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### Christ In Education

By Edmund P. Clowney

If children are the Lord's, His Word must shape all their living. Informal learning has been rediscovered by modern educators, but the principle is emphatically expressed in Deuteronomy 6:7-9, which describes diligent formal instruction and pervasive informal teaching in an atmosphere saturated with the Word of God. Parents are responsible for the religiously unified education of their children. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom": neither the world God made, the history He controls, or the child He has given can be understood apart from Him.

Far from canceling these responsibilities of parents, the New Testament deepens them. Our Lord was subject to His parents rather than to the Temple teachers, and by His own growth in wisdom gave us the pattern of the development of perfect childhood. In his teaching He set the child in the midst; in His love He gathered them in His arms. There they remain as Paul exhorts Christian fathers, "Provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

Paul's word "nurture" is an inclusive one. It is used as the title of Werner Jaeger's work, "Paideia," I to summarize the Greek ideal of education and culture. For the apostle, education must be the Lord's; not only that of which the Lord approves, but that which is His, for the simple reason that the children are His.

Our children do not belong to the state. That is the assumption of totalitarian tyranny. They are not the possessions of the church; that claim perverts spiritual authority to secular dominion. Our children do not belong to themselves. Education for sheer self-expression dissolves even the individual in the chaos of meaningless existence. Nor do our children belong to us to shape as we please or exploit as we choose.

They belong to Christ. His question about Caesar's coin strikes us as we look at our child. Whose is the image and the superscription? Not man's, but God's. Children are a heritage of the Lord. Christ requires them of us, to be conformed to His image. They are His, but He has entrusted them to us as His stewards.

How are we as parents to give answer to our Lord? If Christ is the Educator, how central is He to be in the educational process? Dare we subject our children to an education where hours stretch to days and months and years with the classroom door shut fast against Christ? At its best, secular public instruction is subchristian. At its worst it may be fiercely antichristian. What if the deadly omissions of a secularized school environment rob a child of spiritual sensitivity, and pattern his mind in an approach to life in which Christ is dispensable?

Christians must labor to preserve the right understanding of public education, and support it in its proper function. The Christian school movement contributes to

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### A Warning with a Reason

By F. A. Dunlop\*

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Ephesians 4:30.

We are not always able to give a satisfactory reason for our warnings. Parents know this when they lay down a prohibition to their children. The reason for such prohibition is often obscure and suppositional. The danger is there, but difficult to define. Not so the warning of the text. The reason is clear, and gives meaning to the warning. The whole work of the Spirit of God in personal salvation is bound up in this. Consequently, the warning and reason challenge us to a careful study of the Holy Spirit and His work.

Paul, in this letter, confronts us with definite statements concerning the three Persons in the Godhead: "There is one body and one Spirit," verse 4; "One Lord, one faith", verse 5; "One God and Father of all", verse 6. Throughout the letter he carries the three Persons and subscribes to them the distinctive work done by each in the redemption of man. In chapter I, verse 4, we have the Father's purpose, in verse 5 we have the Father's good pleasure, in verse 6, we have the Father's praise, in verse 7, we have the Father's pardon, in verse 8, we have the Father's prudence, in verses 9-12 we have the Father's plan. This pretty much sums up the work and place of the Father in Redemption. Now, since Christ is the Mediating and Meritorious Cause in Redemption, His work and office are interwoven throughout the epistle. The words, "In Christ", "by Jesus Christ", "through Christ Jesus", "by the blood of Christ", are splashed on every page of the letter, and convey the thought throughout that Christ is the Foundation and Procuring Cause of Salvation. And now, coming to the Holy Spirit, or as Paul states it: "The Holy Spirit of God", we learn that while in essence He is one with the Father and the Son, in office His work is distinctly different. It is in this fact that we find a logical basis for the text.

Theology, considering the work of the Holy Spirit, ascribe to Him a Dispensation. While I cannot bring to mind a positive statement of Scripture to this effect, I believe it is quite universally accepted that the Divine Revelation affords grounds for the following divisions, and in this order: A Dispensation of God the Father, A Dispensation of God the Son, and a Dispensation of God the Holy Spirit.

I believe a proper way of considering the above facts is not to draw such rigid lines as to make any one Economy independent of the others, but a particular and glorious manifestation of the whole Divine Plan. The Trinity is involved and united in all things from Creation to the New Jerusalem and yet there are acts which fall very definitely under the category of each of the Persons: God was prominent in Eden, at Sinai, in the Holy of Holies; Christ was prominent at Bethlehem, at the Jordan,

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