

The most significant cause retarding the growth of Christian education and homeschooling is the lack of strong pastoral leadership in our churches. Many of our pastors, not wanting to address the need for Christian education, are taking cover due to public school employees and families in their churches. So instead of stepping up and being leaders by calling on their flocks and the leadership of the church to start a Christian school or encourage homeschooling, pastors ignore the issue and act like nothing is wrong with public education and that the Scriptures do not speak to the biblical issue of education (Mt. 19:14, Mt. 28:18-20, Dt. 6:1-9, Eph. 6:4). The public school system isn't academically, morally, physically, or spiritually safe for Christian children, because they indoctrinate our children and turn them away from their faith and a Christian worldview.

On Feb. 14, 2018, during the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida, the deputy in charge of security reportedly took cover outside of the school instead of going in and trying to stop the killer. Just like this deputy in Florida, some pastors are taking cover instead of protecting the children to whom they are obligated.

Scripture is very clear that a pastor is to lay his life down for his flock. John 10:12-13 says, "A hireling will flee when the wolf comes," that is, he won't protect his sheep. Some conservative pastors qualify more as hirelings more than shepherds. We've got to have pastoral leadership if we're going to protect our children, and it's a sad commentary on the church today that many of our pastors are not speaking up in the face of this historic crisis.

In 2017, the Barna Research Group published a report in conjunction with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), revealing that **only 9%** of conservative pastors strongly and aggressively support Christian schooling. Another 21% are moderately supportive, which we understand that to mean that they support Christian schools and speak in favor of them, probably have their own children there, but they don't encourage their members to do the same. Another 28% of the pastors never address Christian education and homeschooling. One ACSI official views that as "opposition" to Christian schooling. About a third of them don't speak out because of a lack of moral courage. (www.ACSI.org)

We urge pastors and *exhort* them that they have an obligation in Scripture (Acts 20:28-32) and before God to care for their flock. We don't want them to take cover like the deputy in Florida, at a critical moment in the history of the church and nation. The children need to be in the *safe sanctuary* of Christian schooling or homeschooling.

Dan Smithwick, director & founder of the Nehemiah Institute, reports that 80-85% of church youth attend public schools and that 80% embrace a strong secular view of life. (www.nehemiahinstitute.com). In 2002, the Southern Baptist Family Life Council revealed that 88% of the children raised in evangelical homes leave church and their faith at the age of 18, most never to return. Dean Gotcher, a Christian expert in education and psychology states, "Children are being indoctrinated with secular [humanistic and socialist] values in the public schools."

In some cases, pastors don't realize how disastrous public schools are on children today. Some spend so much time serving their churches that they don't see the danger. Innocent children are being exposed every day to the indoctrination of the federal government educational system, i.e., LGBTQ, Planned Parenthood, anti-Christian bias, revisionist history, Common Core Standards, social emotional learning, data collection, evolution, pornographic sex education, pro-Islamic teaching, etc. The fact remains that all education is religious. No neutrality exists in education and the public schools have been officially godless and humanistic in both design and practice for a long, long time.

Fifteen years ago, the former president of the SC Baptist Convention, a pastor with a congregation of 5,000, spoke to me privately, "Ray, from time to time I have members of my church complain to me about some of the things that are going on in the public schools." He named a few things such as unbiblical sex education. Then he asked, "Is any of that really going on?" It shocked me so much at how little he knew that I had to catch myself not to show incredulity. Then I confirmed, "Yes, it really is happening."

Now conversely 12 years ago, I had another pastor, who attended the Florida Baptist Convention and received materials from Exodus Mandate. He was quite surprised and made copies, then called in 6-8 public school teachers in his church for a meeting. He asked them if this was really happening in their local public schools and to be honest with him. A couple of them got upset, but they settled down and admitted, "Yes, it's really

happening.” The pastor said, “If that’s true what you’re telling me and what Exodus Mandate is saying, then we have a moral obligation to offer K12 Christian education to the children of our church and to the county.” He asked them not to oppose him but to help him in starting a Christian school. Five of the teachers resigned from the public school system and staffed the new Christian school. Today there is a large Christian school in that county, because the pastor had the courage to confront the problem and offer a solution. **But it requires moral courage.**

C.S. Lewis said, “Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the focus of every virtue at its testing point.” We have a lack of moral courage in our churches. Pastors don’t say, “I’m a coward.” They do argue that they are afraid to speak out because they have a lot of public school teachers, administrators and families in their churches. “I have to manage; I have to maintain my job.” That’s being more concerned about protecting a job. That’s not the way of the true shepherd in the Scriptures. He lays his life down for the flock. When the wolf comes, the hireling flees, but the true shepherd will protect the sheep.

This deputy in Florida took cover.

It is time for pastors to exercise moral courage and be the men of God that He intended them to be by aggressively promoting K-12 Christian education to their flocks. It’s time for Christian families in the congregation to urge pastors to fulfill this role and do their duty.



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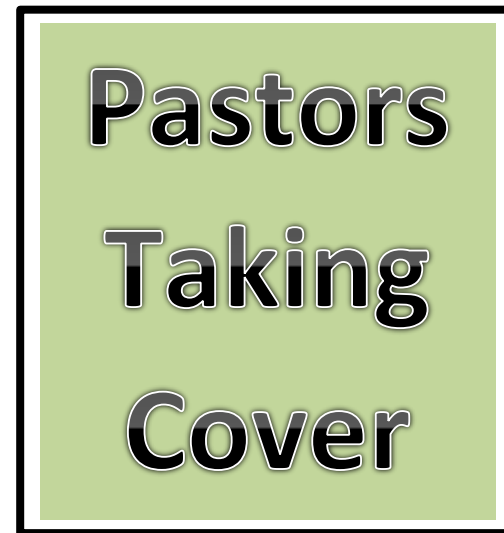


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**Strong Pastoral Leadership Is
Needed in Our Churches**



by Chaplain E. Ray Moore, Th.M.