

## Reaping the Benefits of a Christian School

The joy received from watching a child grow academically and mature in the Lord makes all the effort, all the time, all the money worth it.

by Charles Walker

As a parent, you have prayed, researched, sought counsel, and examined all possible educational options. You have conscientiously made the decision to send your child to a Christian school because you understand the value and benefits of a Christian education. It might prove enlightening and encouraging to you to carefully re-examine the specific reasons that prompted you to make this critical choice for your child and why today you are reaping the benefits of a Christian school.

Your first response to the question of "why?" my child attends a Christian school may go something like this: "I enrolled my child in a Christian school to obtain a Christian education in a morally, spiritually, and physically safe environment." However, this answer is probably an over-simplification of your decision to capitalize on the values of a Christian school. A review of the many benefits that your child reaps academically, spiritually, and socially in a Christ-centered classroom may illuminate your reasoning. "... and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

A child's teacher is an important role model. Your child spends a major portion of the school day under the influence of one or more key teachers. You value the importance of the exemplary model set by your child's teacher. In the Christian school classroom, the teacher openly teaches the truths of Scripture because his commitment compels an open, unashamed love and service to Jesus Christ. The government does not hinder these teachings, nor the reading of the Bible, nor prayer; all three are common every day occurrences. The teachers openly demonstrate and model Christian principles, one of the reasons you send your child to a Christian school.

The academic instruction in the Christian school exceeds that of the public schools. With strict standards of behavior enforced and high academic standards expected, the Christian school provides your child a better education, opening more doors in his life for future success and satisfaction. The benefits of the sound education offered in the Christian school are far-reaching and long-term, another reason you send your child to a Christian school.

Christian values and attitudes are taught and emphasized in the Christian school. The overt effects of violence and immorality so common in today's public schools clearly demonstrate the need for a Christian education. The Christian ethics and morals expounded in your home and church are reinforced in the Christian school classroom. Nurturing a child with Biblical truth is an excellent way to equip him for maturity. The Christian values taught in the Christian home and reinforced in the Christian school enable your child to deal with a troubled world without succumbing to its troubles, another reason you send your child to a Christian school.

Opportunities for Christian friends and fellowship abound in the Christian school. Negative peer pressure is downplayed by emphasizing the relationship of each child with Jesus Christ, and magnifying the Biblical standard of true friendship which calls for love, forgiveness, and accountability. The positive influence of a child's Christian peers has no substitute, another reason you send your child to a Christian school.

Teacher-pupil ratio in a Christian school is lower than that of most public schools. This smaller class size permits a teacher to spend more time with each child. Consequently, your child receives more individualized attention from the teacher, and this, of course, greatly benefits him academically and personally, another reason you send your child to a Christian school.

Obedying Biblical guidelines is essential when seeking the best for your child. Scriptural admonitions concerning the rearing of children in the Christian faith, such as Deuteronomy 6:5-7 and II Corinthians 6:14, can only be truly adhered to if children are taught in a Christian environment. The public schools cannot prepare a child for a fruitful, Christ-honoring life. In the Christian classroom, your child learns the Biblical truth absolutely necessary for living a balanced Christian life, another reason you send your child to a Christian school.

Placing your child in a Christian school may necessitate a financial sacrifice, a geographical inconvenience, or a drain on your energy, but the joy received from watching your child grow academically and mature in the Lord makes all the effort, all the time, all the money worth it. You should praise the Lord for the wisdom and direction He has given you, and thank Him for the blessings of a Christian school.

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