

SESSION 3

VEGEMITE KIDS

Overview

Education is a hot topic today. Should we send our children to public school? Should we give them a Christian education at a Christian school? Should we educate our children at home? Although there are many factors to consider when choosing an educational path for your children, parents should primarily base their decision on what the Bible teaches about this area.

In this third and final video with Ken, he shares that the family has been ordained by God to transmit knowledge of Himself from one generation to the next. Ken underscores that the Bible clearly teaches that the father is to be responsible for leading and seeing that his family is taught about the knowledge of God and what He has done for us. He offers many insights concerning the biblical command to be the “salt of the earth” and challenges parents to rethink their educational philosophy. He provides some cautions about public schools and Christian schools that have compromised on God’s Word. He exhorts parents to raise “Vegemite Kids” by developing in their children a love for God and His Word.

Ken emphasizes that raising children is an incredible responsibility—a responsibility that should not be taken lightly. He ends with the challenge he gave in the first video, “What legacy are you leaving your children?”

Getting Started

We saw in the last lesson that developing a truly biblical worldview and teaching this to our children is of vital importance. In this lesson, we’ll be challenged to consider *how* we’re educating our children and what the Bible teaches about this foundational area.

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1. Let's discuss for a few minutes your philosophy of education. How have you decided that your children will be educated? Why did you choose that path? What biblical principles guided your decision?

Vegemite Kids video outline

A function of the family

Malachi 2:15

Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. (NIV)

Transmit the knowledge of God from one generation to the next

The father as the spiritual leader

Isaiah 38:19

The father to the children shall make known thy truth. (KJV)

Ephesians 6:4

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (KJV)

Psalms 78:3–11

What we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. They would not be like their forefathers—a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him. They forgot what he had done, the wonders he had shown them. (NIV)

Educational considerations

Matthew 5:13

You are the salt of the earth (NIV)

Mark 9:50

Have salt in yourselves (NIV)

2 Timothy 3:14–15

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, And how from infancy [a child] you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (NIV)

Psalms 51:5

Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. (NIV)

1 Corinthians 15:33

Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character. (NIV)

Ephesians 4:14

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (KJV)

1 Corinthians 13:11

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. (NIV)

Build Christianity from foundation up, rather than impose it top down

Teach what to believe and why we believe it

Public school considerations

The myth of neutrality

Matthew 5:13

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. (NIV)

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Mark 9:50

Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other. (NIV)

“When asked to estimate the likelihood that they will continue to participate in church life once they are living on their own, levels dip precipitously to only about one of every three teens.” Barna Research Online, Teenagers Embrace Religion but Are Not Excited About Christianity, www.barna.org, January 10, 2000.

Please note that the “88% of the children raised in evangelical homes leave church at the age of 18” statistic Ken references was later found to be based on unreliable research. However, the following statistic provides another example of the same trend:

“...whereas 52% of the students report frequent attendance at religious services during the year prior to entering college, only 29% report frequent attendance during their junior year (an absolute drop of 23%).” Preliminary Findings on Spiritual Development and the College Experience: A Longitudinal Analysis (2000-2003). www.spirituality.ucla.edu/results/Longitudinal_00-03.pdf

“A minority of born again adults (44%) and an even smaller proportion of born again teenagers (9%) are certain of the existence of absolute moral truth.” Barna Research Online, The Year’s Most Intriguing Findings, www.barna.org, December 12, 2000.

Revelation 3:16

So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. (NASB)

College considerations

Jeremiah 10:2

This is what the LORD says: Do not learn the ways of the nations [the heathen] or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them. (NIV)

How much is the world influencing your children? How much are you influencing your children?

Philippians 3:7–8

But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ. (NIV)

Jeremiah 9:23–24

This is what the LORD says: Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight, declares the LORD. (NIV)

Eternal considerations

“Wherefore, see to it, that you cause your children first to be instructed in spiritual things, that you point them first to God, and, after that, to the world. But in these days, this order, sad to say, is inverted. In my judgement there is no other outward offense that in the sight of God so heavily burdens the world, and deserves such heavy chastisement, as the neglect to educate children.” Martin Luther treatise, Letter to the Majors and Alderman of all the cities of Germany in behalf of Christian schools.

“I would advise no one to send his child where the Holy Scriptures are not supreme. Every institution that does not unceasingly pursue the study of God’s word becomes corrupt. Because of this we can see what kind of people they become in the universities and what they are like now. The universities only ought to turn out men who are experts in the Holy Scriptures, men who can become bishops and priests, and stand in the front line against heretics, the devil, and all the world. But where do you find that? I greatly fear that the universities, unless they teach the Holy Scriptures diligently and impress them on the young students, are wide gates to hell.” Martin Luther, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate*, 1520, trans. Charles M. Jacobs, Rev. James Atkinson, *The Christian in Society*, I (Luther’s Works, ed. James Atkinson, vol. 44), 1966, p. 207.

“I am convinced that the battle for humankind’s future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their role as the proselytizers of a new faith: a religion of humanity that recognizes and respects the spark of what theologians call divinity in every human being. These teachers must embody the same selfless dedication as the most rabid fundamentalist preachers, for they will be ministers of another sort, utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey humanist values in whatever subject they teach, regardless of the educational level—preschool day care or large state university. The classroom must and will become an arena of conflict between the old and the new—the rotting corpse of Christianity, together with all its adjacent evils and misery, and the new faith of humanism.” John Dunphy, *A Religion for a New Age*, *Humanist*, Jan.–Feb. 1983, p. 26.

Challenge: What legacy are you leaving your children?

Bringing It Home

1. We discovered in a previous lesson that our primary goal in raising our children should be to develop in them a love for God and His Word, guiding them toward maturity in Christ. Although individual circumstances vary greatly, each of us is responsible before God for the education of our children. Up to this point, what have your educational decisions for your children been based on? What are your educational goals for your children?

As you consider your educational options, think about the following:

- ✦ How much time do you need to spend “reprogramming” your children after a day at school?
 - ✦ Are the people that you’ve chosen to educate your children helping or hindering you in developing godly attitudes in your children?
 - ✦ Is the educational situation in which you’ve placed your children such that it will help them develop a Bible-based view of the world?
 - ✦ Are your children’s teachers actively involved in training your children, or are they turning them away from things of the Lord?
 - ✦ How can you become more involved in your children’s educational process so that you can help to offset the ungodly attitudes and actions they are being taught?
 - ✦ Is the educational choice that you’ve made for your children for God’s glory, or have you made it out of a sense of pride, because of an “antiestablishment” philosophy or because of a desire for academic superiority?
2. Read 2 Timothy 3:15–16; Deuteronomy 11:18–21; Joshua 1:7–8; Colossians 3:16 and Psalm 119:11. According to these passages, why is it important to know and memorize Scripture?

How are you currently helping your children to memorize Scripture? In what ways can you teach your children to know the holy Scriptures from infancy? If

your children are able to talk, develop a plan for helping them to begin memorizing Scripture, if you haven't already.

Of course, it is important that we, as parents, are actively committing the words of God to our memory, as well. Are you doing this?

3. Read John 3:36 and John 5:24. What do John the Baptist and Jesus teach about the eternal nature of our children (and our friends and neighbors)?

Although every individual is responsible before God for the decision he makes regarding the gift of eternal life, the Bible is clear that we also have a responsibility to tell our children about their need for God's grace and mercy. Read Romans 10:11–15 and Ephesians 6:4. We'll develop this thought further in later lessons.

Frequently Asked Question

1. Should we be concerned that if we homeschool our children they may not develop socially?

One concern that some parents express when considering educational options is the "socialization" factor. They are concerned that their children learn to interact with others appropriately in social situations. What do the following passages have to say about this topic? Proverbs 22:24–25; Jeremiah 10:2 and 1 Corinthians 15:33

Homework

1. During this week, read Proverbs 11–15 with your spouse (we suggest reading one chapter per day). In a journal, write down the insights that both of you glean from these chapters. Additionally, consider the following questions:
 - ✦ What do these proverbs teach about discipline?
 - ✦ What does Solomon teach about the nature of children in these verses?
 - ✦ How does Solomon communicate with his children in this passage?
 - ✦ Solomon frequently compares the behavior of the wise to the behavior of the foolish. What are the characteristics of the wise? What behaviors characterize the life of the foolish? Make a list of the characteristics of each as you go through this book. Is your life more characteristic of the wise or

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of the foolish? Because we can do nothing apart from the Lord, ask Him to show you areas in which you need to put off foolish behavior and put on the behavior of the wise. As you pray, ask Him to help you train your children to be wise, also.

2. Read Psalm 78:8–72. What does Asaph say happened to the Israelites when fathers failed to teach their children about the Creator and what He had done for them?
3. Spend some time this week talking to your spouse about your current educational situation. Are both of you happy with it? Are there ways you can change it so that your children are learning to view the world from a biblical perspective? Are there ways that both of you can become more involved in the educational process, making sure that your children are developing a love for God and His Word and growing in Christ-likeness? Ask the Lord for wisdom as you consider your educational options.
4. Read Psalm 119:1–88. Write down ten principles that you have gleaned from what David teaches about the Word of God.
5. Continue working on drafting a family mission statement that will help you and your spouse to parent your children. What does the Creator want for your children? What verses can you use to guide you?

For More Information

- ✦ A great way to learn more about homeschooling is to visit TheHomeschoolMagazine.com.
- ✦ The Christian Law Association provides guidelines for the rights that Christians have in public schools at www.christianlaw.org/defending_schools_pf.html.
- ✦ *A Christian Philosophy of Education* by Dr. Gordon Clark
This book teaches readers how to develop a true Christian philosophy of education based upon the Bible. The author also helps parents understand that there is no such thing as neutrality in education and that the real nature of the public education system is an anti-Christian agenda.
- ✦ For those considering sending their children to college, visit AnswersInGenesis.org/go/cec for suggestions about which college to attend and a questionnaire to send to colleges that helps to ascertain the college's views on certain areas.