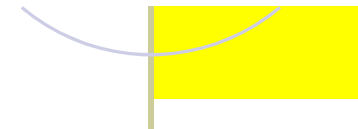


The Frankfort Christian Academy



Basic Principles for Achieving Kingdom Education



Excerpt from

Kingdom Education
*God's Plan For Educating Future
Generations*

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Biblical Principles for Achieving Kingdom Education

Introduction

Kingdom education is defined as:

The life-long, Bible-based, Christ-centered process of leading a child into a new identity with Christ, developing a child according to his/her specific abilities given to him by Christ, so that a child would be empowered to live a life characterized by love, trust and obedience to Christ.

The ultimate goal of kingdom education is to develop a mature disciple of Jesus Christ whose life glorifies God.

God's Word provides every Christian with principles needed to put kingdom education into practice. In order to achieve kingdom education, these biblical principles must be studied, understood, and practiced in every aspect of life. Kingdom education principles must be applied to all the teaching that takes place in one's life regardless of age. However, it is extremely critical that these principles be carefully and diligently applied to children and youth.

It is common knowledge that the easiest time in life to capture a person's heart for Christ is during the childhood years. The home, church and school must give full attention to these biblical principles for children and youth from birth through maturity. As you study each principle, give careful attention to the biblical application the principle has for everyday life.

Biblical Principles on the Education of Children and Youth

1. The education of children and youth is the primary responsibility of parents.
2. "The education of children and youth is a 24 hour-a-day, 7 days-per-week process that must take place from birth through maturity."
3. "The education of children and youth must have as its primary goals the salvation and discipleship of the next generation."
4. "The education of children and youth must be based on God's Word as absolute truth."
5. The education of children and youth must hold Christ preeminent in all of life.
6. The education of children and youth must in no way hinder the spiritual and moral development of the next generation.
7. The education of children and youth, if and when delegated to others by parents, must be done with utmost care.
8. The education of children and youth results in the formation of a lifestyle or worldview that is consistent with that of their teachers.
9. The education of children and youth must have a view of the future that includes the eternal perspective.

Summary

Many Christian parents are becoming increasingly concerned about their children's education with each passing day. The violence that seems to be growing in society, especially in our youth, is causing great alarm. Too often, the first, and, sometimes, only question that parents are asking is "where should I send my child to school?" Should they go to Christian, home, private or public schools?"

Too often this question leads to heated debates. Since God's Word does not address the "where" question directly, anyone's position can be justified and rationalized. At the same time the next generation continues in a moral tailspin, seemingly out of control. In too many cases, where they are attending school doesn't seem to make a difference. This is because, as Christian parents, we are not following biblical principles when it comes to the education of our children and youth. You have just been presented and, hopefully, have given careful attention to nine biblical principles on the education of children and youth. These nine principles must be followed fully if we are going to fulfill the definition of kingdom education given earlier.

There are an estimated 20-25 million children and youth from church families. This huge number represents a tremendous potential for a powerful spiritual army if they are educated and enter into adult life knowing God and thinking and acting from a biblical worldview. If we earnestly apply these principles to the education of our children, the "where" question will be more accurately answered and the potential to capture the next generation and their world for Christ will become a reality.

Principle #1

The education of children and youth is the primary responsibility of parents.

*Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord
(Psalm 127:3).*

*And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, gate and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.
(Deuteronomy 6:7-9)*

*And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.
(Deuteronomy 11:19)*

*We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children
(Psalm 78:4-5).*

*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
(Proverbs 22:6)*

*And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed.
(Malachi 2:15)*

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
(Ephesians 6:4)

The above passages make it clear that parents are responsible to God for the education or training of their children. Another way of interpreting Psalm 127:3 is children are God's homework assignment to parents. Even if parents delegate some areas of their child's education to others, they are still answerable to God for what and how their children are taught.

Malachi 2 makes it clear that God desires parents to develop godly offspring. This is an awesome task, and it takes maximum effort on the part of parents to accomplish. Our society is becoming more and more secular each day. One result of living in a secular society is the belief that the education of young people is a shared responsibility. Parents do have certain responsibilities but so do the local, state, and federal governments. In fact, at each level of government, various branches are constantly trying to assume more and more of this responsibility.

Application

Christian parents must make sure that they are assuming total responsibility for the education of their children. To achieve this goal, parents must constantly ask themselves certain questions.

1. Who or what is in control of educating my child at home? What training is being done directly by me, the parent? What influence does the media have on my child at home? Do I know what my child is seeing, hearing, and doing while at home?
2. Do I know what my child is being taught in my neighborhood? What are other parents or peers teaching my child when they are together?
3. What is my child being taught in church, Sunday school, and other church-related activities?
4. What is my child learning at school? From the teachers? From the textbooks? From the curriculum? From other students? From the school's policies and procedures?

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.
(Acts 20:24)

God places a two-fold calling on every child's life. The first and most important call on a child's life is an eternal call. It is God's desire that each child come to know Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior. The second call is a temporal call. This involves God's call for a person to live a life of service to Christ while here on earth.

The education of children and youth must not only prepare them for a life of service here but also to stand before God for eternity. This eternal perspective must be part of the entire educational process. It is very natural to focus only on this temporal life when it comes to education. But if this is the only focus of education, then individual success will be measured in temporal financial achievement. Financial success is the dominant goal of secular education today.

Application

Ask yourself these questions:

1. Why do I want my child to have a good education?
2. How does my life reflect an eternal perspective as I live it before my children?
3. How is the eternal perspective seen in the teaching of my children that takes place in my home, the church, and the school?
4. Do I want my children to get a good job and have a comfortable lifestyle more than I want God to use them in any way He sees fit?

Principle #9

The education of children and youth must have a view of the future that includes the eternal perspective.

*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
(Colossians 3:1-2)*

*And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.
(Colossians 3:23-23)*

*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
(Matthew 6:19-21)*

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
(Hebrews 11:13)*

*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.
(II Timothy 4:6-8)*

Parents soon realize that it is a tremendous task to assume direct responsibility in each of the areas mentioned above. Therefore, it is important that parents follow additional biblical principles as they endeavor to take responsibility for their child's education.

Principle #2

"The education of children and youth is a 24 hour-a-day, 7 days-per-week process that must take place from birth through maturity."

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

(Deuteronomy 6:7)

And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

(Deuteronomy 11:19)

Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.

(Proverbs 22:6)

A high percentage of Christian parents have heard and, even, memorized Proverbs 22:6. We want to claim this as a promise that will assure us that our children will eventually walk with the Lord if we give them some training from a biblical perspective in early life. However, most of us fail to comprehend how intense this training needs to be.

The concept communicated by the phrase "train up a child" is that this is a continual process that starts at birth. "When he is old" tells us that this process does not end until the individual reaches maturity.

Application

Ask yourself the following questions.

1. Do I have a God-centered worldview? Do I think and act from a biblical perspective of life?
2. What type of worldview is my child receiving and seeing in our home, in our church, in his school?
3. What type of worldview is being presented in the music my children listen to? in the media he is seeing and reading? in the textbooks he is studying?

Principle #8

The education of children and youth results in the formation of a lifestyle or worldview that is consistent with that of their teachers.

*The disciple is not above his master; but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.
(Luke 6:40)*

*Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.
(Philippians 4:9)*

Every person has a worldview or an underlying belief system that drives his/her attitudes and actions in life. There are two possible worldviews one can hold – a God-centered worldview or a man-centered worldview. One's worldview is primarily determined by the worldview of one's teacher(s).

Everyone who teaches others influences them in three ways. They influence them by their content, what they say; by their communication, how they say it; and by their conduct how they live. No one can teach out of a philosophical vacuum. Their beliefs and values will come out and these will help shape the beliefs and values of those whom they teach.

George Barna claims that only 7-8% of today's Christians have a biblical understanding of life. Following this principle would cause us to conclude that today's Christians have been educated by a majority of people (influences) who did not possess a God-centered world view.

God gives us instruction as to the intensity that this process must have in Deuteronomy 6 when He states that parents must teach their children "diligently." It is to be a highly concentrated effort. This effort must be consistent and should take place

1. When our children get up each morning
2. When they are at home and around the house
3. When they are away from the house
4. When they lie down to go to sleep

The only time we should not be diligently teaching our children the things of God is when they are asleep.

Application

Another set of questions must be answered by Christian parents to see if they are following this principle of kingdom education:

1. What am I doing to diligently teach my child the things of God when he awakens each day?
2. How am I diligently teaching my child God's ways while he is at home?
3. Is my child being taught God's truth in all of the activities he is involved in away from home? This must be answered as it relates to his schooling, recreational activities, and even any work in which he may be involved.
4. What am I doing to reinforce God's Word in my child when he finishes each day and goes to bed?

Principle #3

"The education of children and youth must have as its primary goals the salvation and discipleship of the next generation."

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

(Matthew 28:19-20)

That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.
(Psalm 78:6-7)

Philip May in his book "Which Way to Educate" compares today's educator to the field general who has become so involved in the details and strategies of the immediate battle that he has lost sight of the overall strategy of the war or has actually forgotten why it is being fought. Christian parents must never forget that the only goal with true meaning for why we educate our children is for them to know Jesus Christ as their personal savior.

If our children become national merit scholars and do not know Christ, what have we achieved of lasting value? Christ told His disciples that He wanted them to make disciples and this happened when a person received a new identity in Christ and was empowered into a lifelong relationship with Christ characterized by love, trust and obedience.

As we assume our responsibilities to diligently teach our children God's ways and we do this all day long, we must always strive to see them follow Christ in all they do. In fact, we can know that we have been successful in this task when we see our children and our grandchildren teach their children to know God and keep His commandments.

The task of raising children is awesome. It is becoming increasingly more demanding with each passing day. Every parent will in some way delegate some of the responsibility to others to properly educate his/her children. This happens when we take them to church, allow them to go on the internet, or send them to school.

When Moses was trying to educate the children of Israel to know and follow God, Jethro told him he better delegate some of the task to others if he was going to survive. However, Jethro warned Moses to be extremely careful in the character of the person to whom he would delegate any portion of this responsibility. In essence, each person had to "fear God, love truth and hate covetousness."

Application

Consider who you are allowing to help you in educating your children. Make a list of every person and/or institution, organization, etc. who is teaching your children about any aspect of life. Then ask these questions:

1. Does each one fear God, love truth and hate covetousness?
2. What can you do to ensure that these types of people are the only ones that you allow to help you educate your children?

It is true that we cannot control this in every situation. However, this principle can and must be applied in the major areas of life where our children are receiving training.

Principle #7

The education of children and youth, if and when delegated to others by parents, must be done with utmost care.

*Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.
(Exodus 18:21)*

*For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD.
(1 Samuel 1: 27-28)*

*And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again. Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.
(1 Samuel 3:1-10)*

Application

Christians must develop a single-minded focus for the purpose behind the education of their children. This purpose is to see their children become mature followers of Christ. As we ask ourselves certain questions, we can evaluate how well we are doing in practicing this principle.

1. Am I consistently sharing the gospel with my children?
2. Am I a mature disciple of Christ where my life is characterized by love, trust and obedience to Him?
3. Do all the educational efforts that I provide my child, both at and away from home, point my child to Christ and help him follow Christ? (You must keep in mind that this must be applied to all a child does, i.e. music, movies, recreation, schooling, etc.)

Principle #4

"The education of children and youth must be based on God's Word as absolute truth."

*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.
(Matthew 24:35)*

*For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.
(Psalm 119:89)*

*The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.
(Isaiah 40:8)*

Man is constantly searching for truth. Life has no meaning apart from truth. When Pilate was trying to make sense out of the dilemma he was facing concerning Jesus, he asked Jesus, "What is truth?" We are living in a society that declares truth is determined only by experience. It has been redefined as anything that is "legally accurate." God's word is eternal and, therefore, is man's only source of truth. This means that everything that man studies must be scrutinized through the lens of scripture. This is the only way we can find true knowledge that will lead us to wisdom.

When God's Word is removed from any facet of education, that education becomes mere human indoctrination. It will always evolve into empty philosophies that spoil and deceive because it will follow after traditions of man and the rudiments of the world rather than after Christ. Whatever we teach children and youth must be based on the absolute truth found in God's Word.

Jesus showed a special love for children throughout His earthly ministry. When the disciples tried to keep children from getting too close to Jesus, He rebuked them very firmly. It was in this context that Jesus made the statements about the seriousness of offending a young person as noted in the passages above.

Sometimes we think of offending children only in means of physical abuse. We forget that anything that hinders their moral and spiritual development is the epitome of child abuse.

Application

The big question we must answer concerning the education of our children and youth is simply:

Are our children being taught anything that will draw them away from Jesus?

This must be applied to anything and everything that we are teaching them or allowing others to teach them at home, church, school or in your community. This becomes a huge issue when we apply it to who their friends are, what they listen to, see or read or what they are being taught in school.

Principle #6

The education of children and youth must in no way hinder the spiritual and moral development of the next generation.

"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

(Matthew 18:6)

"Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

(Matthew 19:13-14)

"And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

(Mark 10:13-16)

"And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them; but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

(Luke 18: 15-17)

Application

It is extremely important for Christian parents to evaluate everything that is being taught to their children according to God's Word. Several questions must be answered as we strive to fulfill this principle.

1. Do we, as parents, know God's Word and are we growing in this knowledge by daily studying and meditating on it?
2. Is what we are teaching our children at home, both in words and actions, founded on the truth of God's Word?
3. Do we, as parents, know what is being taught to our children through the media, entertainment, recreation, church, Sunday school and school?
4. Is everything that is being taught to our children outside the home grounded in the Word of God. This applies to church, school, and other activities.

Principle #5

The education of children and youth must hold Christ preeminent in all of life.

*In (Jesus) whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
(Colossians 2:3)*

*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.
(Colossians 2:6-10)*

Because of the sacrifice on the cross Christ made on behalf of all men and in humble obedience to His Father, His name has been exalted above all other names. In fact, the Bible states that Jesus not only created everything but everything was created for Him.

Christ is to be preeminent in everything – period. Even the education of our children and youth must be centered on Christ. By doing this, it will lead us to the goal of seeing our children living in a personal intimate love relationship with Jesus. Christ must be at the center or heart of all we teach our children.

In the 1600's, John Milton wrote, "The end of all learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love Him, to imitate Him, to be like Him."

Application

Have we lost our first love like the church at Ephesus did according to Revelation 2? Certain questions can help us evaluate whether Christ is preeminent in our lives and in the education of our children and youth.

1. Would our children know that Christ is our first love by our actions concerning:
 - how we live at home?
 - our church attendance and involvement?
 - our stewardship of our lives including our time, talent and treasure?
 - how and what we tell our children to do?
2. Is Christ the preeminent focus of our church as it relates to training our children? This would relate to our church's worship, Sunday school and other activities.
3. Is Christ the center of our children's schooling?
4. Are our family's activities things in which Christ would be comfortable and welcome?