

## A Christ-centered Education, Part 1

Why are you home schooling this year? Do you have specific reasons for why you are doing this different lifestyle? The enemy of our souls would love to see any of us get sidetracked, or exhausted, or overwhelmed, or discouraged, or focused on the wrong things. Knowing why this decision is important---with a quiet conviction in our hearts---will go a long way toward keeping us focused in the coming months.

The primary reason that we home school is because Steve and I really have desired to provide our children with a Christ-centered education. Perhaps some personal background would be helpful.

I was a public school teacher when I asked Jesus Christ into my life in 1978. As I drove my little gold Volkswagen to the junior high school in Colorado Springs where I worked, I desired to incorporate my new-found Savior and Lord into my professional life. In the past I had, by my own lost nature and by my college training, deliberately kept Jesus out of my life. Now I wanted Him, and needed Him, all day every day. Instead of deserting Him in my car in the parking lot each morning and eagerly greeting Him upon my return, I invited Him to come inside to be a part of my teaching.

With dismay, though, came the realization that the Lord was not welcome in my place of employment! The indications of this were often subtle, but the result was that God was completely omitted in education. He was regularly overlooked, ignored, thought to be unimportant, without influence. I imagined God patiently waiting outside that junior high, perhaps on the front steps or under the shade of a pine tree, longing to be included.

It is said that "Nature abhors a vacuum." If God remains outside, who or what moves in to fill the void?

"When an evil spirit comes out of a man [or a place], it goes through arid places seeking a rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man [or place] is worse than the first." (Matthew 12:43-45)

Why do I think of the tragic shootings at Columbine High School in 1999 when I read these verses?

Therefore, Steve and I felt that it was imperative to be obedient to the Lord in our home schooling and to be absolutely sure that He was included and honored in everything we did as a family. So Steve and I developed a working definition of what we were aiming for (in direct contrast to our experiences in conventional schools.) Here it is: a Christ-centered education is where God is accorded His rightful place and He is given all the significance He is due. (It is my intent to expand on this concept of Christ-centered education in subsequent newsletter articles.) What would it look like in your family's home school if God were honored, included, and significant in everything--including math!--that you teach this year?

My prayer for each of us this year is: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom....And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Colossians 3:15-17).