

# **Christian Education Is Homemade**

*Howard Hendricks*

## Introduction.

A. Moses' upper desert discourse is important for education. (Deuteronomy 6:4); Christian education is homemade.

I. An alarming thing in America today is the disappearance of the distinctively Christian home.

A. A Christian home is where Christ lives with discretion and affects every aspect of the home.

1. A friend boasted that every night he was busy.
2. I rebuked him saying being at home is important to cultivating a Christian home.
3. Is the church actually harming the Christian home by keeping us busy?
4. When parents are bringing their kids to church too much they are abdicating their responsibility to bring these children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.
5. Fathers are responsible to be spiritual leaders in the home.
6. The church must take the initiative to place responsibility of child rearing to the parents.

B. The background of Moses' upper desert discourse is important. (Deuteronomy 6)

1. God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage.
2. At Sinai God revealed the Law and the priesthood.
3. God led them on to Kadesh Barnea where Israel should have entered the land.
4. Instead Israel balked and doubted the ability of God to deliver the inhabitants of the land into their hands.
  - a. Caleb and Joshua only believed in God. (Numbers 13)
  - b. The rest of Israel failed to believe God.
  - c. The majority here was dead wrong.
  - d. The minority placed their faith in God in spite of the problems.
  - e. The disobedience of the majority destroyed a whole generation.
  - f. None of us will enter God's land by disobedience.

5. After 40 years God raises up a new generation to take the land.

- a. This new generation must trust God.
- b. They must see the problems and trust God anyway.

C. Three principles are important here.

1. God's truth must be a thing of the heart. (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

- a. God's word must be in the heart of believers.
- b. God's word must hold our hearts in conviction.
- c. In verse 4 Israel was commanded to love the Lord who is one.
  1. This is doctrine that affects behavior.
  2. The idea that doctrine is unimportant is not true.
  3. Doctrine gives us the norm by which to measure truth.
  4. Doctrine rightly understood is dynamic.
  5. Israel was commanded to love the Lord with all its heart, soul, and might.
  6. Revelation always demands a response.
  7. God does not reveal himself to impress but to demand obedience.
  8. Heart to the Hebrew indicated the totality of human personality; intellect, emotion, and will.
  9. The heart that is moved by God will obey God.
  10. The essence of Christianity resides in the will.
  11. Israel degenerated into a religion without heart.

d. The minor prophets demonstrate heart wrenching obedience. (Amos 4)

1. He preached against all the nations surrounding Israel.
2. Next he preached against Judah, and Israel must have rejoiced.
3. Finally he preached against Israel.
4. He moves in concentric circles until focusing on Israel.

- a. He sarcastically tells Israel to come to Bethel the house of God and sin.
  - b. Today we might say come to church and sin.
  - c. At Gilgal Amos says to multiply transgression.
  - d. He tells them to bring the tithe every three days.
  - e. They had a deceptive rather than a devoted heart doing the right things for the wrong reasons.
  - f. There was no heart in their worship.
5. Chad Walsh *Early Christians of the Twenty-first Century* said many Christians live in vague piety but it is divorced from the will. It is safer to vaccinate a person with a mild Christianity than to infect him with the real thing.
4. Some say it's easier to win kids to Christ from non-Christian homes than it is to win kids from Christian homes. I quality this to mean it's more difficult to win kids from religious homes where he heart has not been moved by Christ.
5. My own home was broken and I was raised by my grandmother who often prayed for me out loud because she was hard of hearing.
- a. I can't forget hearing her call out my name.
  - b. One night I realized she had the reality I lacked.
6. Another person who impacted me was my Sunday school teacher.
- a. He wore a size 14 shoe and never had a discipline problem.
  - b. Of 13 boys in that class 11 are in ministry.
  - c. Of the 11, 9 came from broken homes and 5 from Catholic homes because this man had the real Christianity.
7. We cannot pass on to others what we don't possess.
8. What do you have to communicate?
9. We are looking for better means but do we have real Christianity.
10. There are those who cannot speak and those who cannot but speak.
11. Amos could not but speak.
2. God's truth must be a thing of the home.

- a. I can fool my students but not my children or my wife.
  - b. If Christianity doesn't work in the home it doesn't work.
  - c. Moses said to teach the children. (Deuteronomy 4:7)
    - 1. This involves formal instruction in the home.
    - 2. This also involves informal instruction, at night, at the dinner table, etc.
      - a. Teaching is not only telling.
      - b. Teaching is also showing.
    - 3. If you want to teach your child to be more thoughtful then be more thoughtful yourself.
    - 4. A man interrupted my teaching once to ask me how to teach patience to his children.
    - 5. Most of our sins will be perpetuated in our children.
  - d. The average child is at church 1% school for 16% of his time; in the home for 83% of the time.
  - e. If the home is not instructing children correctly the church labors in vain.
    - 1. Kids are being misled by school.
    - 2. The second generation of Christian homes is losing its faith often.
    - 3. A church with 40,000 constituents saw that if they had done nothing more than win and hold the kids born into their churches they would have 1 and ½ million today.
    - 4. 7 of 8 kids in Sunday school will fall away by the teenage years.
    - 5. When both parents are active in church the kids usually stay.
    - 6. This is why we need home centered educational programs.
3. God's truth must also be a thing of the habits.
- a. Habits are formed in the heart.
  - b. The word of God must be bound on our hands and hung in front of our eyes so that our actions and attitudes are regulated by the word. (Deuteronomy 6:8-9)
  - c. The word must regulate all our actions.
    - 1. Attitudes.

2. Personal attachments.
3. My home life in the bedroom and kitchen.
4. My business.
5. Anything that has public effects.

d. Compartmentalized Christianity is not genuine.

1. The word is to regulate every area of life.
2. When it does right habits will be formed.
3. Do you hate yourself for something in your life?
  - i. A student was always late.
  - ii. I went to his church for a meeting and he was late.
  - iii. Others are homesick when parents aren't here to care for them.
  - iv. Some people are enslaved by habits they have been nursing for years.
  - v. We need to cultivate good habits like responsibility.
  - vi. Our missionaries can't get along with each other because they have formed bad habits.
  - vii. The Russians boasted they could mold a child of 5-6 into anything they want; at 6-7 they need to bend him; at 15-16 we need to break him; after that only the grave can correct the hunchback.
  - viii. This is a biblical principle.
4. The Catholics say the child they get till 7 they will have for life.
5. There arose another generation after Joshua that knew not the Lord, nor the works he had done for Israel. (Judges 2:10)

II. If our children are not picking up genuine faith from us we need to examine ourselves.

- A. If not, perhaps the word of God is not in our hearts.
- B. Perhaps it is not in our homes.
- C. Perhaps it is not forming our habits.