

## Lesson 7: Formal Instruction

### **Two Kinds of Parental Instruction**

**Informal Teaching** – *what ways did we recommend last week for informal education in the Bible?*

**Formal Teaching** – *requires a plan, especially in the area of schooling...*

### **What are the schooling choices?**

#### *(1) Homeschooling*

Advantages: Parent/child relationship (strengthened, can be stronger than peers/media),  
Instilling independent learning (especially reading), and  
Combining the fear of God with every subject.

Disadvantages: Isolation common, often due to pride, independence, or even fear, and  
Limited ability educationally (especially in high school).

Model: At age 12, Jesus sought outside education, while remaining submissive to His parents (Lk 2:41-51).  
Somehow there needs to be a transition period of “both/and” with stepping stones to adulthood.

#### *(2) Private School*

Advantages: Incorporation of Scripture and study, with a division of labor in teaching, and  
Possibly a healthy peer-to-peer environment (but not always so).

Disadvantages: High costs of tuition and transportation,  
Time-consuming (the “rat race” feel of activities and scattered subject-matter), and  
Possibly poor teaching, if the teachers are poorly paid.

#### *(3) Public School*

Advantages: Prepackaged and with little cost, lab and vocational resources, and  
Lots of extracurricular activities (e.g. drama, athletics, band, field trips, etc.).

Disadvantages: God-absent teaching and typically a godless environment.

Beware! The companion of fools suffers harm (Proverbs 13:20).

Why put your children next to fools all day, in an atmosphere of little discipline?

If the fear of the Lord is the “beginning” of knowledge and wisdom (Pr. 1:7; 9:10),  
then how can real learning occur when His word and authority are absent?

As a church, we are committed to freedom of choice in the area of education—per family, per child, per year.

However, we also affirm:

*While not every family must homeschool, every family must home educate.*

*In fact, for those with children in the public school, the home education may be even more intense and needed.*

### **What are the means for home education?**

#### **Church Worship** – *Main Service*

As a bare minimum, take your children to church, especially the main worship service.

Even without full understanding, children can learn of a holy God from a joyful, reverent atmosphere.

The fear of God can come to children through hearing the word of God publicly read (Dt. 31:12-13).

#### **Family Worship** – *Scripture, Song, and Prayer*

The dad is the pastor, mom assists, and the children are trained to seek God in a group setting.

Perhaps mom leads the children at the start of the day, and dad leads at the end of the day.

Use variety, tell a story, ask questions, and invite discussion, questions, and participation.

For young children, emphasize narrative Scripture—Genesis, Samuel, Kings, the Gospels, and Acts.

#### **Memorization** – *Scripture and Catechism*

Children can memorize a lot, even if it is not understood (e.g. Mt. 21:15-16).

Children love to collect things—even memorized sayings are delightful to children (Pr. 22:17-21).

Some object to formalized “rote” learning as not being “from the heart.”

Ans. True, if that is all there is, then it may fall into liturgical formalism.

John Bunyan – telling of God’s wrath will teach children to pray better than rote prayers.

However, the form of Psalms and Proverbs is part of the pattern of truth (2 Tim. 1:13).

And if we can enter into our “rote” hymns, why cannot they as well?