
Why Christian Children Need Christian Education

By James Boyes and MS Copilot

2/18/2026

Christian education begins with a simple but profound truth: children are not spiritually neutral, and education is never spiritually neutral. Every system of instruction, whether ancient, medieval, modern, secular, or religious, operates from a worldview that defines what is true, what is good, what is beautiful, and what a human being is for. Scripture assumes this reality. Moses commanded parents to teach their children diligently because the surrounding cultures would gladly do the teaching if Israel did not. The Psalms describe the blessed person as one who meditates on God's law day and night, not as a weekly supplement but as the atmosphere of life. Jesus taught that a disciple, when fully trained, becomes like his teacher. Paul instructed parents to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, not merely in general morality or civic virtue. The biblical pattern is unmistakable: the shaping of a child's mind and heart belongs to those who love the Lord and are committed to His Word.

This responsibility is not fulfilled by occasional religious instruction layered on top of a secular foundation. A child's worldview is formed by the total environment in which he or she learns, by the assumptions embedded in textbooks, the moral framework of teachers, the cultural norms of peers, and the philosophical commitments of the institution. When the dominant worldview in a school system is secular or ideological, the child is still being catechized, but into a worldview that is not Christian. Modern public education, having abandoned the idea of objective truth rooted in a transcendent moral order, has increasingly replaced academics with political advocacy and identity-based ideology. This shift is not accidental. When a system removes God as the center of knowledge, it must replace Him with something else. The result is a curriculum that often stands in direct contrast to the Christian understanding of creation, morality, human dignity, and purpose.

This call for Christian education is not a reaction to modernity but a restoration of the unity of truth. If Christ is the Creator of all things, then every subject (mathematics, science, history, literature, art) finds its coherence in Him. A Christian curriculum does not turn every lesson into a sermon; instead, it teaches each subject in the light of the One who gives it meaning. Mathematics reflects the rational order of creation. Science explores the intricacy and intelligibility of the world God made. History traces the unfolding of human responsibility, sin, and providence. Literature examines the human

condition in light of the image of God. Christian education is not about adding religion to academics; it is about grounding academics in the truth that all knowledge flows from Christ.

Historically, the church has always understood this. Early Christians built schools because they believed the formation of the mind was part of the formation of the soul. The monastic tradition preserved learning because it saw no separation between intellectual and spiritual development. The Reformers insisted that every child should learn to read so they could know Scripture and understand the world through it. Even the rise of modern Western education was driven largely by Christian thinkers who believed that truth was objective, discoverable, and grounded in God's character. The modern shift toward secularism is not a return to neutrality; it is a departure from the very foundations that once made education coherent.

The Christian Education Awareness Network (CEANet) website informs us that Christian parents cannot abdicate their responsibility to systems that no longer share their convictions about truth, morality, or the nature of the human person. This is not an act of hostility toward the state or toward secular individuals. It is an act of stewardship. Parents are entrusted with the eternal souls of their children. Their responsibility is not merely to prepare them for college or career but to prepare them for life before God. A Christ-centered education recognizes that eternity is more than we can comprehend, and that the formation of a child's heart and mind must reflect that reality. One hour a week in Sunday school cannot counteract thirty hours of secular formation, plus media, plus peer culture. The math alone reveals the inadequacy of a supplemental approach.

The purpose of CEANet is to support Christian parents in fulfilling this biblical mandate. It is to provide resources, clarity, and encouragement for those who desire to give their children an education grounded in Scripture, shaped by truth, and oriented toward Christ. It is to restore coherence to learning by placing Christ at the center rather than at the margins. It is to equip families to resist the drift of culture not through fear or withdrawal but through conviction, wisdom, and faithful stewardship.

Christian education is not about isolating children from the world; it is about equipping them to understand the world truthfully. It is not about rejecting knowledge; it is about grounding knowledge in the One who is Truth. It is not about creating a parallel culture; it is about forming disciples whose minds and hearts are aligned with the God who made them and redeemed them. CEANet stands on the conviction that the education of children is not peripheral to the Christian life; it is central. It is an act of obedience, an act of love, and an investment in eternity.

Scriptural References:

1. **Deuteronomy 6:4–9** — The foundational text for Christian education, commanding parents to diligently teach God's words to their children in daily life.
2. **Deuteronomy 11:18–21** — Reinforces the same parental mandate, emphasizing continual, immersive instruction.

3. **Psalm 1:1–3** — Describes the blessed person as one who meditates on God’s law day and night, showing education as a lifelong formation.
4. **Psalm 78:1–8** — Commands one generation to teach the next so they will set their hope in God and not forget His works.
5. **Proverbs 1:7** — “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,” grounding all learning in reverence for God.
6. **Proverbs 2:1–6** — Wisdom and understanding come from the Lord, not from autonomous human reasoning.
7. **Proverbs 22:6** — The formative power of early training in shaping lifelong direction.
8. **Isaiah 54:13** — “All your children shall be taught by the Lord,” linking education with God’s peace and blessing.
9. **Jeremiah 10:2** — A warning not to learn the ways of the nations, underscoring worldview separation.
10. **Matthew 28:18–20** — The Great Commission as a teaching mandate: discipleship includes instruction in all that Christ commanded.
11. **Luke 6:40** — “Everyone, when fully trained, will be like his teacher,” showing the inevitability of worldview formation.
12. **John 17:14–17** — Jesus’ prayer that His followers be sanctified in truth, not shaped by the world’s system.
13. **Romans 12:1–2** — The call to resist conformity to the world and be transformed by the renewing of the mind.
14. **1 Corinthians 2:12–16** — The contrast between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom taught by the Spirit.
15. **2 Corinthians 10:3–5** — Taking every thought captive to Christ, implying intellectual discipleship.
16. **Ephesians 6:1–4** — Parents are commanded to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
17. **Colossians 1:15–20** — Christ as the center of all creation, giving coherence to every academic discipline.
18. **Colossians 2:6–8** — A warning against being taken captive by hollow and deceptive philosophies.
19. **Colossians 3:16–17** — The Word of Christ dwelling richly in teaching and learning.
20. **2 Timothy 3:14–17** — Scripture as the foundation for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.
21. **3 John 4** — “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth,” capturing the heart of Christian education.

Historical References:

This list reflects the broad historical foundation behind CEANet’s vision: that education is inherently theological, that truth is unified under God, and that parents and the church bear responsibility for forming the minds and hearts of children. These works—spanning the early church, the Reformation, and modern Christian scholarship—demonstrate that

Christian education is not a modern reaction but a deep, continuous tradition rooted in Scripture and carried forward by some of the most influential voices in Christian history.

1. **Augustine – “On Christian Doctrine”**
A foundational work arguing that all truth is God’s truth and that education must be ordered toward loving God rightly. <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1202.htm>
2. **Augustine – “Confessions” (Book I)**
Reflects on childhood, learning, and the moral formation of the young. <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/110101.htm>
3. **John Calvin – “Institutes of the Christian Religion” (Book II & III)**
Emphasizes the necessity of Scripture for understanding the world and the responsibility of parents to instruct their children. <https://ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes/institutes>
4. **Martin Luther – “To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany” (1524)**
A passionate call for Christian schools, arguing that education is essential for faith, virtue, and the health of society. <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1524luther-education.asp>
5. **John Amos Comenius – “The Great Didactic”**
Often called the father of modern education; he insisted that all learning must be grounded in the knowledge of God. <https://archive.org/details/greatdidactic00comeuoft>
6. **Abraham Kuyper – “Lectures on Calvinism” (particularly Lecture II: Calvinism and Science)**
Argues that every academic discipline rests on presuppositions and that Christian education must be rooted in a Christian worldview. <https://ccel.org/ccel/kuyper/calvinism/calvinism>
7. **Cornelius Van Til – “Christian Education”**
A philosophical defense of Christian schooling based on the antithesis between Christian and non-Christian worldviews. https://ccel.org/ccel/van_til/christian_education/christian_education
8. **Francis Schaeffer – “How Should We Then Live?”**
Traces the consequences of abandoning a biblical worldview in culture, education, and public life. <https://archive.org/details/howshouldwethen100scha>
9. **C.S. Lewis – “The Abolition of Man”**
A profound critique of secular education and its moral relativism; argues for objective truth and virtue. <https://archive.org/details/abolitionofman00lewi>
10. **J. Gresham Machen – “Education, Christianity, and the State”**
A defense of parental authority in education and a critique of state-controlled schooling. <https://archive.org/details/educationchristi00mach>
11. **R.J. Rushdoony – “The Messianic Character of American Education”**
A historical analysis of how American public education shifted from Christian foundations to secular ideology. <https://archive.org/details/messianiccharact0000rush>
12. **Douglas Wilson – “Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning”**
A modern articulation of classical Christian education rooted in Scripture and historic Christian pedagogy. <https://www.amazon.com/Recovering-Lost-Tools-Learning-Distinctively/dp/0891075836>

13. **Gene Edward Veith – “Loving God with All Your Mind”**
Explores how Christian worldview shapes intellectual life and academic disciplines. <https://www.crossway.org/books/loving-god-with-all-your-mind-tpb/>
14. **David Dockery – “Renewing Minds: Serving Church and Society Through Christian Higher Education”**
A contemporary defense of Christ-centered learning across all fields. <https://www.bhpublishinggroup.com/products/renewing-minds/>
15. **George Marsden – “The Soul of the American University”**
A historical account of how universities moved from Christian foundations to secularism. <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-soul-of-the-american-university-9780195143556>

Back to [CEANet Home Page](#)