

HOW SHOULD WE EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN?

GOSPEL-CENTERED QUESTIONS WHEN CONSIDERING YOUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

One of the biggest and most daunting decisions a parent will face when raising their child is how they will educate them. With a growing number of sound options and many overzealous opinions on the superior choice, the decision can send any sane parent into a tailspin. But thankfully, the Bible doesn't tell us which option is "better" for the Christian family, it only mandates parents be faithful to raise their children in the instruction of the Lord, teaching them to love God and others as they follow God's design for life. While there are strengths and weaknesses to any choice, when a believing parent has a humble heart and desire to honor the Lord, God will not only direct their path but will work all things for their good in Christ.

In light of our focus on education during the month of March, we've put together a list of questions that a parent or family can use to prayerfully converse about different educational methods. We understand how difficult and daunting this decision can feel (We're right there beside you trying to make the best choices for our young children too!) but we are hopeful these questions can serve as a launch point for thought, prayer and discussion as you navigate the options.

**Please note: As parents of young children, these are things we're considering "on the front end" knowing that we might have different perspectives or questions looking back. These are just questions we've used to help inform our own personal decisions.*

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT EDUCATION?

- As you read scripture, what commands does God give to parents about raising their children? What are we to prioritize and invest in?
- What observations do you make about God's heart towards children and their education? What are the non-negotiables? What are areas of Christian freedom?
- What promises or blessings does God give to parents?
- Is your heart oriented after God's heart for raising children, training, instructing and disciplining them in the Lord?
- What are we supposed to teach our children about outside influences, friendships, resisting temptation, and operating "in, but not of" the world?

WHAT OPTIONS FOR EDUCATION DO YOU CURRENTLY HAVE ACCESS TO?

- Have you explored the educational options available to you in your area? Is the method you'd prefer an option? Does it have the right amount of support, organization and resources that you'd like to see?
- Have you toured the buildings, visited websites or picked up brochures, spoken to other families that have educated their children at the various options?
- If necessary, what resources are available for special needs, therapy, individual attention, accessibility for wheelchairs or other assistive devices?
- What are the time commitments, extracurricular pressures and expectations for involvement? What role is the parent expected to play? Do these align with the vision you have for your family?

WHAT ARE YOUR MOTIVES?

- If you were to pick your ideal educational method, what would it be?
- If you are married, what would your husband's ideal education method be?
- Have you evaluated what is motivating your ideal educational choice(s)? Comfort, control, convenience, flexibility, a desire for ease? A desire to obey and bring glory to God? Wanting to do the best you can and recognize your limitations? A desire to measure up to a supposed Christian ideal?
- Are you idolizing one method over another? If you were not able to engage in your preferred method for one reason or another, what would your response be?
- Are you making your decision based on what your peer group is doing? Or based on pressure from grandparents, friends or other outside influences in your life? Are you afraid to do something different than what someone else is suggesting?

WHAT ARE YOUR CURRENT LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES?

- How do you and your husband spend your days? Is one or both of you available to invest the time your preferred method of education requires? Is one of you willing to make a change so it can happen?
- What support systems surround you and your family? Do you have extended family or friends that are available to assist in ways that might be necessary?
- What financial resources do you have available to you? How much will it cost to fund your education of choice?

- What are your unique skill sets, passion areas, and personality? Do these support the type of education you'd like to go with? Are you willing to educate your child in a way that feels uncomfortable to you if needed, trusting God to help and equip what you lack?
- How will the educational environments in your community influence your child? If your child will be in the midst of an environment that doesn't worship God (or is even anti-God), how will you encourage a biblical worldview through your conversations and training at home?

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF YOUR CHILD?

- Are you willing to have your children enrolled in different educational methods at the same time? If so, are you able to coordinate different schedules, start/end times, and stay organized with the different educational systems?
- Have you considered the strengths and weaknesses of each child individually? What kind of environment does your child do well in? What types of things motivate or inspire them? Are you willing to change course if you find they are struggling?
- Do any of your children need additional assistance throughout the school day due to special needs? How does your preferred method support and encourage your child to excel?

WHAT IS THE VISION FOR YOUR FAMILY?

- Have you and your husband talked about what your vision is for the family? Do you have a family mission statement you can reference? (For more on something like this, check out [Ep. 46 | Intentional Motherhood, Communicating Your Family's Mission.](#))
- What type of family culture do you want to have in your home? How will you prioritize and cultivate it with the educational method you select?
- How will your educational choice influence your child in their choice of friendships, use of technology, understanding of the world from a biblical perspective, and exposure to the world's diversity and cultural backgrounds? Whatever the circumstances, how do you plan to intentionally teach your child to exercise wisdom, protecting and teaching them to apply the gospel where appropriate?
- Have you thought ahead down the road when your children are in middle school and high school? What do you hope your days look like then?