

From the Editor – September 1993

Traditionally school begins this month. Many of us started homeschool in August, while others school year round. We know that children are learning all the time, even when we aren't formally doing school or counting the school days.

I've been thinking about how we teach our children and how children learn. Learning or obtaining knowledge does not consist of soaking up a lecture, which is someone else's ideas, but in learning how to educate your self, learning about what you are interested in. And we help this process by giving our children the resources to learn i.e. phonics, reading, spelling, etc.

I've been seriously considering and studying what learning, or education, or in our case homeschool really is. You'll be reading the results of my studies over the next few months. I encourage you to think and study about these subjects also for I don't have all the answers. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I'm learning and I'll share what I find with you. One of the best guides to what education is and how we should teach our children, is the book Education, by Ellen G. White. If you haven't prayerfully read it lately, please do so, it will change your thinking about homeschool and what true education or learning really is.

“The great principles of education are unchanged. ‘They stand fast for ever and ever’ (Psalm 111:8); for they are the principles of the character of God. To aid the student in comprehending these principles, and in entering into that relation with Christ which will make them a controlling power in the life, should be the teacher’s first effort and his constant aim. The teacher who accepts this aim is in truth a co-worker with Christ, a laborer together with God.” ED 30

We are told by God, through his messenger, that our “first effort and constant aim” should be to aid our children into a relationship with Christ and to make Him the controlling power in their lives. To do this, He must also be the center of our lives.

“True education is not the forcing of instruction on an unready and unreceptive mind. The mental powers must be awakened, the interest aroused. For this, God’s method of teaching provided. He who created the mind and ordained its laws, provided for its development in accordance with them. In the home and the sanctuary, through the things of nature and of art, in labor and in festivity, in sacred building and memorial stone, by methods and rites and symbols unnumbered, God gave to Israel lessons illustrating His principles and preserving the memory of His wonderful works. Then, as inquiry was made, the instruction given impressed the mind and heart.” ED 41

In order to help our children develop a relationship with Christ, to learn of Him through nature, before (and along with) learning the other things needed, we as parents need to have daily (sometimes hourly is necessary) communication with Christ. Also, it is important that we are studying (Bible study) and learning (a personal interest) and

motivated. Keeping a journal (mine is a spiritual discoveries/prayer journal) and reading sets an example for our children.

Useful work, stud of the scriptures and nature, serving others and experiences of life—these three things, incorporated in the Moore Formula and in AHE as I like to refer to studying for eternity and preparing for “the school hereafter” is what learning consists of. (See ED 77).

Each year I’ve found myself simplifying our curriculum. Right now to concentrate for a while on spiritual discoveries, it has been cut down even more to Bible, finding God through nature and science study, writing letters and in our spiritual discovery journals and for unit studies. Learning history through biographies and Christian history books including *The Great Controversy*, strengthening relationships within our family, work at home and service for others.

I’m learning that it is impossible to seek education apart from God or without a daily relationship with Jesus. (See ED 83).

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