

“Let My Children Go!” It is becoming increasingly clear to a growing number of national Christian leaders that there is an educational and spiritual crisis of huge proportions in public education. But what can be done about it? Can the Christian community leave public education behind as the children of Israel left the dominion of Egypt long ago?

The typical Christian family in America’s heartland has been suffering for years because churches have been committed to the proposition that the public school system, i.e., the government school system, is an acceptable method for the education and nurture of Christian children. This proposition is no longer acceptable and, in fact, has never been acceptable. In recent decades, the failure of government education has become more and more apparent. Now the larger Christian community seems willing to take a second and harder look at the various Christian education options.

The *Exodus Mandate Project* is committed to the proposition that Bible-based Christian education is the only acceptable method for the Christian community to educate Christian children. *Exodus Mandate* is also dedicated to the belief that the time has come for a coordinated commitment by national Christian leadership, pastors, and the larger Christian community to support an effort to withdraw Christian children from the government school system. Christian children should be placed in existing Christian schools and Christian home schools. Current resources could be used to launch new Christian schools where they do not now exist. *Exodus Mandate* proposes **four defenses** for biblical education explained below.

1. God’s providential timing

In discussions about the Exodus Mandate proposition to remove Christian children from the public school system, some Christian leaders say that Christian people are not willing to take such a drastic step and that pastors and Christian leaders will not support such an effort. As historical justification for the withdrawing of our children from government schools, the original Exodus itself is a prime example. The children of Israel spent 400 years in Egypt exiled from the Promised Land. It was always to have been a temporary

arrangement. While allowed in God’s providence, it was not God’s long-term blueprint for them. In the same way, while many Christian families have used government schools, which have not always been as bad as they are at present, this should have been a temporary arrangement and not a substitute for God’s best for the nurture of His children today.

Now is the time to seriously consider withdrawing from the public schools. The evidence is abundant that Christian children cannot continue to thrive within the government school system as they have done in years past. Just as the conditions in Egypt drastically changed and turned against the people of God when a Pharaoh arose “*who did not know Joseph*” (Exodus 1:8), so the current government school system has radically turned against Christian children, their beliefs and even against Christian teachers. This has been true for several decades, but now with the adoption of the Common Core Curriculum Standards (CCCS), indoctrination and coercion have accelerated. (For information about the Common Core, contact *Frontline Ministries, Inc.*)

The children of Israel initially balked at leaving Egypt for the Promised Land, even though they had been abused, enslaved, and their children killed or “Egyptized” by the government dominion of the time. When the Lord God, having heard their prayers, was ready to deliver them at last, Moses did not want to lead them, Pharaoh did not want them to leave, and they did not want to go. But they did leave, finally, for the Promised Land. This was God’s decreed will. Their sojourn in Egypt was meant to be only temporary.

2. Warnings from the past

Christians have not been without warnings about the result of churches supporting and utilizing government-sponsored education. The two principal founders of government education in America were hostile to biblical Christianity. Horace Mann, the father of public education and a member of the Unitarian faith, exhibited an open hostility to orthodox Christianity. John Dewey, the father of progressive education, and of Columbia University Teachers College, was also a committed humanist and coauthor of *Humanist Manifesto I*. Dewey was mentor to thousands of educators and professors

who later staffed the various teacher colleges in America, beginning in the early 1900s.

Does not the warning of Martin Luther now ring powerfully in our ears when he said,

“I am afraid that the schools will prove the very gates of hell, unless they diligently labor in explaining the Holy Scriptures and engraving them in the heart of the youth.”

Also, Dr. Archibald Hodge, one of America’s eminent theologians, wrote some 130 years ago:

“I am sure as I am of the fact of Christ’s reign that a comprehensive and centralized system of national education, separated from religion, as is now commonly proposed, will prove the most appalling engine for the propagation of anti-Christian and atheistic unbelief, and anti-social nihilistic ethics, individual, social and political, which the sin-rent world has ever seen.”

3. All Education is Religious

It is unwise to divorce the lordship of Christ and the superintendency of the Holy Scriptures from any area of knowledge and learning, but especially in the education of our youth. The government school system, however, is the most quarantined and protected place from Christian belief in the entire nation. Christians have supported this system with their children, their taxes, and their endorsements for generations.

America has built a whole school system upon the premise that there can be neutrality in education, i.e., that education can occur apart from religious underpinnings.

Timothy Dwight, President of Yale University from 1795 to 1817, said about the importance of a thoroughly Christian education:

“Education ought everywhere to be religious education . . . parents are bound to employ no instructors who will not instruct their children religiously. To commit our children to the care of irreligious people is to commit lambs to the superintendency of wolves.”

All education has a religious character as it is inescapably based upon views, articulated or not, related to the nature of God, man and the world. Neutrality in education is impossible.

4. Education belongs to the family, supported by the church, and not to the state.

Christians begin with the principle that children belong to the Lord and are a stewardship to the parents, not the state. Psalm 127:1 says, “Behold, children are a gift of the Lord.” There are numerous texts to support this principle, such as Deuteronomy 6:1-9, Proverbs 22:6 and Ephesians 6:1-4. Nowhere in Scripture does a reference exist in which God delegates to the state the authority to educate children. It was the universal custom in ancient Israel and in the church for two millennia that families be responsible for the education of youth with assistance from the synagogue or the church.

This was also the exclusive pattern in early American history when all education had a strong Christian foundation. This foundation steadily eroded as the humanism of Mann-Dewey permeated education practice. Government education, as it is known today, is an evolving education experiment, and a failing one at that.

Conclusion:

It is time for a new Exodus and a new cry from the people of God to “*Let my children go!*” The church must accept the reality that government education does not have a biblical foundation. Today’s “Pharaoh” is determined to make humanists out of godly “Israelite children.”

The churches, however, still have enough children, teachers and the facilities to organize a genuine, Bible-based school system *and* a support system for home schooling parents. The financial resources exist as well. The great need seems to be for a vision of biblically grounded education which will be acted on in faith.

An “education reformation” could ignite a revival in the land, a biblical reformation, so that once again America could become that “shining city set on a hill” that helped birth liberty and the Christian faith throughout this continent and the world.

It can be done. It is not too late. The Lord will be with the Church in the endeavor today as He was with the children of Israel and their Exodus. He has commanded us to bring up our children “*in the training and admonition of the Lord*” (Ephesians 6:4). All that remains is for today’s Christian parents and leaders to stand up like Moses and say, “*Let My Children Go!*”

--E. Ray Moore, Th.M.

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”
Proverbs 9:10*

Exodus Mandate is a Christian project of Frontline Ministries, Inc. The mission of Exodus Mandate Project is to encourage and assist Christian families to leave “Pharaoh’s” school system (i.e. government schools) for the “Promised Land” of Christian schools or home schooling.

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The EXODUS MANDATE

“Let My Children Go”

**An Answer to the
Crisis in Education that
Faces the Christian
Church in America Today**

