

Is Christian Education a Biblical Mandate?

To say “no” to this question would entail stepping outside the educational boundaries established by God.

In today’s pressure-packed world of loosely-held values and morals, unpredictable hostilities and dishonesty, and multiple negative influences, Christian parents must purposely pursue biblical righteousness for their children or risk losing them to a counter-Christian culture. To ignore these worldly dangers is like playing Russian roulette with their children’s lives, future, and destiny. Other than the home, the school influences children more than any other institution. Conscientious Christian parents know this; thus, they seek trustworthy guidance from the Word of God and from those who pursue the Christian way of life in raising their children to love and honor the Lord and their parents.

With these thoughts in mind, Christian parents are duty-bound to know the mind of God in relation to education, which only comes from studying the Bible to learn what God says about education (2 Timothy 2:15). Undeniably, the Bible is the only child-rearing book that Christian parents can unconditionally trust. This is why parents who want God’s blessings on their children’s lives will take the time to search the Scriptures on the matter of educating children. They will commit themselves to God’s directives, regardless of the cost, inconvenience, or pressure from friends or relatives. They follow God’s way because they trust the words of Scripture more than they trust themselves (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Is Christian education a biblical mandate? Think about this question before you respond, and as you think, consider the following: Christian education promotes Christian values, beliefs, and standards. Bible and prayer are a part of every school day and every classroom lesson taught. Teachers are

committed servants dedicated to helping their students grow spiritually, morally, and academically. A biblical worldview of education and of life integrates every program in the school and permeates every classroom lesson. In other words, the relationship of Christ to every aspect of the teaching-learning process is emphasized to the extent “that in all things” Jesus Christ is given “preeminence” (Colossians 1:18b).

Where should I send my child to school? Parents can discuss or argue this question from multiple perspectives, but when it comes down to wanting what God wants in the life of a child, most Christian parents would agree that God’s desire is a school environment that exalts biblical instruction by Christian teachers within the confines of a biblical worldview. Thus, the question, “Is Christian education a biblical mandate?” must be answered “yes” because no other answer lines up with Scripture. To say “no” to this question would entail stepping outside the educational boundaries established by God for teaching and training children. No matter how much a Christian justifies a non-Christian school environment, the truth boils down to one simple question, “Whose way is right, God’s way or man’s way?” Christian parents who understand what the Bible says about education will embrace God’s way. This, in essence, is the rationale for choosing a Christian education.

By selecting a school that reinforces the teachings of the Christian home and church, parents can rest assured that their Christian faith will not be undermined by their children’s teachers or the textbooks their children study. Isaiah 38:19 tells fathers to “make known thy truth to the children,” and Ephesians 6:4 admonishes parents to

“bring them [children] up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Furthermore, Deuteronomy 6:6-9 tells parents that the Word of God should be a constant daily “way of life” in their children’s lives.

Is Christian education a biblical mandate? The average Christian parent in church today would probably say “no.” This same parent may genuinely love God and sincerely love his or her child. So, why do some Christian parents refuse to embrace Christian education, knowing that public school educators are prohibited by law from teaching the sovereignty of Christ, reading the Bible, and praying in their classrooms?

Unfortunately, some parents’ loyalty to public education is greater than their loyalty to biblical truth. This does not mean that public schools do not have Christian educators. They do, but they are forbidden by the U.S. Supreme Court to teach or express their Christian beliefs at school. To do so is a violation of federal law.

Is Christian education a biblical mandate? The answer is an unequivocal “yes.” No other answer can be supported by Scripture. In considering the ramifications of this question, one needs only to imagine standing in the presence of God at the Judgment Seat of Christ explaining why public education—where Christ, the Bible, and prayer are not allowed—was chosen over Christian education, which exalts Christ, the Bible, and prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. How could Christians not agree, though external influences may tempt them otherwise, that Christian education is a biblical mandate?

Dr. Charles Walker is the executive director of the American Association of Christian Schools and the Tennessee Association of Christian Schools.