative to have concerned parents because it is a demonstration that they truly care about their physical, social, educational, and spiritual well-being.

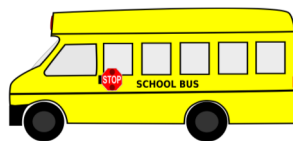
(3) Take Appropriate Action

We represent Christ with our words and actions. 1 Peter 3:21 “but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.” It is perfectly justifiable to be angry about literature that is contrary to God’s word. However, we must be “angry and sin not” (Ephesians 4:26). Remember our attitudes when we address these situations.

We should not be hesitant to express our concerns to teachers, school boards, and other parents. You never know what kind of reaction you may get just for bringing something up. Many people never firmly and kindly express their complaints. Most school districts have policies in place to request the removal of books. Many parents can offer suggestions. For example, *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis would be a comparable reading to serve as a counter study to *Anthem*. This would create more balance and diversity.

Ask the Lord for wisdom how you as a Christian ought to react to anything in the public school system that bothers your conscience and challenges your core beliefs. “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him” (James 1:5).

—Spencer Ross



Voodoo In Massachusetts?

In the newspapers on February 4, 2018, there was a story from East Bridgewater, Massachusetts, about a five-year-old girl who was permanently disfigured by a voodoo ritual. Two sisters tied her down and engaged in a ritual intended to rid her of a demon. The sisters say that they perform “cleansing baths” for family and friends and the children sometimes get burned as spirits leave their bodies. Voodoo rituals like that are practiced in Haiti, the home country of the sisters.

The Bible makes it clear that God forbids anything associated with witchcraft, voodoo, evil spirits, or sorcery. The Old Testament law said that a person who performed this type of activity should be put to death (Exodus 22:18). Any activity of that type was forbidden (Deuteronomy 18:10; 2 Kings 9:22; Micah 5:12). We might think that is extreme, but these things can and do result in human sacrifice. That is serious.

We should never underestimate the power of evil, but God has given us tools far superior to anything evil can produce. James tells us, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). (Does God Exist? today)

—from doesgodexist.org