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WHAT KIDS  
**NEED TO  
KNOW**

MINI BOOK

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Have you ever noticed that education is always one of the major themes during elections? Of course there has been a considerable debate going on across the nation about the poor condition of schools and the best way to motivate good teachers and weed out the less accomplished ones. There is also a lot of discussion as to what students should be learning.

Add to this the fact that we live in the "Post-Modern" era where "truth" is relative and all knowledge is considered valuable no matter how trite or illogical it may be. We have a generation of kids that need to be educated but no agreement on what they should learn. This is why different groups responsible for education have different formulas for what the proper educational package should be for students in this time of technological, environmental and social challenges.

As parents we often feel left on the sidelines as the so-called "experts" decide the educational future of our children. If the future is anything like our recent past, the next generation may be in a lot of trouble.

It's easy to sit on the side lines and criticize, which I don't mean to do, so let

me suggest some things that kids need to know in order to cope in the complex world they are preparing to enter and manage.

Now I'm not an expert in public education but,

- I have been a student at the graduate level.
- I have taught in the public school system.
- I have succeeded in both a secular and ministry career.
- I have, along with my wife, raised a family and managed a home for over thirty-five years.

I say these things not to boast but to established the fact that what many

children and young people are preparing themselves to do, I have already successfully accomplished. So from the position of experience, and with the advantage of hindsight (which is 20/20) I want to tell children, young people and the parents who are raising them the three things that kids need to know in order to achieve the future success that they are striving for:

## **1.**

### **Kids Need to Know "How to Know"**

There was a time, a hundred years ago, when a well-educated person could learn pretty much all he/she needed to know with a well-rounded education. There was a generally definable limit to the information available in any given area,

and a bright person could, with training, master it.

In the last fifty years however, the rate of new information available on any given subject has increased faster than it has in the previous 1900 years. In other words, the pace of increased information is such today that what you learn in college may become obsolete by the time your diploma is a year old. For example, in the 70s and 80s people who studied to be graphic artists and draftsmen had much of their training and skills replaced by computer programs that produced their work 100 times faster than the conventional hand drawn method (all in the space of one decade). For this reason kids need to learn how to find the knowledge they need from the vast pool of information that is ever increasing. And once they learn how to find

what they're looking for, they need to be trained in how to select the information that is most useful, most applicable and most true in the context of their search.

It has been said that "knowledge is power," this was true in a world where knowledge was compact and access to it was limited because of ignorance and poor communication tools. In the future however, the one who knows how to find specific knowledge in the universe of information around us, this person will have power.



## **2. Kids Need to Know the True God**

With the proliferation and multiplication of information comes the dizzying array of philosophies, religions, cults and beliefs - both old and new.

- It took 400 years for primitive Apostolic Christianity to apostate into Roman Catholicism.
- It took 600 more years for Catholicism to split into two branches: East and West.
- It took another 600 years for the Protestant Reformation to take shape, and still another two centuries for Protestantism to give way to the Denominationalism that existed by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In the last hundred years, however, we have added thousands of religious groups, all claiming to speak, to know, to act on behalf of God or their personal image of God. Subcategories of subcategories of subcategories, and this is only within Christianity! The same is happening in the other so-called world religions of Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and others.

The religious world is so fractured that a kid's search for God is more daunting than ever before, that's if he even tries to find Him at all! This is the problem with the multiplicity of religion, it tends to discourage those who seek God, turning them into agnostics.

Those of us, however, who practice biblical Christianity understand that God, the true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God who sent Jesus His Son, the God

who reveals Himself through His word, the Bible; those of us who know this God know this about Him:

- He has created man in such a way that man yearns to find the truth about what is beyond himself. Solomon says it this way,

He has set eternity in their heart.

- Ecclesiastes 3:11

Even with the confusing array of options, kids today, like kids before, will yearn to know the true God and search to find Him. And this is so because without a sense of God, without a knowledge of the true God, kids armed with all the powerful technology and information the 21<sup>st</sup> century affords will grow up to arrive at the same dead end that the "wisest man"

of Israel's Golden Era came to at the end of his life almost 3000 years ago:

Solomon, genius of the times, innovator, builder, writer, thinker, ruler; wrote of his one of a kind experience;

Vanity of vanities, says the preacher. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity

- Ecclesiastes 1:2

and...

The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: Fear God and keeps His commandments, because this applies to very person.

- Ecclesiastes 12:13

Advances in technology and information never outstrip a person's need to know the true God because these things only affect our physical lives. Kids need to know the true God because no matter how much they learn about the world around them and themselves, the proper context for all of it doesn't come into view until it is seen in the presence of the living and holy God. That there is an ever increasing mountain of information is new, but that there is no end to knowledge and learning, this is not new, God revealed this to Solomon 3000 years ago.

But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body.  
- Ecclesiastes 12:12

Kids will need to know God in order to make sense of this world, and understand his/her place in it; and this is our great challenge as parents and as a church: to teach our children to know the true and living God.

### **3.**

## **Kids Need to Know Love**

By the time modern kids grow up to be adults:

- The genetic code of human beings could be mapped out and a completely new way of treating and preventing disease could become routine.
- Plants, animals and even humans will be routinely modified through genetic engineering.

- Machines will look, sound and act more and more like human beings.

And because of this, old style nationalism based on language and culture will begin to fade as the new dividing lines will be drawn between what is considered to be human and bio-human. In other words, the future clashes will be over the definition of what being "human" is and not what color you are or language you speak. This sounds like science fiction to us, but it will be what modern kids today will have to deal with when they will be our age in the tomorrows to come.

In a world we cannot even contemplate now, what language and common currency will transcend the innovations of the society of the future?

## **IN A WORD: LOVE.**

Let me give you an example of how love transcends time and culture. If I could return to the year 30 AD and enter into the Jewish society of Jesus' day and sit with the mightiest thinkers of that period. If I could do this and describe to them the world of the 21st century, they couldn't imagine it. I think I could not even find words in their language to try to convey concepts like: electricity, television, rocket, plastic, virtual. They would think that I was a lunatic.

However, if I explained to these very same people how I felt about my eldest son the time he foolishly disobeyed me and got into trouble with the law, and I had to go get him out of jail at 2 AM in the morning. If I told them how he came to me with his head bowed and whispered, "I'm sorry



dad," and how I held him in my arms, and pressed him close to me in a father's forgiveness.

If I told them that story, a father with a prodigal son, then the thousands of years and all the barriers between us would vanish because no matter what ... the language of love and forgiveness is timeless.

Kids need to know what love is:

- They need to see it and experience it.
- They need to be taught how to express it.
- They must be encouraged to set love as the high watermark for their relations with others and themselves regardless of the type of world they live in.

Parents often worry because they can't keep up with what modern kids do, or listen to, or know. And with the avalanche of new and newer ideas and technologies ever upon us, it's getting almost impossible for parents to keep up.

What kids need, however, is not parents who know about everything they know; what kids need is the security of their parents' love so they can cope with the crazy world they live in.

You may not be able to match your kid's prowess in using a computer, but if you teach him/her how to love, you'll have equipped them for life here, or on any planet they choose to live on in the future.

## **WHAT MODERN PARENTS NEED TO DO**

Let's face it, if anyone is reading this mini book about what kids need to know, it's the parents of those kids; so here are a few things that parents need to do in order to help their own kids know what they need to know:

### **#1 You are training your kids to know how to know by encouraging their education and experimentation.**

By providing computers, opportunities for sports, activity clubs, social involvements etc., modern parents are helping kids explore the world of abundant options. My only advice in this area would be to allow them to try, allow them to fail, allow them to think (don't give them all the answers). Kids need to learn how to search, and a wise parent will exercise patience during this slow and painful process.

You are helping if:

## **#2 You are leading your kids to know the Eternal God.**

Your congregation should never apologize for the time and money spent in your children's education program and the resources you supply this group.

From the time they are babies to adulthood they should be taught, molded and directed to know the only true and eternal Lord God and His Son Jesus Christ. The rest of the world may doubt or be confused, but Christians have fulfilled prophecy, an empty grave, the eyewitness of the Apostles and an unassailable record in the Bible about who the true God is. You should never be ashamed of the gospel because through it you bring postmodern

kids into the presence of the eternal God through faith in Jesus Christ.

No matter what kind of world the kids of today will live in tomorrow, they will bring into that world the knowledge of God and the good news of Jesus Christ with them because of you!

### **#3 You are teaching your kids how to love.**

- How to love God through obedience and worship.
- How to love each other through fellowship, service and evangelism.
- How to love themselves from the positive reinforcement and environment you provide.

Regardless of the shape of the future, there will always be sinfulness in the world. Greed, pride and lust will always mar any utopian society man tries to create with his own ingenuity.

Your kids, however, are inoculated against the destruction caused by sin in this and every generation because you have set the love of Christ in their hearts that will become, in their time, what it has been in your time and every time throughout history. His love will always be the light of this dark world.

And so, you send them forth as the light of the future leading the way for all those who will seek the true and living God. If we teach kids these things, we will have done well and can have hope for their lives and their souls in the years to come.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What other important things do you think modern kids need to know? Why?
2. Describe a piece of advice you received as a young person that has served you well as an adult.
3. Do you know who your child's role model is?
  - Why this person?
  - Who would you rather see as your child's role model (aside from Jesus) and why?
4. What are some ways that parents can counteract the secular and sometimes anti-biblical nature of public education?
5. In your opinion, what are some effective rules that can be put in place to guide your child's use of "Social Media"?

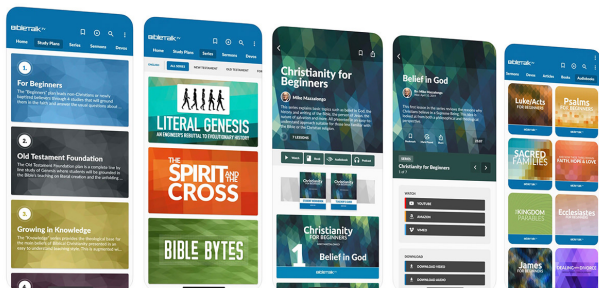
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