

# Faith and Education

By Samuel L. Blumenfeld

It can be said that education tells us a good deal about the faith of a nation or the lack of it. Theoretically, education is what the past generation wants the future generation to know, believe in, and do. That was the sort of education I got back in the 1930s in the public schools of New York City. At assembly our principal read the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, so we all knew that God existed as concretely as the magnificent city around us. He was there to protect us, and He certainly protected me during my time in the Army in World War II.

In those days faith and education were clearly inseparable. Life without God, education without the acknowledgment of God, were simply unheard of. Yes, there were atheists and humanists and communists among the public educators, but the culture itself strongly adhered to biblical faith, and most of the school personnel were believers. There may have been talk of the separation of church and state among the progressive elite. But, as everyone knew, the public school's exhibition of faith had nothing to do with a federal establishment of religion. It was a faith that came down to us through history, through tradition, through the Bible, and was considered an indispensable component in the raising of the next generation.

We knew of the faith of the founding fathers. We read of faith in the works of English poets. We read of faith in the biographies of great men. We learned of faith in dissecting a frog in the biology lab. Darwin had not quite erased faith from the bio lab. (I had watched my mother "dissect" a chicken in preparation for the Sabbath dinner.)

We sat in orderly rows behind desks bolted to the floor. Learning required order and silence, and the mind responded by absorbing knowledge, honing skills, observing the world, developing an independent mind with independent intelligence.

One of the most salient points that John Taylor Gatto makes in his remarkable book, *The Underground History of American Education*, is how today's schools do everything in their power to make and keep the students childish, indeed, so childish that they cannot engage in an adult conversation with anyone.

Jay Leno, the TV comedian, provides enormously entertaining interviews with today's youth, some of whom are in college. Their ignorance is so appalling that it is really more tragic than comic. "Who is buried in Grant's Tomb?" gets responses so absurd as to make one wonder. A high-schooler was asked, "Who wrote Handel's Messiah?" and he answered, "I don't read books." He didn't even know that Handel's Messiah was a piece of music, not a book.

But the simple truth is that most young people today don't read books. They don't read because either they can't or that it is simply too difficult, too much work, too painful. And the schools have done that to these poor victims of progressive mis-education. And yet we spend more money on education than ever, the students spend more time in school than ever, and teachers are supposedly more professional than ever. But Dr. Rushdoony explained what happened in his masterful study, *The Messianic Character of American Education*. The humanists took over the schools and replaced Christianity with their atheist religion.

Thus, faith in God has been replaced by a nihilism that Satan uses to destroy minds and souls. Faith has been removed. God has been removed, and thus we no longer have education, we have the mutilation of the mind, the retarding of growth, the spread of ignorance, the enslavement of the soul. We have barbarians living in a hi-tech civilization. And all of the hi-tech toys are used to provide more awesome spectacles of fiery destruction than the human race has witnessed since the Creation.

When I was growing up, it was assumed that the future generation would know more than the previous generation. They would be better informed, wiser, more skillful, more talented. And indeed some of the young in our time have been able to achieve some wonderful things. But they are a small minority in a nation of over 270,000,000 people. Without faith our education system has become a destructive, nihilist force.

Faith is the backbone of true education, for you cannot understand the world or the nature of man until you know the nature of God. John Calvin wrote in *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, "Our wisdom, in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves." And today's public schools deny both. Thus we get ignorant atheists.

But even so, some of these ignorant nihilists and atheists find their way to God, for as Calvin observed, man is by nature deistic. He wrote: "That there exists in the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, some sense of Deity, we hold to be beyond dispute, since God himself, to prevent any man from pretending ignorance, has endued all men with some idea of his Godhead, the memory of which he constantly renews and occasionally enlarges, that all to a man, being aware that there is a God, and that he is their Maker, may be condemned by their own conscience when they neither worship him nor consecrate their lives to his service."

But faithless education has given us so many crippled minds and souls that one is saddened by the prospect that so many of them will spend their lives wandering in an empty landscape with no hope of redemption, for they cannot read and are trapped in a web of emotion, superstition and ignorance.

The tragedy for them is beyond calculation. If faith is for all of life, then it must begin in the womb, and grow within us in the various stages of life. For we are all programmed to go through these stages. In modern America, schooling has become a twelve-year prison sentence in which the individual is manipulated, twisted, bored, propagandized, and

reduced to animal status in order to fulfill an evil progressive agenda sustained by billions of dollars in taxes. The public has been persuaded by politicians and the education establishment that what goes on in the schools is worthy of their support. And the majority of our citizens not only send their children to these schools, but actually believe that they are being “educated.”

Deuteronomy 6 tells us what is entailed in education. Faith can only be passed on by faithful parents to their children in need of the knowledge of God. It cannot be passed on by faithless schools or by the U.S. government. In a rational society, the knowledge of God would be the first and foremost reality that children would be confronted with. In fact, that is the way it was in the early days of this country when children were taught the alphabet by such statements as: A—In Adam’s Fall We sinned all; B—Heaven to find, The Bible Mind; C—Christ crucify’d For sinners dy’d; D—The Deluge drown’d The earth around; E—Elijah hid By ravens fed; F—The judgment made Felix afraid; etc. In fact, the entire Primer was a simple, straightforward catechism in the Christian religion.

That Primer contained instruction in the Ten Commandments and such verses for children as:

Though I am young a little one  
If I can speak and go alone,  
Then I must learn to know the Lord,  
And learn to read his holy word.

Today, Christian schools and Christian homeschoolers are the only ones in America who make it a point to catechize their children. They may use modern, watered down texts, but at least the children are taught that they were made in the image of God and have a duty to live up to God’s estimation of them. Life is a gift that must be cherished, and that it is God who gives our lives meaning and purpose.

The public school nihilist has no idea why he or she is alive. Their soul has been removed and replaced with nothing. Materialist fulfillment and sensual satisfaction become their only purpose. The nihilist is a digestive tract on legs with an inner yen for self-destruction. There is no intellect, no love of life, no appreciation of beauty. Several years ago the subways of Montreal were plagued by gangs of nihilistic youths with much time on their hands. The city officials came up with an ingenious way of getting rid of them: they played classical and operatic music through the subway’s speaker system, and before you knew it, the gangs were gone. They simply could not tolerate beauty. The music these nihilists enjoy is totally barbaric and satanic.

The deliberate effort of the public schools to destroy religious faith in their students must be considered the most destructive aspect of our culture. A culture without faith can only lead to madness. But there is a growing underground of Godly sentiment that has risen in America since the terrible events of September 11, 2001. More and more Americans are beginning to realize how dependent we are on God’s mercy and forgiveness for our well-being. God has made us the strongest and richest nation in history because of our

original faith in Him. That was our beginning, and it must be renewed in the next generation if we are to survive as a nation blessed by Him.