

# Editorial



How would you react if an agent from the central government in Wellington knocked on your door and informed you that from now on, every Saturday and Sunday morning at 9:00am, all of your children would be required to report to a hall down the road to receive officially-sanctioned instruction in topics determined by a Ministry in Parliament, delivered by agents specially trained by this Ministry via experimental methods and where the content of the topics is constantly changing? And what if the reasons given by these agents were a bit on the vague side but something about preparing them for the future as the nation's most precious natural resources and helping them achieve their full potential as citizens?

Well, that is precisely what we've already got in this country, except they knocked on the door back in 1877 and require our children's attendance Monday through Friday.

Taxpayer funded, compulsory and secular schooling has been the worst social and economic disaster in New Zealand's entire history. Fact is, it has been the worst disaster in every country to adopt it. The damage it has done to family integrity and cohesion alone is not just incalculable, it has now become so ingrained in everyone's thinking, that we look upon rebellious teenagers with the morality and intellectual acumen of feral dogs as a normal state of affairs! When home educators only start to nibble at the very edges of this vast institutional schooling cartel, they react with powerfully crafted arguments to intimidate us back into the fold and to supply our critics with ammunition to bamboozle us and keep us on the defensive. The Research article on page 13 is an example of what I'm talking about.

While the article is somewhat in defense of home educators, it is thoroughly secular (that is, based on non-Christian thought), and at one point, it encourages home educators to embrace the philosophical presuppositions of the enemy! (These are listed as principles of "multidimensional citizenship", starting at the first line at the top of page 14; and he enjoins them upon us at the end of the paragraph starting with the word, "Further," on page 25).

Listen dear Christian brothers and sisters: we need to be clear, bold, convinced and unapologetic about some basics: we as parents are already doing the best any parents could do for their children: we are training them up in the knowledge, fear and admonition of the Lord. And we are keeping them away from the toxic teaching of the politically-determined, compulsory, secular curriculum of the state classrooms and from the seething; contagious; morally, spiritually, emotionally, academically and physically dangerous pathologies of age-segregated, peer dependent cohorts that typically inhabit and are bred by these institutions.

A bad home is still better than a good institution.

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**The state controls  
what knowledge is  
taught in schools.  
The schools have always  
been required to  
transmit state ideology.**

From: *Political Issues in New Zealand Education*  
(1985), edited by Codd, Harker and Nash, professors  
of education at Massey University.

**TEACH Bulletin** (Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home) is a bi-monthly newsletter of the Home Education Foundation. Articles deal with political developments which may affect New Zealand home educators, statist and professional trends, correspondence with politicians and educationalists and other items of general interest to home educators. Published since January 1997, **TEACH Bulletin** has been used to sound legislative alerts, rallying home educators to write submissions to their MPs and Parliamentary Select Committees when legislation unfavourable to home educators was introduced into Parliament. The eight-page newsletter comes out 6 times a year (on odd-numbered months) for an annual subscription of NZ\$9.00 or two years for NZ\$18.00.

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# Evan & Rebecca Tyler

*From Wellington, New Zealand*

We have recently celebrated 15 years of marriage, and the Lord has blessed us with nine children.

Jared is 13; he is sensible and mature beyond his years and is a great example to his younger brothers and sisters. Joel is 12 and is an avid non-fiction reader, a walking encyclopaedia and bus timetable. Abigail is 10 and is a cheerful and friendly soul and will bowl up to complete strangers and turn them into friends. Bethany is 8, loves to read and has recently taken up knitting. Rachel is 7 and loves drawing and colouring in pictures. Wesley is 5; he is fascinated with keys and likes zooming on his bike around our house. Nathan, 3, follows on his scooter and tries to keep up. Matthew is 2 and loves balls, trains and balloons. Cassia is nine months and is our precious bundle of smiles.

Rebecca is a former registered nurse. She became a Christian after attending a camp at Kiwi Ranch at the age of 11. She heard the Gospel message and was saved. Her mother was later saved and disciplined. They began attending church as a family soon after. Rebecca moved to Wellington in 1992 to study and began attending a new church where she met Evan. We married in 1996.

Evan was brought up in a Christian home and came to know the Lord as His Saviour from the age of five years old. Both his parents were teachers – his mother was a new-entrants teacher and his father a university lecturer. Evan was taught to read before going to school so skipped a year early on. While it was good to skip a year, it did lead to difficult times at high school, where he was nearly always the youngest and smallest in his class. Evan is a computer programmer, and his work is fairly flexible and allows him to work one day a week at home.

The decision to homeschool didn't seem like a hard one at the time. Evan has 13 cousins from two families who were homeschooled, and he got to know many of them well. They are nice people and have achieved well. Three of these cousins boarded with us at different times early on in our marriage, and so Rebecca got to know them well also. She was impressed at how motivated and diligent they were. So she began to consider homeschooling as a viable education path also.



Rebecca attended the local Play Centre where Jared was enrolled. A big part of Play Centre is that parents are involved, and this seemed right to both of us at the time. At Play Centre, Rebecca watched as various children reached five years and went off to school while the mum went to work outside the home; but this didn't seem like the path we wanted to take.

Most importantly though, we felt it was God's will and plan for us to homeschool. This has been like a rock for us: it

has steadied us on those many difficult days when we wonder why on earth we are doing this.

So, as Jared our eldest turned 5, we kept him on at Play Centre rather than sending him to school. We joined the local Wellington Home School Assn. (WHSA), and Rebecca read many of the books there which helped us decide which philosophy suited us. When Jared was five and a half years old, we looked into various curricula using the list supplied by the WHSA (now Wellington Home Educators Network or WHEN).

We were considering the ATI programme and some others. We got to meet an ATI family and go around to their place to find out more. From there and our visit to the ATI headquarters in Marton, everything seemed to fall into place.

In January/February 2003, we did a BASIC and Advanced seminar through IBLP/ATI NZ and attended our first of many conferences at the Arahina Training Centre in Marton. Other homeschoolers helped us with the daunting task of applying for our first exemption, which was granted in due course without any drama. We stayed at Play Centre until Jared was six years old, then started homeschooling.

We are so grateful to our family, friends and church for their support in this decision. We know in the early days our decision seemed odd to many, yet no one tried to put us off but rather gave us an opportunity to make a go of it.

In the end, our decision to homeschool, though it was unusual to many people's way of thinking, has been as nothing compared to the looks of bewilderment we have seen on people's faces as we have welcomed more and more children into our family...without giving any assurance that there would be no more! We

simply felt that that was the Lord's plan for us, so that's what we have done. Again that has been a rock for us in the hard times.

We are convinced that from the standpoint of eternity, these decisions will be ones that really mattered. We laugh to ourselves as we remember that in the months before our marriage, we wrote a list of things that we had agreed on for our marriage. Having three or four children was on the list, as was Rebecca being involved in nursing for many more years than she ever completed. God's plan for us was very different and much better!

"Are they all yours? Are there any twins?" are common questions we get asked. "Don't you have



*Five boys: Back, L to R: Joel, 12; Jered, 13. Front, L to R: Nathan, 3; Wesley, 5; Matthew, 2.*

TV?" is another we sometimes get asked. Most people are genuinely interested in our homeschooling and ask many questions. The socialisation type questions are the most common for starters. We answer about all the activities we go to and networks we belong to and that seems to satisfy those questions. The next questions are about the legal requirements, so we explain about the exemption process and ERO reviews. We have had one review – we were anxious about this, prepared well, and in the end found it a very positive experience. When we explain about that, people relax more.

Another common question is about the high-school

years – will we send them off to school then? We explain why we are confident our children can get just as good if not a better education at home, and how we plan to go about that.

We try to start the day with a family Bible reading at the breakfast table. This helps set the tone for the day and is a wonderful opener to some great conversations. We each have different strengths and weaknesses. Rebecca's are Spelling/Phonetics/English, etc., and Evan's lie in Maths/Science/Technology, etc. From the start, Rebecca concentrated her time in teaching phonetics/reading to the younger ones. Rebecca uses Christ Centred Curriculum to teach Phonics and the Rod & Staff Graded Readers. Evan has always planned and produced our Wisdom Booklet Resources, currently on a weekly basis. The Character First education series helps with our character studies. For Maths, we've always used Math-U-See, and we think it's a great curriculum. It's great for the visual and kinaesthetic learner. For writing, we use the Wisdom Booklet Language Arts which was produced with the help of Andrew Pudewa (IEW). For spelling, we use the AVKO books. Our eldest Jared this year has added Apologia Science and Abeka History and Geography. Once a week the children complete a PSSM/Bible Discovery lesson. We start this from the age of 4 years where they colour in. As they get older, the lessons advance to a reading comprehension type of format. These are duly finished, sent off and returned marked for the children to read the comments.

Our family has found that the following resources have been beneficial for our family: the Maxwell's publications, i.e., *Managers of Their Homes*. We love the Moody series by Sarah Maxwell. We use the Getty & Dubai Italic writing books from Geneva Books.

Being part of homeschooling networks has been such a blessing and encouragement to us. We and our children have made so many friends. We go to the WHEN rollerblading session every other Friday. We have joined in with a bunch of other activities organised through WHEN families, like technicraft, one-day-a-week workshops, chemistry labs, and a sailing class soon. We make a big effort every year to submit projects in the WHEN Science Fair. We have swimming lessons every Tuesday with a group of ATI families. Evan attends a monthly homeschooling fathers' meeting where the dads pray for and encourage one another. The two ATI conferences each year are a great time for the whole family. There is a local support group we belong to which has activities every Wednesday. All of our different networks bring us into contact with many different homeschooling families, and every one is wonderfully different.

When we despair of this problem or that, all our friends are there to remind us that these are normal problems, and we can each help each other with ideas how to get through them. Evan can calmly and matter-of-factly

explain to the other dads that our five-year-old son was trying to throw a rock onto the roof of the house but missed and smashed it through the back window of our van. Understanding “Hmmm”s are heard from the other dads. Yes, this is nothing extraordinary — the need to throw rocks is built into the human psyche. Onto roofs is quite normal, and aim comes with time!

There was the time when Evan turned on the gas heater on that first cold day of winter. It hadn't been used for months, and the smell of a bit of burning dust was to be expected — but not the flames and smoke that quickly billowed out. Some of the children enacted our emergency evacuation plan while Evan set to putting the fire out. One child hid behind the couch with a guilty look on his face. It turns out that pencils, paper, marbles, toys and other things had been stuffed through the grill by little hands. When the fire was out and the smoke cleared, they all gathered round to watch as Evan dismantled the heater. Things like, “Oh, I think that used to be a toy car,” were volunteered as melted and blackened objects were extracted.



*Pretty in Pink: Cassia, 9mo; Abigail, 10; Bethany, 8; Rachel, 7.*

Normally, before we go anywhere in the car, we first check underneath it. But recently one Sunday, Evan was running late and in a hurry to get to church on time because he was speaking. We piled in the car and drove out. As we drove along, we could hear this loud click, click, clicking, keeping pace with the speed of the car. Jared jumped out and inspected each tyre as Evan edged forward. Sure enough, there was something lodged in the tyre. It was a rotary sanding disk that attaches to a drill, and the centre pin was buried in the tyre. We didn't have time to change it, and if we pulled it out, the tyre would have deflated immediately. So we drove the 10 minute trip to church with this loud click, click, clicking, smiling at the bemused people who pointed at us.

We could go on and on. Suffice to say, Evan has had a

few interesting conversations with our insurance claims officer over the years, and our claims history can tell a few more stories. But whenever Evan feels embarrassed explaining how this or that got broken, smashed, burnt or otherwise mangled, the reassuring words come back, “Don't worry, this is quite normal.” As homeschoolers, after taking a few deep breaths (OK, maybe weeks later), we have learned to embrace *nearly* all of these as great learning experiences and get to look back on them and laugh.

But being alone with nine children, many of them little, trying to homeschool and keep clothes washed, people fed and the place in some semblance of orderliness is a tall order. Rebecca at times finds this overwhelming. Being stretched to the limit day after day does take its toll. Praying together before we say goodbye in the morning is vital. When Evan comes home, we sit down together and talk about how the day went at home. If someone didn't get their work done, then it's Evan's job to make sure it gets done in the evening.

All the children have a list of school items to do each day. The little children have lessons with Rebecca while the older children are able to work by themselves. Sometimes we get some of the older children to take turns supervising the under-fives while Rebecca is busy giving lessons.

Getting six children to work quietly and conscientiously while simultaneously having the younger three suitably occupied has probably never happened for more than three seconds, if ever. One will stop working and distract another, mischief will start here if not there, and so on goes the daily task on instilling good character into our children.

The ATI programme is strong on character, and we have found it so instructive and helpful. Time and time

again, we find the character quality we are studying for a given month is applicable to the situations that arise. The other thing we find is that the whole family is learning. As parents, we get heaps ourselves out of what the children are learning.

The plan is to get the academic work done in the morning. After lunch there is “quiet reading time” — Rebecca’s only chance to slow down and to try and relax. Normally three afternoons a week there are outings to activities like swimming lessons, library visits and various homeschool group activities. We have found the afternoon activities are the best motivators for the children to get their work done.

The four oldest children are avid readers, and we hope the others will follow. Library visits are highlights of the week. The children reserve books in advance. They also buy their own books with their own money from Trademe and even from the other side of the world.

“Creative Memory” photo-albums and journals have been popular with all the children. We take heaps of photos, particularly of our holidays, get them printed, and each week the children do a page in their own albums. These are works of art and full of happy memories and often are proudly brought out and displayed to visitors, especially grandparents. Our older boys are so particular with their journals, that when they are on holiday they take notes of all the things they are doing so that they can journal them later. Letter writing to relatives or other friends is a fun activity and often rewarded with return letters.

Things constantly need adjusting. Our timetable is “tweaked” every term on average. At the start of each year, we also sit down with the older children and get their input into their programme for the year. This is often full of surprises, as they often say they want to continue with something that we thought they were bored with.

All the children have their “jurisdictions” — we got that flash name for chores from the Duggars’ book *20 and Counting* — which is vital for running the house and building character. The five oldest children also have a regular dinner night where they make dinner for 10 (and sometimes pudding) without any help. We have a notebook where we record good and bad marks for behaviour throughout the week, and then we add them up on Pay Day. This has been a good system for us and has helped encourage many of the children. We have also employed a helper to come once a week for two hours to help with “the mountain” (the washing pile).

The day ends with bedtime stories. Evan puts the younger children to bed and prays with them. Even though we can feel tired at the end of the day, spending time with them praying has opened up some wonderful conversations about God and salvation.

This is Evan’s most treasured time as a parent.

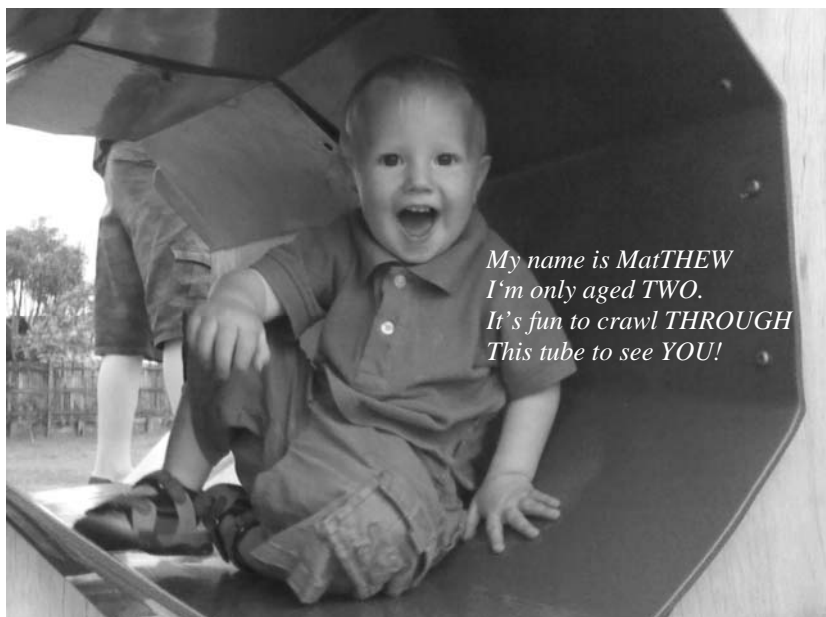
We feel our homeschooling is very much a work in progress. We are only just beginning to navigate the college years, and so much uncharted ground is before us. We are trusting the Lord Who led us into this and Who has helped us thus far, to faithfully lead us on into the future. We see wonderful signs of His blessings in our children’s lives. We see Godly character being developed, and we are encouraged by the positive feedback we get from our friends and extended family. We are so grateful for all the wise counsel, encouragement, practical help and prayers on our behalf from so many of our friends and family.

We want to leave these words of encouragement for all you faithful homeschoolers out there. We have borrowed them from Esther Kerr Rusthoi. They have been such a boost to us, particularly on those difficult days, and we trust they will be an encouragement for you also.

Oft times the day seems long, our trials  
hard to bear,  
We’re tempted to complain, to murmur  
and despair;  
But Christ will soon appear to catch His  
Bride away,  
All tears forever over in God’s eternal  
day.

It will be worth it all  
when we see Jesus,  
Life’s trials will seem so small  
when we see Christ;  
One glimpse of His dear face  
all sorrow will erase,  
So bravely run the race  
till we see Christ.

by Evan and Rebecca Tyler  
Jared 13, Joel 12, Abigail 10, Bethany 8, Rachel 7,  
Wesley 5, Nathan 3, Matthew 2 and Cassia 9 months.



*My name is MatTHEW  
I'm only aged TWO.  
It's fun to crawl THROUGH  
This tube to see YOU!*

# The Faith of Us Fathers



## 18 Things a Father Must Ensure His Son Learns (Part 1)

by Craig Smith

I've had so much fun with the two previous series ("15 Things a Father Must Do with His Son" and "Seven Things a Father Should Do with His Son"), that I've come up with at least two more series: "18 Things a Father Must Ensure His Son Learns" and "19 Things a Father Must Ensure All His Children Learn." So let's get started!

### 1. Teach him the rudiments of a balanced diet as well as how to cook basic meals from scratch. Make sure he knows how to fry, boil, steam, poach and bake.

Now, if you're like me, the balanced diet has always been composed of a daily selection of several items from each of the four basic food groups: the donut group, the burger group, the deep fried group and the dessert group. Plus coffee.

But, I don't know, ever since the wife started having a go at me for gaining weight and the doc got on my case about high blood pressure and cholesterol numbers off the chart, I started thinking how the odd vege now and again wouldn't be so bad. And I guess if you're going to go to all that trouble to catch the fish, you might as well try poaching the thing instead of frying it before you scoff it.

Anyway, I think most of you know what I mean, even though virtually none of us dads knows how to do it. I've mentioned a number of huge items here: what constitutes a balanced diet; how to cook from scratch; and how to perform a number of culinary operations.

**A balanced diet.** Apparently, this has changed from when I was taught about the food pyramid back in the 1950s and about the white deaths of salt, sugar and flour in the 1980s and the fatal fats in the 1990s. Fact is, you need salt or you die. Oil is good for your joints. Your brain cannot function without fat. So what is the full story?

I cannot claim special wisdom here. But one thing I have noticed: additives, processing and what I'll call fake foods or plastic foods have burst on the scene like never before in history while at the same time, people's lifestyles have moved away from hard physical labour

to much more sedentary routines. That is, people eat more since it is so much more convenient and quicker to get a bite of something more exciting than an apple or pear than it used to be, and yet people do far less physical activity to work off the calories ingested. So a balanced diet has reference to the sheer volume you eat, when and how often you eat, as well as what exactly you do eat.

Virtually all of us should eat far less than we do. So stop having seconds. Eating just before going to bed, the old midnight snack or late supper routine, is hopelessly unhealthy, as it is all stored as fat and forces your guts to process food when they, like the rest of you, want and need a sleep.

The Scriptures talk about fasting as a spiritual discipline, a conscious act of denying the flesh in order to focus on the spiritual. Obviously that lack of food volume is not harmful but good for you as you seek the Lord more earnestly. And Proverbs 15:16-17 say: "Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble with it. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fatted ox and hatred with it." One's attitude and environment and state of being is also important.

One of the more obvious references to diet is Daniel and his companions in Daniel chapter 1 when they refused to eat the pagan king's rich food and insisted on a vegetarian fare and water. This is going way beyond what the Lord had spelled out for them in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. But the Lord blessed them for their stand and gave them better academic acumen as well as better physical appearance than their colleagues.

The Old Testament food laws certainly impose no hardship: plenty of red meat, seafood and fowl are included, even grasshoppers and giraffe for those looking for a bit of excitement and exotic flair to serve to their dinner guests. Just lay off the shellfish, eels, shark, ostrich and pork products. The Scriptures allow for the consumption of wine and fat, and even commend them at certain times or for certain reasons.

Actually, if we allow the Scriptures to be the blueprint for what we regard as food, then the passage in I Timothy 4:1-5 doesn't seem to so completely declare all things edible as food...food appears to be defined by verse 3: created by God as food, and that was defined in the Law. Verse 4 says everything created by God is good and not to be rejected if received with thanksgiving. None of us would extend that to rhubarb leaves or oleander leaves or toadstools or buzzards or polar bear liver — you get really sick and could die if you eat that stuff. The Mark 7:19 passage could well be assuming that "foods" is defined by Scripture rather than by common cultural practice. The foods listed as unclean in the Old Testament were referred to by God as "abominable to you." That's pretty strong language. But keeping the Law is not our salvation...it is part of our joy and a new ability as saved people and helps in our sanctification (Romans 8:1-8).

Eat plenty of what grandma always recommended:



fresh fruit and veges. Now, grandma did do something we need to fix: she used to boil the carrots, cabbage, spinach, broccoli and cauliflower to mush. Man, all the goodness is gone with that kind of treatment. Put those items in a separate steamer on top of the spuds as they boil away and steam them to a state just past raw. Carrots are probably best raw, in fact, and we've even had an orthodontist in New Zealand tell us that many people have jaws too small for the number of teeth coming in because their jaw bones and muscles do not get enough work since all they eat is processed, soft food. If they were worked more vigorously, the jaws would actually get larger.

**Cook from scratch.** Well, I don't mean teach your son how to stone-grind his grain in lots just big enough for baking the bread just for today. But he does need to know how to do more than whip up some 2-Minute noodles or render a frozen meat pie edible. He needs to know what can be done with raw vegetables, fresh fruits and slabs of meat or fish, either fresh or frozen.

How about learning to present a man-sized dinner plate covered with a grilled steak, poached eggs, steamed vegetables, raw carrot sticks and mashed potato? With a light cheese sauce for the veges heated to just under the boil? It is all about knowing different culinary techniques and also how to plan a balanced, attractive menu.

When I first arrived in New Zealand in 1973, some friendly neighbours in Christchurch invited us over for a meal. We enjoyed it thoroughly as well as their company. But the meal was all of one colour: white. I'd never seen such a thing: skinless chicken breasts, mashed potatoes, boiled cauliflower and a white sauce on white china. Peas and carrots are cheap and always add bright, healthy looking colours.

**Perform a number of culinary operations.** Specifically I'm thinking of frying, grilling, boiling, steaming, poaching, baking and the like. Some of these take more practise than others. Again, home education is brilliant, for the secret to everything in home education is to do it with them rather than send them away to do it themselves...or to a paid professional whose methods you'll probably just end up criticising anyway.

Once you know a few techniques, you can experiment. I was with a bunch of home educated teens another dad and I took camping to Wanaka during their bi-annual air show. In the communal kitchen, while every other person seemed to be frying up bangers and mash, these teens were lightly frying stacks of tortillas and stirring up a mountain of mince with added Taco seasoning plus diced onions, shredded lettuce, sliced tomatoes and grated cheese. Both the sight and the smell of these tacos were driving everyone else to heights of jealousy, but it was hardly any more effort or expense.

## **2. He should have two complete menus to serve six that become his specialties.**

This is simple to do and yet really impresses people, especially when a young single man volunteers to do

tea for the assembled guests. A full menu we'll call entrée, main and dessert.

An entrée can be fancy breads cut into pieces with a couple of dips and / or a small bowl of olive oil and one of balsamic vinegar. Or fancy breads sliced open with a bit of cheese lightly grilled on top. Or a tossed green salad with dressing. Or sausage rolls sliced really thinly with a bowl of tomato sauce. Or a light soup, using the water from the boiled spuds of the main course as the soup base.

For a main, it is good to have a couple of quite different specialties: a pasta dish (spaghetti and sauce, lasagne, macaroni & cheese) can be so interestingly done that people won't always note that you've made it completely vegetarian. Stir fries and rice can be done with an infinite number of variables. A traditional variation of meat, potatoes and veges is always popular and easy to do, too.

Dessert can be simply fresh fruit. Or ice cream. Or both. During the wee period when we had desserts regularly, a simple yet attractive and filling one was instant pudding (set in the dish) topped with ice cream and fruit.

One person can do such a three-course menu for six with an hour's preparation time...I know, since I used to do it when single. And another trick to teach is to clean up after yourself as you go, so the bench never looks like a disaster area at any time.

These are not just survival skills: this is a future husband caring for his ill wife and little children; training up his own sons; and preparing something while his wife is busy caring for ill children, needy neighbours or counselling a close friend.

## **3. He needs to know how to sew on a button.**

Emergency repair jobs like this one are a blessing when completed immediately, and yet they seem to be a pain you-know-where out of all proportion when they just keep getting deferred...and turning up in your face at awkward times again and again. Half the lousy buttons on store-bought shirts aren't sewn on properly in the first place anyway, so you might as well learn how to do it yourself instead of passing it on to someone else. This pretty much is a simple survival skill.

## **4. He needs to know how to give a solid handshake, look people in the eye and listen carefully to what they say.**

Please, please tutor your son in how to give a properly firm handshake. There is simply nothing worse than taking hold of a limp fish. Please, for the sake of men and vital Christian manhood everywhere, teach your son how to get a full palm-to-palm hand grip (not just a few of the finger tips) and how to squeeze very firmly. If it is with another man, give a real bone-crusher (relative to the other fellow's size, of course). If it is with a woman, the first rule is not to offer your male



hand to a female. But if she offers her hand, yes, take it, but only firmly, not with any kind of bone-crushing intent. Such hand-shakes communicate sincerity and strength of character. Limp handshakes are really off-putting, communicate weak character and intimate that there may be something sinister about you.

Looking people in the eye is again a measure of direct, open and honest character.

Listen carefully to what they say. Many of us fall down here and forget even the other person's name immediately after hearing it for the first time. Get the name, make sure you pronounce it properly and then use it back to the person a few times as you ask general questions about him or her. Listening carefully is necessary to taking more of an interest in the other person, as the Scriptures enjoin us in Philippians 2:3-4 and elsewhere, than waiting for the opportunity to tell the other person all about yourself.

As a door-to-door salesman for 13 years, I discovered that I could learn vast amounts of fascinating facts and general knowledge from absolutely anybody, even from those most of us would write off as drongoes. You do it at first because you want to try to make a good impression. The effort you make comes across to the other person as genuine interest in them. Listen carefully and ask questions to clarify what you don't know. Most people love this interest shown in something they've said. Before long, you will be so interested in what anyone says and what you can find out from them by asking well-placed questions, that you will be indeed demonstrating real, genuine interest in what they say. In addition, the information you learn as well as the genuine interest you'll express in these exercises will make you a great conversationalist in no time, at ease in any social setting, and very much appreciated by the function's host, I might add.

This leaves a very good impression, especially on prospective employers looking for staff who can show respect and follow orders.

**5. If you're going to do something, do it right. Don't ever do a half-pie, slip-shod attempt: finish it off properly, and see it through to the end.**

This is part of the general work ethic you will want your son to have as second nature. Dr Raymond Moore and his wife Dr Dorothy Moore, the late grand-masters at the promotion of home education since the 1940s, included this kind of thing as one of the three keys to a brilliant home education syllabus: work, academics and service.

Teach your son to work, to sweat, to get dirt under his fingernails, to happily forgo playing and entertainment, even meals, in order to get the job done. Men and boys are mostly pre-wired this way by our Creator, but our popular culture is bombarding us all with a viciously constant message of "take it easy," "you deserve a break" and "don't forget to take some 'me' time." This is anti-Biblical to the core, and we must fight it tooth

and nail. That is probably best done by shielding your children during the important formative years from our popular culture and its followers, who will (sadly) include many in our churches. Ration time strictly with such folks and also plan to choreograph their visits at your place with all manner of work projects rather than goofing around with computer games and videos.

There are three aspects to a job, any job, that when performed, go a long way toward shouting to anyone who comes near, "Here is a lad of excellence!" One is working to do the job to a high standard of excellence. Another is seeing the job through to completion. The last is to tidy up and tie up all the loose ends.

Doing a job to a high standard of excellence is not just being clear about what you are supposed to be doing, doing it in the correct order and using the right tools. These are all part of it. But the main thing is doing it well. Washing windows properly is when that layer of grease is completely gone and there are no more rain-bows or streaks when you examine the glass in the light of various angles. Car windscreen interiors are notorious for retaining a nearly transparent film of grime that resists elbow grease, but does come off with finger scratching: an excellent job will get all that film off. Failing to move the furniture and lift the rugs up *every time* to vacuum under them is emphatically not a standard that reflects excellence. During my first year at university in the USA, I held a cleaner's job to pay my way. The boss would come in once a month or so, literally with a white glove, and run a finger along the tops of door and window frames, behind pot plants, etc., looking to catch me out. When he couldn't, he'd say, "Smith, this is one clean office!" and flip me a \$10 note as a bonus. That was a good move we dads can emulate: that lousy \$10 had me working twice as hard for the next month hoping I'd get another cash incentive. They work really well.

Our sons need to learn to see a job through to completion. Often that last 10% of work to wrap the project up is the hardest and most fiddly of all, especially if it is one of those jobs that needs to be interrupted and put away a few times. It is at this point that we sinners are too often tempted to do a rushed, patch-up job just to be done with it and move on to something else. Don't help or encourage your son to settle for the "near enough is good enough" standard...that is not honouring to Christ. "Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men," (Colossians 3:23). It may mean biting the bullet and spending time and money you may not feel you can afford just at that time: but it is a bargain price to pay for such a worthwhile lesson.

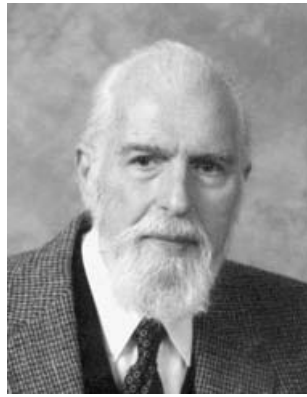
The final aspect is the tidying and tying up. When this is overlooked, the job is spoilt in the eyes of many, no matter how good it is, for they are put off by the mess everywhere. Put all the tools away properly, sweep the floor, wash out the paint brushes, dispose of all the trash and stow the spare bits for later use. This is the back velvet behind the diamond; the new haircut, collar and tie at the job interview: you can get by without it, but all agree it sets the *best* apart from the *really good*.



# Bits of Books

## The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum

by Rousas J. Rushdoony



### Who Owns the Child?

A basic question which must be faced in order to give perspective to education is one of ownership. To whom does the child belong?

Statist educators have acted in terms of their answer to this question, and we will fail to grasp the implications of statist education if we miss their often plainly stated presupposition, namely, that the child is the property of the state.

If humanism governs our perspective, we will answer the question, "To whom does the child belong?" in one of three ways. *First*, the older, individualistic humanism, while stressing the individual, was still respectful of the family. The child was thus seen as the property of the family. In ancient pagan humanism, as in Greece, Rome and China, this was especially the case. Ancestor worship was a common expression of this form of humanism.

For us as Christians, the family is the basic institution in society, but the family is the trustee and steward of its children, not their owner. There is thus a vast and basic difference between the humanistic and Biblical views of the family.

*Second*, the child can be viewed as the property of the state. This view is basic to the philosophies of statist education. It is especially pronounced in all forms of Marxism, national and international socialism alike. The child is a state resource, to be developed and used for the welfare of the state.

It was the development of this view of man, of child and adult as properties of the state, which led to the development of state control of education. We cannot understand the governing philosophies of statist education apart from this premise.

*Third*, there is the view, held by existentialists and anarchists, that the child is his own lord and owner and not under state or parents. This view was popularized in the 1960s by the hippy philosophy. It is influential currently and is behind attempts to legislate a child's bill of rights.

All too often, conservatives defend the first view, as though it represents a valid alternative. The fact is, however, that a Biblical faith requires us to declare that

we are God's property (Psalm 100:3). Sheep are property, to be used as the Shepherd determines. We and our children are alike God's property.

Thus, our lives and our schooling cannot be for our pleasure or profit but for the glory of God.

What does this mean practically? *First*, it means that the focus of education is not on the child, nor on the parents, nor on society. It is on God. Education is thus primarily theological, God-centred, not vocation-centred nor knowledge-centred. Because of the Biblical doctrine of calling or vocation, the Christian School will strive to excel all others in preparing its pupils, but the focus will be on our necessary service to God. Because God's revelations give knowledge, and because knowledge is an aspect of God's image in us, we will seek to surpass all other schools in this respect also. Our focus, however, will be on the competent and faithful service of God.

*Second*, worship and prayer will be a basic aspect of the school because the students must never forget that all their schooling must serve not only themselves but primarily the Lord. In Psalm 119, we see the psalmist drawn ever closer to the praise of God by his study and his meditations thereon. Prayer and chapel in the Christian school should stress the absolute property rights of our Lord over us and our learning.

*Third*, the school must seek to develop increasingly its freedom from and independence of state controls, state standards and state accreditation. The root word in accreditation is *credo*, I believe. If the state is our Lord, it is the state's approval and imprimatur we seek. If Christ is our Lord, it is the accreditation of His word we seek.

Increasingly, states are seeking controls over Christian schools and churches. They are demanding the right of lordship, accreditation and licensure. This we must resist.

[Sadly, many areas of the church are quick to condemn such resistance by Christians] as a non-spiritual involvement in the world by Christ's flock, and to call for a "true" spirituality, defined as limiting the jurisdiction of Christian faith to the church.

It is important for us, very briefly, to cite the reasons for these attacks. *First*, many insist on limiting Christian concern to things which are spiritual. If this be true, then we must drop church weddings, and all concern over adultery and other sexual sins, because sex and marriage are declared by our Lord to be for this world only (Mark 12:25). All the same, Scripture legislates extensively and totally the sexual life of man. It also legislates concerning weights and measures, eating and drinking, debt, sanitation and everything else. Very clearly, the Bible speaks concerning far more than our spiritual life. It governs our total life, because God is totally God, and there is no area of life and thought outside His government. Psalm 139 tells us plainly that there is not a corner of the universe nor an atom of being outside of God's government. Hence, to limit the

(Continued on page 12: **Education**)

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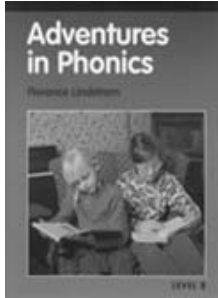
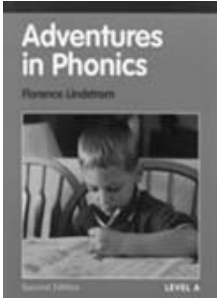
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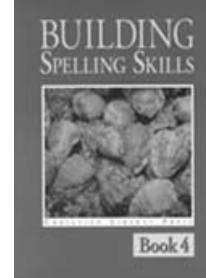
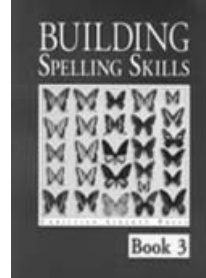
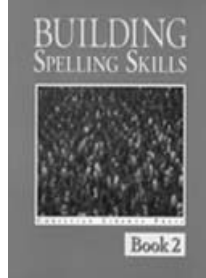
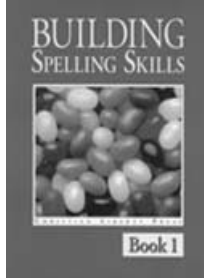
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(Continued from page 10: *Education*)

areas of Christian concern is to limit God and deny His Lordship.

*Second*, the Scripture is emphatic that our children must be reared in the Lord. This is a major stress of Deuteronomy and of Proverbs. Children are a heritage from the Lord (Psalm 127:3), and they must be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In every religion, in varying degrees, the god claims the children. Molech worship and modern statism are classic examples of the claim among anti-God forces. We, however, must set apart our children for the Lord: they are His possession. This requires us to provide a Christian school. [This was published in 1981, before the modern homeschooling movement began in 1983. In later years, Rushdoony became a great supporter of homeschooling.]

But what constitutes a Christian education? Sometimes Christian schools are Christian in name only: they are humanistic schools with Bible added to a humanistic course of studies. It is a serious mistake to assume, *first* of all, that there is any *neutral* subject which can be taught in the same way by both Christian schools and humanistic schools. To believe so is to deny God's total sovereignty over all things. It means that areas exist where man, not God, is the Lord. There is no area of neutrality in all of creation. What we believe determines our perspective in mathematics, history, biology, geology, art, physical education and everything else. The triune God is totally the creator of all things and thus totally their Lord and determiner. All subjects are either taught from a Biblical, a theistic perspective, or they are taught from a humanistic, a man-centred perspective.

*Second*, we must remember that facts are never neutral, as Cornelius Van Til has so powerfully taught us. Before there is a fact, there is a faith. The faith interprets and determines the facts. The "facts" of the universe are very different for a Buddhist, an existential humanist and an orthodox Christian. For the Buddhist, all is illusion and misery; his faith requires a world and life negation. *Maya* and *karma* determine all things. For an existential humanist, "facts" have only a purely personal meaning, the meaning which each man assigns them. Neither man nor creation have any essence, any created and preordained meaning. Good and evil and every other form of meaning is self-generated: they are values I assign to things in terms of my will. Nothing has any meaning from God's creative act; all meaning comes from man's creative act.

In Biblical thought, however, every fact is God-created and God-interpreted, so that the meaning of all creation is to be understood in terms of Him and His Kingdom. The plain implication here and elsewhere is that all study and investigation must be in terms of God's word and the fact of God's sovereignty as creator, sustainer and Lord.

*Third*, not only does faith determine facts, but faith determines the mind. The humanistic philosophy of education gives priority to the humanistic mind. Intellectualism is the determiner: it is the true morality. The

greater the level of humanistic education, supposedly the greater the level of moral character will be. Salvation is thus seen as the spread of humanistic education and knowledge over all the face of the earth.

For us, however, the spread of humanistic education is the spread of sin and apostasy. For us, education is even more to be desired than for humanists, but it must be Godly education and in terms of God's whole counsel. Truth for us is not humanistic ideas, faiths and facts, but Jesus Christ (John 14:6), and for us "truth is in order to goodness," and also to true knowledge. A man cannot be holy or moral outside of Jesus Christ, nor can a man have true knowledge apart from Him.

This means that Christian textbooks are a necessity. We as Christians are members of another kingdom, the Kingdom of God. We live, not in a meaningless, blind and evolving universe of chance but in a universe totally created and governed by God the Lord. We dare not know anyone or anything apart from the Lord, because His Lordship, rule and purpose are total. A school course which is not systematically "Biblical is a hidden enemy to the faith. Humanism has no place in our hearts, churches, homes or classrooms.


Culture is religion externalized, and every culture represents a faith in action. To understand a culture, it is necessary to understand its basic religious premises and motives. Two areas of any civilization will give us a ready index to the faith of the people. These two areas are *law* and *education*.

All law is an implicitly enacted morality and represents moral norms in its procedures, courts and officers. It is a moral code, and that moral code rests on a religious premise. Every legal structure is thus inescapably an establishment of religion.

The same is true of education. The power to educate is being taken from church and family and controlled and administered by the state. The established religion of the state schools, as witness Dewey's *A Common Faith*, is the religion of humanity, humanism. [Here] there is no sovereign God over all things, and no absolute good and evil. A man may choose or create his own gods and his moral options. Intellectually, this provides the roots for the doctrine of academic freedom. No opinion or teaching has any more claim to validity or truth than any other. All opinions and ideas are equally valid and equally false.

[But the Christian belongs to God.] Because he believes in a binding truth on all men, he is an enemy of academic freedom. [That is, he believes] that the world is not a product of man's will and ideas but of God's creative fiat, that there is a universe of coherency and of total meaning, because it is totally the handiwork of God.

(From R.J. Rushdoony, *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum*, Ross House Books: Vallecito, CA, 1981, pp. 128-131, 140-143 & 116-118.)

(The late R.J. Rushdoony founded [www.chalcedon.edu](http://www.chalcedon.edu) in 1965. It has become a major influence in applying the whole word of God to every area of life and thought.) 

# Home Education Research

## Homeschooling and the Redefinition of Citizenship Part 2 (Final)

by A. Bruce Arai  
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Waterloo, Ontario, Canada



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## Citizenship and Citizenship Education

The concept of citizenship is interesting because, while there is general agreement about some of the elements which form a core definition of the concept, there is wide disagreement about its final composition and which elements should receive more prominence than others. Most understandings of citizenship include some combination of five elements: group identification; rights or entitlements; responsibilities or duties; public participation and common values (Derricott, *et al.*, 1998; Touraine, 1997; Callan, 1997). Various models of citizenship have been proposed and debated (see Delanty, 1997 for a good review of the major positions), but there is no single vision of citizenship which is acceptable to all. Perhaps this is not surprising given that citizenship is a fundamentally political concept. Similarly, there are many different proposals about the nature and content of citizenship education.

Starting with the earliest ideas of citizenship, there was an important distinction between good people and good citizens in ancient Greece. Good people lived their lives according to a set of legitimate moral principles, but good citizens carried the additional burden of participating actively in the public life of the society (Cogan, 1998). And this participation required a certain level of education.

With the development of industrial capitalism and the rise of public education, the school became a primary site for citizenship education (McKenzie, 1993). Early versions of citizenship education in most countries stressed several elements including nationalism and national history, individual rights and responsibilities and factual information about a country's geography and systems of governance (MacKenzie, 1993; Wong,

1997). In many cases, schools continued to emphasize one's duty to participate in the public life of the society. In these early years, participation meant not only following political events and voting in elections (if one had the right to vote) but also working within the local and church communities to which one belonged. That is, children were taught that they have a duty to work actively to improve the conditions of life for themselves and others in their immediate environment (Fogelman, 1991; Wong, 1997).

Over time, more and more emphasis was placed on "civics" or the facts about a country's political system, and less attention was paid to participation and community identification beyond

formal political participation in elections. In many countries, citizenship education was confined to history courses and later to social studies courses (McKenzie, 1993; Wong, 1997). This led to the teaching of a more formalistic understanding of citizenship, one which stressed rights and responsibilities rather than participation and group identification. When participation was stressed, the fear was that it was incomplete and did not result in strong bonds between individuals and their communities. As Touraine (1997:146) says, "In today's mass society, everyone talks of participation; but participation tends to mean dissolving into what David Riesman called *The Lonely Crowd*." In other words, in many schools, participation was a rather vacuous moral injunction to be publicly involved. This has begun to change with the development of "community service" elements in many curriculums (Cogan and Derricott, 1998; Fogelman, 1991; MacKenzie, 1993). Schools appear to be rediscovering that participation in the daily events of life are important for the education of proper citizens.

Fogelman has shown that although citizenship education has stressed public involvement, there is a clear difference between the attitudes and behaviours of students. In a survey of British students, many of them reported that public involvement, especially in helping others, is important but very few students were actually involved in these activities. For example, the percentage of students who thought charitable work (e.g., helping the elderly or the disabled, preserving the environment) was important ranged between 37% and 71%, but only 6% to 12% of students were actually involved in these activities (Fogelman, 1991).

## Multidimensional Citizenship

Kubow, Grossman and Ninoyama (1998) and others (Cogan and Derricott, 1998) have recently articulated an idea of "multidimensional citizenship" Multidimensional citizenship for them has four components — the personal, the social, the temporal and the spatial — which encourage students to reflect on their own behaviour, their relations with others both locally and globally, and their relationships to the past and the fu-

ture. Multidimensional citizenship is based on the principles of toleration of and cooperation with others, non-violent conflict resolution, rational argument and debate, environmentalism, respect for human rights and participation in civic life. This vision of citizenship, they argue, must become the philosophical foundation for schools of the future.

Kubow *et al.* (1998) argue that in the personal dimension, compulsory schooling should develop a personal sense of virtue in all students and that this cannot be done in isolated courses. Rather, the school must be a model of virtue in all respects: from the behaviour of teachers, administrators and students to the place of the school in the life of the community. Schools should provide students with opportunities to integrate into their communities in numerous ways to foster proper attitudes and behaviours. Moreover, other social institutions such as families, churches and volunteer organizations must help schools achieve this mission by reinforcing the principles of multidimensional citizenship.

The inculcation of virtue through schooling is a theme that also runs through Callan's (1997) ideas, as well as those of others such as Holmes (1995). For example, Callan stresses that contemporary common schools can and should promote "virtue" in their students, and Holmes wants major changes to the school system so that they can build "character" in pupils. In both cases, these goods cannot be taught simply in history or social studies courses but must be an integral principle upon which an adequate school is founded. Moreover, character and virtue involve more than adherence to the values of respect for the law, tolerance of others and non-violent conflict resolution but must also include a belief in the power of rational thought and argument and a constant search for the good, the true and the right. [So how would you know when you've found it? You wouldn't. It is described as a "constant search". That is, the search, the journey, is what is important, not the destination. If you posit that you've reached "the truth", you imply an absolute, unchanging ideal. That is too much like God, so these humanists cannot allow that. — Ed.]

The social element of multidimensional citizenship encompasses the active commitment of citizens to participate in "civil society" which is not simply a formal political space. Rather, civil society takes in a much broader range of actions including everything from public highway clean-ups to parades and the use of public spaces to running for political office. The energetic participation of all people in these actions is a primary goal of education for multidimensional citizenship.

The spatial element forces us to think of our place in the world, but not giving any one reference an exclusive claim on our identities. Rather, we need to recognize that we are all pulled in many directions by spatial and other affinities, and that we do not have to choose one at the expense of others. So for example, one can be a North American and an environmentalist at the same time without any necessary contradiction.

Finally, the temporal dimension encourages us to think

about our place in the march of time. We need to recognize that our actions are shaped by those who preceded us and that we have a responsibility to those who will come after us.

All four elements need to be developed and explicitly recognized in school curricula, according to Kubow *et al.* (1998). One of the interesting things about the idea of multidimensional citizenship is that the four dimensions all involve many different skills and values, and people may combine aspects of the four elements in many ways to produce different, but no less valid, forms of citizenship. For example, citizenship for some people might include a very strong environmental commitment which for them means a focus on internationalization and globalization as the basis of environmental problems. For others, environmentalism means cleaning up the chemical waste from a local factory. In multidimensional citizenship, both of these incarnations are valid. We are not required to agree on one and only one vision of the good citizen.

Homeschooling seems to have little place in any of the above discussions of the relationship between citizenship and education. In all cases, schools are argued to have an important, even primary role in the cultivation of new citizens, and in some cases, it is argued that parents do not even have the right to exempt their children from this education. Yet the number of home schoolers in most countries continues to grow. The key issue then is whether homeschoolers pose a threat to citizenship because they do not go to school. That is, do homeschoolers make good citizens? In the following section, I will argue that the answer to this question is "yes," but there are important differences between the vision of citizenship promoted in schools and that found among homeschoolers.

## Homeschooling

Homeschoolers have responded to the above charges of not being good citizens and have begun to create a different understanding of citizenship through their actions. The counter arguments to the charges of lack of socialization, elitism, post-secondary qualifications and parental rights to choice in education reveal that homeschoolers do not accept the assumption that schools are a primary agent in the construction of all good citizens. Further, the majority of them do not want to isolate themselves from the larger society, as is commonly presumed. Rather, they seek meaningful integration into the society and, in doing so, have come to produce a different but equally valid understanding of citizenship.

## Socialization

Homeschoolers have been charged with failing to provide their children with the tools necessary to cope in the wider world. The contention of this criticism is that school provides this wisdom. However, homeschoolers recognize that school is not the only means by which children learn coping skills, nor is it necessarily the best. Homeschooled children, far from being isolated in their homes, are often heavily involved in sports, music, church and wilderness groups (i.e., scouts and

*(Continued on page 23: Research)*