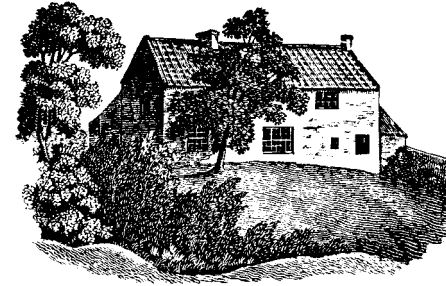

INTRODUCTION



The Anvil - God's Word

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, and then, with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, thought I, the anvil of God's Word,
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone.

Author Unknown

HOMESCHOOLING IS NOT A PASSING TREND. After centuries of family-based learning, a tidal wave of shifting values and worldviews birthed the system of institutional education, which pulled children out of the home and placed them under the control of the state. Now, with the resulting moral and academic crises, the tide is turning, and many Christian parents are seriously reevaluating the methods and materials used in educating the minds, bodies and souls of children. Homeschooling is proving to be a blessing to many individuals, families, and the Bride of Christ—the Church.

This study is designed as a companion to the book, *The Little Book of Big Reasons to Homeschool*. Whether you are contemplating the decision to homeschool, hoping to encourage others, or are looking for a vision boost, this guide will help you examine homeschooling in light of Scripture.

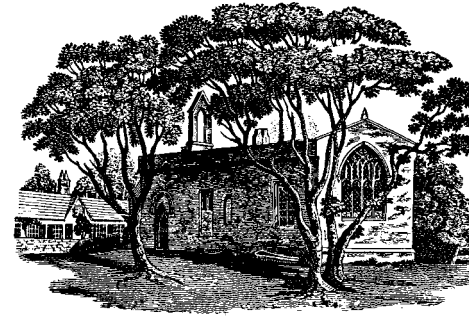
The "Afterword" of *The Little Book of Big Reasons to Homeschool* states: "Get in the Word. The Bible is our instruction manual in life. If God's Word doesn't convict you, nothing else—no book, magazine article, or friendly advice—will. As pointed out in Scripture, the Word of God is living

and active (HEBREWS 4:12) and will stand forever (ISAIAH 40:8). In order for us to be effective teachers of our children, we must go to The Teacher for instruction on a regular basis ourselves.”

The Teacher has spoken to us clearly in His Word. By searching Scripture, we continue to hear God’s voice today, guiding us as we make decisions in regard to training up our children. Too often, however, God’s voice is drowned out by the world or by the many diversions in life. This Bible study is designed to be a “hearing aid” to enable us to tune back into Him, and find answers to questions like: Whose responsibility is it to educate children? Do parents make effective teachers? Issues related to academics, socialization, and spiritual training are looked at from a Biblical perspective.

The Little Book of Big Reasons to Homeschool—Companion Bible Study can be used in personal reflection time, support group discussions, or church classes as a way to dig deeper into God’s Word and seek direction as parents, the true educators of our children. We pray that it strengthens your resolve if you are already homeschooling, or that it sheds new light on the vision of family-based learning and encourages you to answer the call, if you haven’t already.

HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK



FOR MANY PEOPLE, school day memories probably include those first-day jitters that came with boarding the big yellow school bus, book bag in hand, filled with all the necessary supplies: new pencils, glue, notebook paper, and that fresh box of crayons (the big 64-pack, if you were lucky). You entered the classroom clutching your sack lunch, wondering who your classmates were and if your teacher would be all you hoped for. As the year progressed, you experienced the challenges of juggling homework, extra-curricular activities, and peer pressures, along with the nervousness of exams and the ever-impending report card day.

- ☞ Describe your childhood back-to-school experience.

- ☞ If you had it to do over again, would you prefer the same setting and experiences or different ones?

*...I found it necessary
to write appealing to you
to contend for the faith
that was once for
all delivered to the saints.*
JUDE 1:3



Teach them to thy children... Moses thought his law so very plain and easy that every father might be able to instruct his sons in it and every mother her daughters. Thus that good thing which is committed to us we must carefully transmit to those that come after us, that it may be perpetuated.

MATTHEW HENRY

Historically speaking, institutional schooling as we know it has only been around for a brief period of time. The following study includes some examples of education through the centuries, beginning with the Old Testament. We will look closely at home education and how it fits in with God's plan and purpose for families today.

THESE WORDS THAT I COMMAND YOU (1500 B.C.)

History shows that today's home education movement actually springs from a rich heritage of family-based learning. Through the centuries, beginning with the earliest recorded history found in the Holy Bible, the practice and belief of many cultures worldwide was that parents and immediate family members should be the primary educators of children. (The Little Book of Big Reasons to Homeschool, 17)

DEUTERONOMY 6: 4-9 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

1 What are the commands given in this passage?

2 What words indicate that these are a command from God and not a suggestion?

3 Moses conveys God's commands with these words, "You shall teach them diligently to your children ...when you sit in your house...when you lie down...when you rise... write them on the doorposts of your house." Is he addressing parents or other authority figures in children's lives? Where are these activities to be lived out primarily?

4 By delegating to another person the majority of your child's spiritual training, are these commands being followed?

Consider the relevance of God's Word today.

ISAIAH 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

5 Do you believe the Bible is treated with as much relevance as it should be in most schools? In the church? In your home?



The Word of God is living, because it is the utterance of an immutable, self-existing God. God doth not speak to-day what He meant not yesterday, neither will He tomorrow blot out what He records today. When I read a promise spoken three thousand years ago, it is as fresh as though it fell from the eternal lips today... the Word is always sure, steadfast, and full of power. It is never out of date.

CHARLES SPURGEON