



PASSING ON THE TORCH OF THE TESTIMONY

A Biblical Challenge to Parents
Facing Contemporary Educational Options



Booklet 3

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THE BIBLICAL CHALLENGE TO PARENTS FACING CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

Introduction

This session is about choice and its consequences and will test the depth of your convictions regarding Christian Education.

Joshua's challenge is for you to choose so that your house serves the LORD. Christian Education should result in young people serving the LORD. The Maker's manual, the bible, is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. This is a challenge based, not on our reason but on Divine Revelation. If the Bible is the maker's manual, the family should be the Maker's mirror. The Godhead reflects, Authority and Submission, Love and Discipline, Fatherhood and Son-ship and the family reflects these and other truths. Man made in the image and likeness of God mirrors aspects of the divine. God is a parent who made the choice to send His Son. Where will you send your children? The A.C.E. programme is designed to create servants.

Key Idea:- Choice

Scripture:- Joshua 24:15

TORCH Truth and Transmission

I like Church History and a book, which has been a challenge to me, published in India called, 'The Torch of the Testimony' outlines the story of faithful Christians who passed on the baton to subsequent generations at great cost. True Education is about transmission of Biblical Faith, Doctrine and values. Such people who carry the flame aloft are true servants. Character and value, skills and workmanship, knowledge and wisdom are all required in this process. True education is not primarily to serve the state, nor to assist global business or even to prosper a religious organisation but to serve God. Peter at Pentecost said 'The promise is to you and your children'. Moses at Sinai said you should teach the children diligently and Malachi 2:15 talks about God's marriage objective to produce 'a Godly seed'. True Education is a preparation to carry a Torch and to pass it on. A.C.E. students are light bearers as the bible is the heart of the programme.

Key Idea:- Pass it on

Scripture:- Psalm 78:4,5

TEST CASES

Tragedy and Transformation

The best test case is the LORD JESUS. God passed the Torch to HIM. He said 'As the Father has sent me so send I you.' In his humanity Jesus was subject to his parents, he learned the scriptures, he physically worked with Joseph. 'And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man'. Luke 2:52 Jesus Himself was a Torch that Satan tried to extinguish. His prayer in John 17 is a treatise on how to pass the Torch on. Positive examples of parental success in passing the torch are Adam to Abel, Hannah to Samuel, David to Solomon, Lois to Timothy, Mordecai to Esther and Uzziah to Jotham. See 1 Chronicles 29: 1, 28. Proverbs 4:1-3. which have application to David and Solomon. Poor examples are also recorded Eli and his sons, Samuel and his sons and Aaron and his sons. These were godly parents in leadership who had to come to terms with family disasters. Some had other children who compensated for their siblings failures. Parental lack of restraint of their children was often a contributing factor. The New Testament does not historically focus on family history in the same way as the Old Testament, the issues are the same, the TORCH must be transferred to the next generation. Christian Leadership is valid when the house is ruled properly. The criteria for deacons and elders to qualify include this issue. 1 Timothy 3:4, 5, 12. The local church is viewed as a collection of households. Remember the message to the jailer, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house'. The care of widows and children and mutual support of families was part of church life. In this era of religious confusion, the family is the keep or fortress in the wider walls of Church protection. The Scriptures tell fathers to bring their children up 'in the nurture and admonition of the LORD'. Ephesians 6: 4 One of the strategies of Satan is to maintain division between the generations and oppose proper authority and appropriate submission. There are less tragedies and more triumphs with A.C.E. students.

Key Idea:- Happy or heart-broken

Scripture:- 2 John 1:4

Training and Teaching are part of the responsibilities of a special stewardship. Teachers are Trustees of the Heritage. They will need to cultivate creativity in their charges. Their duties will be to inculcate knowledge and by training and discipline they will also have to develop the children's skills. When the bible says, "train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it" Prov.22:6 the focus is on the way he is designed to go and this draws attention to each child's individual bent. A.C.E. is not just work- books (PACES) and workstations (offices) it leaves room for bringing together the input of information and training and also leaves room through the inspiration of the teacher to inspire dreams and enable discovery and true devotion. The external part of training the next generation is to input and instil. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 says to 'teach them diligently.' Proverbs 22:6 says 'train up'. Mastery learning through PACEs and Scripture memory are key factors in this input. The procedures instil good work habits and the text inputs appropriate information. The A.C.E. contribution is only a part of the training process; the most significant is still the parental nurture and admonition. There must be scope in this process to respond to the curiosity, inquiry, and questions of the child. The A.C.E. system follows a necessary unfolding sequence of information where controlled progress motivated learning is administered awakening spontaneous sense of discovery. The A.C.E. day is only partly PACE work. The Jews left altars, stones and ceremonies where the children were expected to ask about the meaning. The parents must not abdicate their part because the curriculum and Christian school are supports, not replacements for their duty. The part of the training that has an internal effect is dependent on the Holy Spirit working in the parent and educator. This impartation and inspiration has much to do with the joy of the Lord and the positive spirit of the teacher to generate enthusiasm in the student.

Remember, enthusiasm literally means ‘God inside,’ entheos. This is heart-to-heart stuff. Answers to prayer, acknowledgement of difficulties, mutual confession, and evident faith will impart trust. Both faith and fear are infectious. A family facing the vicissitudes and problems of life in an open way through shared petitions and praise will do much toward passing on the torch. Prayer and discussion time at school can also be shared needy issues that face the life of the school. Fathers’ and mothers’ roles can actually be quite distinctive and unique, teaching lessons in loving leadership and gracious submission and in protection and provision and also modelling gender roles. The communication between fathers and sons and mothers and daughters will have relevance to torch bearing. Even siblings have a role here as the whole household is a training environment. Grandparents may also be allowed input. There is an interesting contrast between the patriarchal families of the biblical era and the present nuclear families. With God in the learning centre, and the integration of creativity and knowledge happening, the development of individual skills together with positive socialisation and personal relationships is also very successful. This happens when anointed and appointed teachers add their Holy Spirit influence. A.C.E. is not just a paper based curriculum but is a system that provides the motivation through the ethos, environment and in the enthusiasm of the staff. The Supervisors and monitors who know how to incorporate all these features are trained to obtain results and make all of this work. This is the benefit of the A.C.E. package of systems. The choice of A.C.E. is for parents to entrust the children ‘The Heritage of the LORD’, to those who will bring the children to Christ in the whole learning process. James 3:1 indicates the greater responsibility of masters, tutors guardians who will have greater judgment. My experience of A.C.E. over 25 years is a high level of dedication and sense of responsibility amongst the staff. Do not hand over your children in their formative years to those who do not know the LORD, nor expose your children to a curriculum that does not include the Divine revelation, the Word of God.

Key Idea:- Responsibility

Scripture:- Provs.22:6

There are some things that are very traditional in education. The concept of a peer group class, the idea of chalk and talk, rote learning of information are examples of traditional education. The evaluation of work by essay choices in written examination, are examples of this. Schools with classes of children of similar age and ability, rows of desks, chalk and talk, examinations with essay topics to choose from are being displaced in our modern world by computers and personalised learning. What past practices can be abandoned and what should be retained? Whilst areas of poverty may present little choice to some parents we would expect the church to be on the cutting edge of educational reform and be creating choice. Without a doubt technology has hugely impacted education. The printing press and availability of books, the advent of radio and television and videos in the 20th century profoundly influenced education. Now with computers and the possibility of electronic education another sea change is occurring. Even communication skills are adapted to mobile phone and e-mail technology. Do we need books and letters any more? The human side of education must retain face to face, spirit to spirit, teacher and learner. Motivation and inspiration must include person to person. The Lord Jesus had the most amazing people skills and His effectiveness was bound up in His love for people especially His disciples. The A.C.E. programme is a unique methodology and can be initially intimidating to those who resist change. What is missed is that it is a methodology that inculcates character through goal setting, self scoring, God-centred learning centres, and spiritual staff. In these Learning Centres there is a family atmosphere where there is progress controlled and mastery learning. Personal tutors are available when needed at the raising of a small flag by the student. The availability of one to one encounters with both monitors and supervisors enhances vertical socialisation.

Key Idea:- Understanding options

Scripture:- 1 Chronc.12:32

CONCLUSION

Tribulations and Triumph

Everything costs and there will be pressures on any Godly movement in education. ‘The Prince of the Power of the Air’ Eph. 2:2 has a record of interfering with this procession of light bearing. He will try to neutralise the impact of Christian Education. Satan’s strategy is to influence the world downwards through principalities and powers, nations and politics. God will use humble families, Bible churches, newly founded Christian schools to influence communities, states and countries upwards. Pharaoh, Herod and others at Satan’s instigation have sought to put Torch out by resorting to mass murder. The first earthly family was disrupted with the murder of Abel and there have been many martyrs since. In modern times secular education has been a tool to extinguish the light. We cannot be neutral. We see a polarization against true Biblical conviction. The final twist in Satan’s philosophical deception is to make man tolerate anything except God’s absolute truth. The Bible says they have changed the Truth of God into a lie. Romans 1:25. Jesus said, ‘In the world you shall have tribulation’ and He also says, ‘Don’t be afraid, I have overcome the world’. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 2:14 ‘He always causes us to ‘triumph’. Christian Education doesn’t cost, it pays. It gives us the chance to invest in Christian leadership at an early age. A.C.E. graduates are serving in mission all around the world. We know that the Lord needs ‘workmen’ that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.” Timothy 2:15.

The A.C.E. Curriculum and methodology is a powerful tool to fulfil the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. The Lord bless you in these considerations and may you take this biblical challenge to choose the right option.

Key Idea:- Overcoming

Scripture:- 2 Cor.2:14

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