

In Pursuit of the Priceless

Although the second half of this school year has only begun, in the coming days and weeks you will be tasked with considering Christian school reenrollment for the 2009/2010 school year. Economic times that have put incredible stress on countless families make this decision even more challenging.

There is not and will not be a magical solution to the varying array of financial issues facing many families. New challenges will exert pressure on your priorities and values. As you consider the critical matter of Christian schooling in your family, I offer some points for your consideration:

Truth in an upside-down world. I could not begin to rehearse every aspect of what God considers important for us, but the interesting thing is that what He considers important is often contrary to what the world considers important. Christian schools take great effort to integrate biblical concepts and principles into every facet of learning—concepts and principles that guide spiritual life, including relationship with God, as well as relationships with others in everyday life.

Extended support for your Christian values. Christian schooling supports the values of your Christian home through the assurance that your children's teachers, in addition to being professionally qualified, are men and women who love God and follow Jesus Christ. These educators seek to model and extend Christlikeness in their teaching roles. We have received the scriptural directive to "train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:6, NIV). Christian schooling greatly strengthens you in your crucial parenting responsibilities, which include this scriptural directive.

Competition for the hearts and minds of your children. There is tough competition for the heart and mind of every individual. Our children in their developmental ages are particularly vulnerable to that which is attractive but can be exceedingly destructive. Our culture and the world put extraordinary emphasis on satisfying and pleasing self. Jesus' call is one of putting God and others before self—a decision and a position that are not the natural bent of humanity. This daily school regimen of emphasizing putting God and others first—reinforced by men and women who embrace

it, all in an environment that centers on God's Word—can be a tremendous defense against the competitive voice of the world that comes especially from the popular entertainment media and the prevailing culture.

Investing in the priceless. Very few if any would subscribe to the notion that things of high value and worth are achieved easily and inexpensively. They often require extreme measures of saving, sacrificing, reprioritizing, and any number of other matters of discipline that simply are not easy. Training up children in the way they should go is one of the most challenging mandates of parenting. Christian schooling is about teaching and nurturing students so that they will pursue that *right way*. This pursuit truly is an investment in things that matter for eternity—literally, the priceless things.

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Your Christian school has carefully and thoughtfully developed strategies to take students to appropriate academic achievement levels and to help them mature to loving God with all their hearts, souls, and minds (Matthew 22:37); to growing in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52); to living in the world as salt and light (Matthew 5:13–14); and to giving sacrificially of themselves and their resources (Romans 12:1). These spiritually mature students will reflect the essence and love of the Christ who lives and dwells within them. I urge you to continue pursuing the highest for your children.



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