

# Challenges to Disciple Children

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## Introduction:

Hebrews 13:7 Obey your leaders and submit to them, **for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account.** Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

God holds Pastors and Church leaders to be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the Church. God also holds fathers/ parents to be responsible to protect, disciple, and guide their children (see Appendix A). Therefore, it follows that Church leadership must challenge, equip, and guide fathers/ parents to properly disciple their children.

However, since at least the 1970s, high percentages of children from Christian homes have rejected their faith by the time they graduated from high school. Many of those who survived high school lost their faith during their college years. Some parents place hope in the “once saved, always saved” teaching, which is true, but God knows the true intentions of the heart. The important question is, “Does God honor the prayer of salvation of those who are not sincere?”

Matthew 13:18-23 “Hear then the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

The parable of the Sower presents serious warnings that the *appearance* of new life does not guarantee the *fruit of genuine faith*. Thankfully, God has designed families to have the greatest opportunity to cultivate the hearts of their children, preparing them to stand against evil and produce abundant fruit. Therefore, Christian families (especially fathers) must embrace their responsibility to properly train their children. But, what does this mean?

Seven challenges are proposed to guard the faith of children and to prepare them to honor the Lord Jesus Christ. Goals and evidence are provided for each challenge.

The first challenge, the cornerstone, is to develop sincere faith. All relationships with God must begin, not with an intellectual or emotional acceptance of the Gospel, but with a personal relationship with Him. As the Lord Jesus Christ begins to dwell within their heart, as the friendship grows, there should

be continual communication and awareness of God. Ultimately Believers should enter into an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second foundation challenge is to be committed to submitting all areas of life under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. The evidence will be a pure heart and respect for the authority of God's Word.

The third foundation block is for Believers to understand and embrace their identities in the Lord Jesus Christ. New Believers may need to accept God's love by faith but with maturity, they become gripped by God's unconditional love. Believers who are embraced by God's love receive tremendous power that will transform their lives.

The fourth challenge is learning to know God and respect Him (fear of the Lord). The result will be wisdom and understanding His intent.

The fifth challenge is to build Biblical values and moral excellence upon the first four foundation blocks. Transforming the mind is a lifelong challenge, yielding Biblical values, moral excellence, and discernment to identifying good and evil.

Built upon the previous challenges, the sixth challenge is for Believers to worship the Lord Jesus Christ by being living sacrifices (Romans 12:2). The lust-of-the-flesh (impurity), the lust-of-the-eyes (greed), and the pride-of-life (the desire to worship self) are holy and acceptable sacrifices that continually worship God.

The seventh challenge is for Believers to be transformed into the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, reflecting God's love to the World. To love God with their whole hearts, to love others, to be salt and light, and to be faithful Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).

Mentoring (discipleship), children or adults requires substantial time, prayer, and energy. Because discipleship is so critical, especially family discipleship, Church leadership must recognize and embrace the challenges to encourage, help equip, and lead by example. Success should be measured when fathers are effective spiritual leaders of their families.

### **Challenges:**

The American culture and environment have become hostile towards God and present major obstacles to discipling children. Many appear to be unaware of the extent of the threats. Especially since the enemies of darkness have employed progressive education to promote atheistic worldviews that have been so effectively integrated into American culture that many Christians are unable to recognize the dangers. It is not the goal to study progressive education but a basic understanding is necessary for parents to properly prepare, train, and protect their children. Thus, the challenges below are presented.

The appearance of progressive education has been polished to appear admirable and is difficult for many to understand. However, the Humanists Manifesto clearly presents the true motives of progressive education. There are three Humanists Manifestos. Manifesto I can be found in Appendix B. John Dewey, the author of the Dewey Decimal System, considered the father of progressive education,

and his cronies, publicly published the Humanists Manifesto with the goal to **eliminate all Christian and Biblical influences from America.**

Dewey and his cohorts understood that multiple generations would need to reject the Lord Jesus Christ so they implement self-propagating philosophies that have not only survived but have thrived for over 100 years. Their strategy was/ is to promote their ideas, beginning with Ivy league Universities down to every teacher. To improve the effectiveness of their efforts, they pushed for "free" public schools, mandatory school attendance, teacher certifications (per their standards), and "State" approved curriculums (also per their goals).

In the early years, the impact of progressive education was minimal, but over time it successfully removed Biblical truths and God's moral standards from a large segment of the American population. The results have brought tremendous destruction to American culture, the American family, American politics, and even the modern American Church. Today, there is open antagonism against God, the Bible, the Lord Jesus Christ, and many American values. Sadly, there has been little resistance from the modern American Church and there is evidence that the World view of many Christians, some Church leaders, and even some seminary professors has been greatly affected.

The challenges presented below are presented to help fathers/ parents prepare their children against these attacks of the forces of darkness. The challenges are important, regardless if children are homeschooled, if they attend private school, or if they attend public school. However, parents need to recognize that the more time that children, especially younger children are exposed to non- or anti-Biblical friends, entertainment, and public education, the greater the probability that they will embrace atheistic values, and possibly reject their faith and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **1. Sincere Faith:**

A primary attack in America is to reject God's existence. If God does not exist then His moral standards can be ignored. Thus, individuals can be "liberated" from Biblical moral restraints.

[Psalms 19:1-6](#) **The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.**

Because the Creation reveals the handiwork and power of God, a foundation of progressive education is to challenge God's existence through the promotion of the postulate of evolution (which cannot be considered a theory). Using poor science, evolution is presented as "fact", and is woven through K-12 (13 years) curriculums of public education. The impact has been so effective that evolution is promoted through many forms of entertainment and in some cases, even Churches.

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the modern American Church offered little resistance against the propagation of the postulate of evolution. Around 1970 organizations like the Institute of Creation Research were formed. These organizations have identified hundreds of questions in every field of science that evolutionists cannot answer. Many of the issues and questions can be found on the Institute of Creation Research (ICR) website and in their material. However, given the goal of progressive education to raise doubts and “prove” that God does not exist, public education continues to indoctrinate students to convince students to reject Creation as being possible.

Their efforts have been so effective that it is not uncommon for individuals with advanced degrees to be convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that evolution is a fact. More disturbing is a growing number of Christians and Church leaders who attempt to merge evolution into the Biblical description of Creation. Despite the clear attacks of questioning God’s existence and hundreds of Biblical-based books that refute “Biblical evolution”, the indoctrination of evolution has affected the worldview of many Christians.

Despite the evidence of creation, many students are so convinced that the Creator God does not exist that it is very difficult for them to consider the truths of the Gospel.

Given the admonition to “Train up a child in the way that he should go; when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6), much of the modern American Church has attempted to guard the faith of children through teaching intellectual knowledge and sometimes emotional experiences. However, these defenses have proven to be ineffective. Therefore, it is proposed that to “train up a child” must be to “spiritually” prepare children by guiding them to develop personal relationships with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Personal relationships with God are developed by spending time with Him through prayer and in His Word. Sadly, spending time in prayer and God’s word often becomes “check marks” on to-do lists. Fathers/ parents and mentors must carefully use these “tools” with the goal to guide children and new Believers to develop friendships with the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Therefore*, the first challenge for parents is to mentor their children so that they have not only received Jesus Christ as their Savior but to guide them to begin developing personal relationships (friendships) with Him. Friendships that extend beyond emotional, intellectual, and doctrinal understanding.

- *Goal/ Evidence*: An important element of such friendships is to help children develop constant awareness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sharing thoughts, ideas, and questions with Him through prayer, then waiting, and listening to His promptings.

- *Goal/ Evidence*: The ultimate goal is to develop an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

To guide children to embrace God’s love and to develop a relationship with Him, fathers/ parents must model God’s love. Setting standards, and giving money does not demonstrate love but spending time and investing in their lives is very important. The [Introduction and Philosophy of DMS Handbook](#) further discuss how fathers and mentors can encourage children and Believers to meet each of the challenges.

The success of all of the remaining challenges rests on meeting this challenge.

## **2. A pure heart:**

The first challenge, developing Sincere Faith is the foundation for developing a Pure Heart. And this challenge is the foundation for the next challenge, Identity.

Again, it is not the goal to discuss progressive education but parents must be aware of the battles they face. Progressive educational philosophies have so permeated American culture that most American, including parents and even Church leaders, are unaware of how their perspectives have been influenced. Therefore, if parents are to properly guide their children they must carefully evaluate their ideas according to God's Word.

A major frustration for John Dewey was the impact that parents had on the value system of children. Therefore, a goal of progressive education has been for younger children to begin attending school to minimize parental influences. Many Christian teachers have entered into public education to attempt to positively influence children but the progressive education *system* is deeply embedded and powerful. Very few understand the extent and depth of the influence that has been developed through the decades. Exposing children to 13 years of humanist-atheistic philosophies and doctrines promotes disrespect towards parents, the authority of God's Word, and ultimately for God.

As stated in the Humanists Manifesto, the main goals of progressive education are to promote the rejection of God, His moral standards, and His Word. Many of the techniques of progressive education are very subtle and have been developed to promote rebellion against God's moral standards. Sadly, rebellion against God produces rebellion in every area of life. After generations, teenage rebellion has become expected and has spread to every area of American culture. Even within the Church, MKs (Missionary Kids) and PKs (Pastor Kids) are examples of rebellion. The current blatant example is the promotion of WOKE. Are the forces of darkness concerned with the welfare of children? Are those who promote the goals of progressive education concerned with the rights of minorities? Or are they only exploiting children to promote rebellion and lawlessness through fear and hatred to meet their goals?

However, God's desire is for all to be free from sin. Contrary to human logic, the path to freedom is through submitting to God's standards. Starting with the understanding that God is sovereign and embracing that the Lord Jesus Christ has been given all authority in heaven and on earth. A critical element of being born again is for individuals to bow to and make Jesus Christ Lord of their lives.

*Therefore*, the challenge for Fathers/ parents is to help their children to submit all areas and desires to Jesus Christ as Lord, to come to embrace God's unconditional love, and to develop a constant awareness of His presence. Meeting these challenges empowers Believers to maintain a pure heart.

Parents are 100% responsible for babies but by the late teenage years, the young adults need to be 100% responsible for themselves. Therefore, parents must constantly work towards preparing their children to be self-governed, self-sufficient, and self-motivated.

The path for this challenge is to encourage children (and Believers) to bow to Jesus Christ as Lord, and spending time in God's Word and with Him in prayer is very important. When children are younger, parents will need to hold them accountable but the ultimate goal is for them to bow to Jesus Christ as their Lord, then to build a friendship with Him and to develop a constant awareness of His presence. Such relationships provide tremendous internal power and desire which will develop and maintain pure hearts.

When there are failures and they respond to God's love and repent, they will begin to be embraced by God's unconditional love. Therefore, it is critical for parents to model God's love and effectively communicate to them that they love them, even when they fail.

And as their friendship with God matures, hopefully, they will develop a constant awareness of the Lord Jesus Christ in their hearts and minds. Not only will they receive the power to maintain a pure heart, eliminate guilt, producing true freedom, they will abide with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sadly, many parents, especially home-school and private school parents fail this challenge because they focus on their children meeting rules, guidelines, and appearances. Ultimately, children must learn to be internally governed and motivated by their desire to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ. Until children are able to embrace God's unconditional love, it will be difficult for them to submit to Jesus Christ as Lord. Then when they are out from under their parent's authority, seeking to fulfill their wants and desires they will fail and possibly reject a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and their faith.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To make Jesus Christ Lord.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To have a personal friendship with God.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To have a constant awareness of the Lord Jesus Christ in their hearts and minds.

*Goal/ Evidence:* An understanding of their parent's love and to be embraced by God's unconditional love.

*Goal/ Evidence:* By mid-teen years, young adults should begin to be self-disciplined and parents should move into positions of counselors.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To understand that the Lord Jesus Christ is sovereign over all and that all authority flows down from Him.

*Goal/ Evidence:* For children/ disciples to understand, and embrace that God's Word is the ultimate source of moral authority and all spiritual truth.

*Note:* God prescribes the use of the rod to remove foolishness from the heart of children. Given the goal of progressive education to promote rebellion against God, it is no surprise that "corporal punishment" is discouraged.

### 3. Identity:

If the first and second challenges have been met, the third challenge provides tremendous power for children to transform their lives.

When children are pulled away from the safety of their families and thrust into the sterility of classrooms, it is very easy for them to lose their identities. The loss of the security of their families is often replaced by identifying with their fellow students. Children have various personalities and respond differently, but in general, younger children are more at risk of losing their identity. Family isolation and the loss of individual identities form foundations for “group dependency”. The greater the group dependency, the more influence their peer groups have over them.

When children are asked, especially younger children, “Who are you”, those who do not have a solid grasp of their identities struggle. Students who are able to maintain links with their families do better. Such as “I’m Johnny”, “My mom brings the special treats on Mondays”.

A major complication of students’ identities is if their fathers are not involved in their lives. Fatherless students tend to have much higher levels of failure in all areas of life. Probably because they generally have poorer personal identities. Sadly, progressive education has successfully convinced many Americans that God’s moral standards are irrelevant, resulting in sexual perversion, which has increased the percentages of broken homes, which has promoted increasing numbers of fatherless children, and which has damaged the identity of many.

[Jeremiah 17:9](#) The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

From experience, a significant problem within groups of children is that the leaders of such groups are whoever is deemed to be the “coolest”. Those who achieve leadership status, void of God’s standards, are free to define what is “cool”. And given the deceitfulness of the heart and the foolishness in the heart of children, the requirements for “acceptance” are often very arbitrary and sometimes destructive.

[I Corinthians 15:33](#) Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”

Group dependency creates powerful motivations to be accepted (a form of desiring to be loved) but the conditions of acceptance can be very demanding. Sadly, students who do not meet the requirements of being acceptable often experience tremendous rejection, driving them to develop psychological issues, deep hatred, and sometimes suicide. In extreme cases, they may be involved in mass shootings.

The consequences of group dependency are very destructive for some students but it allows progressive education to achieve their goals, so the collateral damage is acceptable. And when group dependency promotes widespread drug usage, immorality (“everybody is doing it”), and other forms of rebellion the cry is for more “education”.

However, the great blessing of Believers is that God has given them tremendous Identities:

- They are adopted as children of God and receive unconditional love.
- They are covered by the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ and can enter directly into God's presence.
- When they are born again, God's Holy Spirit begins dwelling in them. This is a great mystery.
- They receive incorruptible inheritances.
- They are commissioned to be Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).

*Therefore*, the challenge for Fathers/ parents is to guide their children to understand and embrace each of the elements of their identities in the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Goal/ Evidence:* A key element of understanding the identity of Believers is to be gripped by God's love. Believers may need to initially embrace God's love by faith but when Believers are gripped by His unconditional love, they receive tremendous power, and their lives are transformed. Obligations to obey God's laws are replaced with opportunities to reflect God's love back to Him. And when love is expressed to God, it is easy to also demonstrate love to others.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To cheerfully identify with the Lord Jesus Christ, even when faced with group disapproval and rejection.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To cheerfully be thankful for all trials that God brings into their lives.

#### **4. Wisdom:**

**Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.**

The fourth major building block is to guide and mentor children to develop wisdom. The essence of "fear" is sincere respect. Such respect can only be accomplished by knowing God. Therefore, wisdom is found on the narrow path of knowing God, discovering His character, and coming to understand His heart.

When Disciples know God and understand His intents, they develop wisdom, allowing them to discern good from evil.

**Hebrews 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.**

When a Believer is born again, they receive the Spirit of Truth but it is still very important for them to be trained to discern good from evil. To be able to distinguish truth from lies. As our nation has turned away from God, part of His judgment on America is allowing spirits of deception over our land. Evil is seldom presented in black and white but in many shades of grey. Sadly, increasing numbers of Christians are not able to distinguish truth. They accept compromises of living together outside of wedlock, support those who promote abortion, gender fluidity, homosexuality, sexual perversions, and



many other violations of God's standards. Such compromises reveal a lack of wisdom and are evidence of not fearing or knowing God.

Romans 1 teaches that when individuals reject God and His truth, He allows them to be overtaken by their selfish wants and desires. As God is not a respecter of any man, apparently spiritually immature Christians also fall under some of God's judgments.

*Therefore*, the challenge is to guide children to begin developing sincere respect and knowledge of God, and through His Word to begin to understand His heart. The result will be wisdom and discernment. These are lifelong challenges, critical for recognizing good from evil.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To embrace that God loves His children and understand that in His Sovereignty. That He designs trials and temptations to develop character and deepen their relationship with Him. The outward evidence is patience and thankfulness in all circumstances.

## **5. Biblical Values:**

If there is doubt about the effectiveness of progressive education to indoctrinate students, the high percentages of children from Christian homes who professed Jesus when they are young but later reject their faith and God's love should be compelling and very concerning evidence. Further evidence is that many Church leaders and seminary professors attempt to justify evolution by compromising the authority of God's Word. Darwinian Evolution has been crumbling under legitimate scientific scrutiny (a topic for a different time), but why are some Church leaders compromising the authority of God's word by attempting to integrate evolution into the creation? Why is there a group of Christian leaders, who are usually very resistant to compromising fundamental Biblical Doctrines willing to place science above God's Word concerning Creation?

One possible answer is that most Christians, Church leaders, and Seminary professors have been indoctrinated and possibly psychologically conditioned through many years in public school. Advanced degrees further expose individuals to philosophical and psychological conditioning. A characteristic of such conditioning is that students (victims) are unable to recognize inconsistencies between their indoctrination and what they know the Biblical teaches. As humanistic philosophies and Biblical teachings are incompatible any attempt to harmonize these two opposing World views requires illogical thinking and rejection of the authority of God's Word.

A warning flag of conditioning is strong emotional reactions when Humanist philosophies are challenged.

By design, psychologically conditioned makes it difficult for individuals to discern if they have been affected so it is important for all to carefully consider at least these questions:

1. Is there a willingness to compromise the authority of scripture and Biblical principles to avoid potentially offending others?

2. Are there desires to be inclusive and to appease others by justifying the compromise of Biblical standards, sex outside of marriage, divorce and remarriage, sexual perversions, and other Biblical standards?
3. Are political candidates who have long track records of promoting policies that violate Biblical truths, principles, and moral standards justified and supported?
4. Is there a desire, possibly craving for reports from the liberal media?

Those who answer yes to these questions are at risk of unknowingly being psychologically conditioned. What is the solution to these problems? Regardless of any conditioning, because of the deceitfulness of the human heart, all Believers must strive to reject conformity with world values by renewing their minds.

**Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**

*Therefore*, an important challenge to protect children and to rescue Believers who have been indoctrinated is to guide them to **renew their minds**. God's method to renew minds is to develop Biblical values and convictions by integrating God's Word into the heart and mind of Believers.

*1<sup>st</sup> Goal/ Evidence:* The first step is for Believers to humbly bow to the Lord Jesus Christ and to learn to carefully listen to His promptings.

*2<sup>nd</sup> Goal/ Evidence:* The next step is self-discipline (dying to self) to memorize, commit to long-term review (daily for at least 2 months), and effective meditation on God's Word. Intellectually learning God's Word will not transform the mind. Transformation is possible through hiding God's Word in the heart and embracing Biblical truths, regardless of personal opinions, or feelings.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To develop and maintain Biblical convictions through a working knowledge of God's Word and empowered by an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Obedience should not be through the force of external threats or rules but by an internal desire to demonstrate love to the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To develop and maintain moral excellence.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To develop Christ Like character.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To speak truth within our hearts concerning sin and motives.

*Goal/ Evidence:* For children/disciples to embrace God's designs, especially that He holds marriage, vows, and sex to be sacred.

*Goal/ Evidence:* The fruit of a transformed mind is an increased awareness and an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

## 6. Worship:

One of the greatest honors that God's Children receive is the ability to worship Him. Believers are covered by the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ so they have the privilege to enter directly into God's presence.

**Romans 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, **to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.**

Many invent substitutes for worship but His delight is when His Children crucify their wants and desires, becoming living sacrifices.

**Galatians 2:20** **I have been crucified with Christ.** It is no longer I who live, **but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.**

The greater the cost of a sacrifice, the greater God values them. Offering lust-of-the-eyes, and pride-of-life are very acceptable sacrifices. Because lust-of-the-flesh is so powerful, those sacrifices are especially important.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the forces of darkness promote moral impurity. Under the guise of sex education, too much information is given to students when they are too young. Many are tempted and sin. And since students in public schools and some private schools spend over a decade with fellow students, many of whom embrace the indoctrination that there is no God, such peers encourage philosophies that there is no absolute right and wrong, there is no concern for final judgment, to ignore guilt, or understanding of genuine sacrificial love. Within such environments, students face tremendous sexual temptations, which become stepping stones to promote rebellion against God's moral standards.

**Psalms 14:1** The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good.

By design, progressive education works to remove the fear (respect) of God. The consequence is moral corruption and abominable lifestyles. However, God's law is written on the heart so when temptations yield to sin, the result is guilt. The guilt for non-Christians further motivates them to reject the existence of God and any absolute moral standards.

When students from Christian homes violate their conscience, their knowledge of God's standards creates greater guilt, forcing them to repent or to pursue their lusts and desires. Sadly, their desire for self-gratification waters the seeds of doubts about God's existence, growing a crop to reject their faith. The companion of fools will suffer harm. Group dependencies and years of exposure to those who have rejected the existence of God (bad company) further encourage students to reject their faith.

Many attempt to remove their guilt by becoming outspoken enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, a consequence of rejecting the Creator destroys the possibility of a divine designer. Without a master planner, there is no meaning in life, and no purpose in failures, disasters, or even successes. Life is

reduced to only seeking self-gratification, often resulting in lifestyles of sexual gratification and perversions. True purpose and the high honor to worship God are not possible.

Some become inwardly destructive, engaging in substance abuse and various forms of suicide. Others, worship themselves instead of God. They strive to pursue riches and fame. It is not uncommon for them to achieve “success” at the expense of others through personal drive and brute force. Those who obtain personal power and authority, often physically and sexually abuse others. If they are not restrained many will strive for positions where they can dictate the life and death of others. Despite outward appearances of success, guilt and the lack of true meaning create tremendous unhappiness within them, driving them further to lust for power.

It is extremely difficult for children in younger grades to recognize and address the indoctrinations of progressive education. By junior-high years, students who reject God, pursuing their selfish desires are persuaded to become fools and are filled with abominations. Therefore, it is important to prepare children to defend themselves against such temptations and moral attacks. But this is extremely difficult for most children, hard for young adults, and even adults fail.

*Therefore*, the challenge for fathers/ parents is to help their children to develop and embrace **the high honor and joy of worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ by becoming living sacrifices.**

*Goal/ Evidence:* A key element of worship is for Believers to understand their righteousness is only the result of being covered by the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. This righteousness allows Believers to boldly enter into God’s presence, making supplications and deepening their friendship with Him.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To worship the Lord Jesus Christ by crucifying the lust-of-eyes, putting away greed and selfishness.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To worship the Lord Jesus Christ by crucifying pride-of-life, honoring the Lord Jesus Christ above bringing praise to self. Important evidence is serving selflessly, only motivated to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To worship the Lord Jesus Christ by crucifying the lusts-of-the-flesh, maintaining moral excellence.

## **7. Love:**

When Jesus was asked, “What is the greatest commandment?” His answer/ command was recorded in the book of Matthew:

Matthew 22:37-40 And he said to him, “**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.** This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: **You shall love your neighbor as yourself.** On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

Sincere faith (challenge 1), abiding with God with a pure heart (challenge 2), being gripped with the identity of the Lord Jesus Christ (challenge 3), knowing God, having the mind of Christ (challenge 4), being transformed, embracing Biblical values, as is evidenced by Godly character (challenge 5), and worshiping God as living sacrifices (challenge 6) are all necessary elements of loving God with all of our hearts, soul, and minds.

It is God's design and desire for His Children to be shining lights of His love to the World. If parents are to instill the importance of loving God and others, they must lead by example, not only with their love towards God but to demonstrate and express their love to their children. Parents must express love to their children but it is also necessary for parents to demonstrate their love by investing significant time in their lives.

*Therefore*, the challenge for fathers/ parents is to teach their children to intentionally demonstrate love to God and to the World.

*Goal/ Evidence:* To have genuine fellowship with other Believers as a result of walking in the light (1 John 1:7).

*Goal/ Evidence:* To be salt and light to the world.

*Goals/ Evidence:* To pursue God's guidance to be faithful Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).

#### **Final Comments:**

My family was broken but the Lord Jesus Christ saved me at an early age and began developing a personal relationship with me. By the time I entered high school I began attending Bible-teaching evangelical Churches, not from obligation but for love and obedience to God. In contrast to my family, the homes of my Church peers appeared to be like heaven to me. Sadly, by the time we graduated from high school, 19 out of 20 of them rejected any relationship with God. This greatly concerned me and raised many questions.

In college, God led me into a campus ministry. While sharing the Gospel with students it became obvious that many grew up in Christian homes but they also rejected their faith. Worse, some became outspoken enemies of God, His Word, and the Gospel.

Now, over 60 years of attending good Churches, unacceptably high numbers of children from Christian homes have continued to reject the Lord Jesus Christ. Moral purity has plummeted and many other problems have permeated the modern American Church.

It is proposed that while most parents make significant sacrifices to help their children be successful, the high percentages of spiritual failures indicate that many do not know how to strengthen their children's relationship with God. This also indicates that the spiritual maturity of many parents needs to be strengthened. Therefore, the challenges are presented for Church leadership to encourage and guide fathers/ parents to be the spiritual leaders of their homes, and to challenge them to meet their responsibilities to properly raise and disciple their children.

Homeschool families deserve respect for making extra sacrifices to protect and prepare their children. However, it is just as important for their children to meet the above challenges. A significant danger for homeschooled students is that under the rules and the protection of their families, it is easy for them to appear to have solid relationships with the Lord Jesus Christ, but when they leave the external disciplines of their families, the faith of some have sadly been dashed upon the rocks.

Private Church schools allow children more time to mature so there is a higher possibility of success but meeting curriculum requirements does not transform hearts. Therefore, the above challenges are also very important for them.

If parents send their children to public school, they must understand that there is a high probability that their children will lose their faith and face eternal judgment. Therefore, it is extremely important for fathers/ parents to constantly work to help their children effectively meet the above challenges.

Regardless if children attend public, private, or are homeschooled, parents must understand the importance of adequately preparing them for the emotional, social, and spiritual challenges they will face.

As God holds parents, especially fathers to be responsible, to protect, disciple, and guide their children, and as Pastors and Church leaders are responsible for the spiritual welfare of the Church. Church leadership must challenge, equip, and guide fathers/ parents to properly disciple their children.

Note: The [Discipleship Meditation System- A Handbook for Mentors](#) is available to assist fathers/ parents (and mentors) to Believers meet the challenges above. The paper, [All Honor to the King- Discipleship](#) discusses the philosophy and goals of the Handbook.

## Appendix A, the responsibility of fathers to disciple their children:

### Children belong to God:

**Psalms 127:3** "Behold, **children are a gift of the LORD**; The fruit of the womb is a reward."

**Psalms 24:1** A Psalm of David. The earth *is* the LORD's, and all its fullness, the world **and those who dwell therein.**

**Isaiah 8:18** Here am I and the **children whom the LORD has given me!**

**Genesis 33:5** And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, "Who *are* these with you?" So he said, "**The children whom God has graciously given your servant.**"

**Ezekiel 16: 20-21** "Moreover you took your sons and your daughters, whom you bore to Me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. *Were your acts* of harlotry a small matter, "**that you have slain My children** and offered them up to them by causing them to pass through *the fire?*

### Parents are responsible for Children:

**Deuteronomy 6:7,8** "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

**Ephesians 6:4** And you, **fathers**, do not provoke your children to wrath, but **bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.**

**Deuteronomy 11:18-21** "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. "**You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.** "And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, "that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.

**Proverbs 1:8** My son, hear the **instruction of your father**, And do not forsake the **law of your mother;**

**Proverbs 22:6** **Train up a child** in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it. (This verse strongly implies that parents are to be the primary teachers.)

**Parents are responsible to train and discipline their children:**

**Proverbs 22:12-14** Apply your heart to instruction, And your ears to words of knowledge. **Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod,** And deliver his soul from hell.

**Proverbs 13:24** **He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.**

**God will judge parents for not properly training their children:**

**Samuel 3:11-14** Then the LORD said to Samuel: "Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. "In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. "For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, **because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.** "And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."

Some may argue this application of God's word, however, there are no Biblical exceptions for the responsibility that fathers have towards properly raising their children.

**God has appointed the fathers/ parents to instruct their children:**

**Genesis 18:19** "For I have known him, in order that he may **command his children and his household after him,** that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

**Deuteronomy 4:9** "Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. **And teach them to your children and your grandchildren,**

**Exodus 10:2** "and that **you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son** the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I *am* the LORD."

**Joel 1:3** **Tell your children** about it, *Let* your children **tell their children,** And **their children another generation.**

**We are not to allow the ungodly to be peers or teachers of our children:**

**Proverbs 13:20** He who walks with wise *men* will be wise, But the **companion of fools will be destroyed.**

**Psalm 1:1-2** Blessed *is* the man **Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;** But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.



**Jeremiah 10:2** Thus says the LORD: "**Do not learn the way of the Gentiles**; Do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, For the Gentiles are dismayed at them.

**Luke 6:40** "A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained **will be like his teacher**.

**Colossians 2:8** **Beware lest anyone cheat you** through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

**True knowledge and wisdom only come through God's word:**

**Proverbs 1:7** **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge**, *But* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

**Psalms 111:10** **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom**; A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*. His praise endures forever.

**Deuteronomy 7:12** "Then it shall come to pass, because **you listen to these judgments, and keep and do them**, that the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers.

**Matthew 4:4** But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, **but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.**' "

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** All **Scripture is** given by inspiration of God, and **is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness**, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Conclusion:**

Since children belong to God and parents have been given the responsibility to train and discipline them.

And, since there are no Biblical exceptions for anyone other than the parents to raise their children.

And, there is a Biblical precedent of God harshly judging a father for not properly training and disciplining his children.

And, children should not have ungodly influences through ungodly "companions" or teachers.

And, since true knowledge and wisdom only come through God's Word.

Therefore, God has given the responsibility of raising, disciplining, and training children to only the parents, primarily to fathers.

No doubt, many will look for loopholes in this conclusion. Two possible Biblical examples are Moses and Samuel. Both were raised by families other than their natural-born parents (probably after they were

three years old). Both of these cases were extremely unique situations and they do not diminish the responsibilities that God has given to fathers for their children.

### **Appendix B, Humanist Manifesto I:**

FIRST: Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.

SECOND: Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process.

THIRD: Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.

FOURTH: Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely molded by that culture.

FIFTH: Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but it does insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is using intelligent inquiry and the assessment of their relations to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.

SIXTH: We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of "new thought".

SEVENTH: Religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation--all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.

EIGHTH: Religious Humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.

NINTH: In the place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being.

TENTH: It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural.

ELEVENTH: Man will learn to face the crises of life in terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability. Reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom. We assume that humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.

TWELFTH: Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life.

THIRTEENTH: Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.

FOURTEENTH: The humanists are firmly convinced that existing acquisitive and profit-motivated society has shown itself to be inadequate and that a radical change in methods, controls, and motives must be instituted. A socialized and cooperative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world.

FIFTEENTH AND LAST: We assert that humanism will: (a) affirm life rather than deny it; (b) seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not flee from them; and (c) endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few. By this positive morale and intention humanism will be guided, and from this perspective and alignment, the techniques and efforts of humanism will flow.

**Appendix C, an example of the temptations that children and teens face today:**

A young man worked closely with his parents and they felt that he was adequately prepared to transition into public high school. Within the first couple of weeks, a girl invited him to get off the bus to have sex with her, since her parents were not at home. Thankfully, the young man resisted. It was helpful for him to resist temptation because he knew that his father would be holding him accountable and asking him direct questions. Part of his success is that he was willing to submit to his father's authority.

This example is the result of progressive education's goals and long-term efforts to destroy Biblical moral values in America.