

The Best Means for Growth

This past summer my wife, Bonnie, and I moved from Indianapolis, Indiana, to Colorado Springs, Colorado. The Lord provided for us a lovely house that my wife is transforming into a home for our family. My four children, Jared, Drew, Lindi, and Aubrey, all moved to Colorado with us. The boys are both graduates of Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU), and the girls both attend IWU.

Our new house is nestled into a gorgeous subdivision called Fox Run, which is situated in a ponderosa pine forest. We discovered that the landscaping outside our new house has a myriad of beautiful wildflowers—and weeds! For the first two weeks, however, we could not see any flowers because the weeds had taken over.

Bonnie decided that she likes flowers better than weeds, so for the last three weeks she has labored on her hands and knees to pull the weeds. At the same time, she has diligently watered the flowers. And guess what? The flowers are responding to my wife's TLC, and they are blooming.

What would have happened, do you think, if we had taken a different approach? What if instead of pulling weeds and watering flowers, we planted four flowers in a bed of weeds and neglected watering altogether? Perhaps one or more of the flowers would survive. The question, however, is, What approach is the best means available to us, considering our goal of growing strong, beautiful flowers capable of producing other beautiful flowers?

Last week I received a phone call from a talk show host who works for a Christian radio station in Buffalo, New York. He invited me to explain to his listeners why Christian education is one of the best means available to parents today to assist them in thoroughly preparing their children to serve God as sold-out followers of Jesus Christ. I explained that Christian schools employ Christian teachers; equip their teachers with a curriculum founded on the Word of God, the Holy Bible; and expect them to live the Christian life alongside their students every day.

Following my opening remarks, the host asked me to elaborate on a view that he thought was commonly held by many of his listeners. He said that some parents believe that the best way to help their children develop

as thoroughly prepared followers of Jesus Christ is to immerse them in a secular school culture and support them at home as they defend their faith day in and day out.

I thought of our flower bed at home. What caused the flowers in our landscaping to bloom? First, we separated our flowers from our weeds. Flowers grow stronger when they are planted in beds with other flowers. Weeds choke the life from young, tender flowers. It is seldom the other way around!

Then we began to water our flowers, and the flowers responded. They began to grow and bloom right where they were planted.

We had the same experience as we grew flowers outside our house in Indiana. Over

time, as flowers grew and developed, we were able to transplant beautiful, healthy flowers from where they were originally planted to other places in our yard. We even helped friends establish flower beds in their lawns.

The Word of God is living water! Students in Christian schools drink freely from streams of living water as they are taught by teachers who love Jesus. Students in Christian schools memorize Bible verses, attend chapel, serve others, study the Bible as a core subject, and look at every discipline through the lens of Scripture.

Listen to the Word of the Lord: "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 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" (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, NKJV). Why? So that our children when they are fully grown will choose to fear the Lord and obey His commands and serve Him wherever the Lord "plants" them!



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