



## Episode #347 - Dr. Ellsworth McIntyre & Grace Community Schools REVISITED

### **Description:**

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This is the second interview R.J. Rushdoony did with Dr. Ellsworth McIntyre, founder of Grace Community Schools in SW Florida. The topic continued to be education and how Christians can reform education and their communities from the ground up!

Speaker 1: The Reconstructionist Radio Podcast Network presents The Easy Chair with R.J. Rushdoony.

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R.J. Rushdoony: This is R.J. Rushdoony. Easy Chair number 347, September 24, 1995. This evening, or afternoon rather, Mark Rushdoony and I will be interviewing Dr Ellsworth McIntyre of Naples, Florida. Andrew Sandlin is under the weather, and Douglas Murray is out of town. Now to introduce Dr McIntyre, he is an educator, an ordained minister with a very successful background in business, who has developed a system of education whereby he has accomplished some remarkable things. I'll have him tell more about it in a moment, but he has pioneered in educating two to five-year-old children, so that after he has had them for those years, they are ready for the fourth grade.

He now covers grades four through six in the six schools he has, has made them a tremendous financial success, so that from a standpoint of accomplishing a great deal as a Christian, he is an unqualified success, educationally a remarkable success. And then economically a remarkable success. We have a mandate as Christians to conquer all things for Christ. To occupy until He comes. Unfortunately too many Christians have been losers, or let us say, too many church people have been losers.

So it is refreshing to see someone like Mac who is an unqualified success in every area of endeavor. So I'm going to ask Dr Ellsworth McIntyre now to tell us what he is doing, how he got there, what he hopes to do, and so on. And don't hesitate to take as long as you want to make your statement.

Pastor McIntyre: Thank you, Rush. It's a pleasure to be with The Easy Chair again. Since I was with you last, I guess it was earlier this spring, reverend Andrew Sandlin and myself set about setting up a Christian Reconstructionist conference, that'll take place December 2nd in Naples. And it's the plan of my family, of Pat and I, to give, free of charge, all the help that is necessary to any friend of Christian Reconstruction, help in starting schools like ours. We've developed a model that can be used to start a Christian school from scratch. We've successfully replicated this thing five times. We have six schools underway right now, and property to start more.

So we have a working model that can be used by Christian men and women that are interested in going into the ministry, and getting into a work where they don't have to compromise their doctrine. Too often men that believe in a firm Calvinist position, or non-compromising position like Christian Reconstructionism, find themselves affiliated with denominations and churches where they have to reign in what they have to say. They have to be very careful about what they do, or they'll lose their paychecks and lose their living. But if these people could start the work from scratch, and do it on a good financial basis, then they can be free to teach the doctrine, and to build the work from scratch, and to have a congregation of people that will support them.

Also the society in general, we can convert them, if we can get them young enough, and get there first with the doctrine type correctly. The Humanists from every side press in upon our young people, teaching them all of the Humanistic ideas. And then we have to come along later on, and try to undo this. It makes good sense from an educator standpoint to go into these hearts and minds of these young people through Christian pre-schools, and teach them the truth from the very beginning. God's law, God's application of law, and all of the things that are necessary to make a success out of their lives.

And this can be done for a Christian pre-school, at a profit, as you already mentioned. And the parents of these young people can be brought into churches, and we can develop works that are independent. And we're going to give this technology away to people that would take advantage of it, and that's going to be the subject of the conference that'll take place December 2nd in Naples, Florida. We hope for a good turnout.

R.J. Rushdoony: Mac, one of the things that I think is particularly wonderful, is the involvement of your family in the work. Could you tell us more how many of the eight children are involved, and what they are doing?

Pastor McIntyre: We have eight children, three sons and five daughters. At one time or another all of them have been involved in the ministry, and their wives, those that are working. And we have six grandchildren coming up, and some of the older ones are already beginning to talk about schools of their own, whenever they come of age. This is one of the great advantages of a family enterprise of any kind, people have idealized the family form. For example, Thomas Jefferson talked about the independent gentleman having his own means of making a living. How a free man, if he's able to provide his own sustenance, doesn't have to trim in what he believes, as he would if he was getting a paycheck.

You can't offend the boss too often too long, you'll end up out of work. But a family enterprise does give a lot of freedom to embrace religious beliefs and political beliefs that may not be mainstream and popular for the moment. This family enterprise that we have allows that to be done. And also it does the main thing in education that needs to be done, which is more important than literacy, and that is that children have a meaningful employment to do, so that they develop character.

And this was the big thing with the family form. They had chores day in and day out, that they had to do systematically. They had to assume responsibility, and carry this out, and this develops character in a way that nothing else can. The child, whenever he comes at the dinner table at night, knows that he's contributed to the family enterprise, that in effect, he's earned that food that's at the table. He's contributed to the family welfare. And the same thing takes place in our schools. Our youngest daughter, Abigail, was just a third-grader, when she was already doing meaningful things around the school, whenever we first started in 1985.

And today she's the most experienced, the most capable, accountant that we have for the six schools. Because she has years and years of experience, because

accounting seems to be her particular gift, in that school. And she's an invaluable employee to us. And one of these days, whenever she finds a young man, she's just 19 right now, I'm sure she will have her own school, and perhaps several of them. And the same thing is true of the other children, because in a family enterprise of this kind, if the child's aptitude is teaching, or the child's aptitude is accounting, or public relations work, or whatever happens to be, there's a spot for them.

But the character they develop in doing this is very important. Children are very much like adults, play, recreation, is not a full-time employment for us. We have to have meaningful work in order to have our lives be truly happy. And if you give meaningful work to children, this quickly becomes more enjoyable to them than just mere feckless play. Play and recreation is just something we do after we work very hard, and we earn a respite from it. But it's certainly not a full-time calling. Part of the liberal philosophy of our day is that children should play and do nothing else.

And quite the opposite is true. Children, if they have meaningful work to do, if they have a meaningful contribution to the family, they're far, far happier and more secure, than children that just watch television or just go around breaking things all day to get attention from their parents, who are bored stiff with them. So the family enterprise aspect is one of the best means of producing children that are responsible.

R.J. Rushdoony:

I'm glad you brought that up, Mac. One of the things we have seen for almost two generations now, is a hostility against the family, and a hostility against family operated enterprises, as though there is something wrong about them. I've been interested in this past year, and talking to a great many people, to hear a repeated refrain, which is sad but revelatory of our time. Namely, that it's becoming harder and harder to hire people to work for you. They share, no matter how well trained they are in a Christian college, or in your local church, the feeling of victimhood that is common to our time.

They believe that if everything doesn't suit them at their place of work, they're being victimized. And they're very loud and vocal about their complaints about very fine men in their church or in their community. I've heard a man say, who ... small businesses, or a small operation, but ones that are quite successful, and bring in a very superior income, that they have dispensed with secretaries, and they only have computers. Or they only use their daughters or close relatives in their place of business.

Because they can correct them, and even get angry with them, justifiably, and it doesn't lead to a lawsuit. It leads to them doing the thing properly. We have so self-centered a population today, that they refuse to believe that anything they do is anything short of perfect. If somebody corrects them, they become victims immediately. And this is an impossible situation. So more and more businesses are thinking about purely family operation. In fact, I was told that in some instances, where the work grew, and they went public, they sold shares, they're buying back the shares now, so they can have exclusive control of the corporation. So the family-operated venture I think is a very godly one.

Pastor McIntyre:

Yes. What you say is a direct result of a removing from the school system all competition. Competition for grades, competition for recognition, and the teaching of a philosophy that somehow competition is an evil thing. One of the reasons that many successful people still come out of a sports background is, it's very difficult to convince a loser that he's a winner. But in grades, in the classroom, by the teachers manipulating things through various devices, can actually convince some students that they're not as bad as they really are. And thereby they deaden a striving for achievement. And this creates an artificial view of the world, because the world that we live in, as every experienced adult knows, is a world of competition.

You have to be proficient in whatever your calling is, and you have to do it better than the other guy in order to be successful. That is what's being successful, doing things more efficiently and better than other folks can. But these children are continually being taught in the classrooms that they don't have to strive for excellence. They don't have to strive to do things well. And as a consequence, when they suddenly are thrown into an enterprise, where the boss is insisting things being done correctly, they do feel like a victim. Because they've just spent 18, 20 some years, being taught that that sort of thing is not important.

So all of a sudden the boss is a non-loving character, who's only interested in a dollar, and not interested in me, and boo-hoo. And whenever we hire students right out of school, very often this is the attitude, that somehow or another, this is a very bad thing. Now to go back to the family enterprise that we have, if the child is raised from their youth, working in a family enterprise, he quickly learns where the money comes from, and the money is from producing a better product of less money than the competition.

And this is the very survival, his family depends upon it. So he's learning a system that is real, that is genuine, that the real world operates on, instead of this artificial thing that the academics have created. It's no accident that the academics love socialism, because they are trying to produce an artificial world in which capitalistic ideas, conquest, winners and losers, don't exist. But winners and losers do exist in every system, and those who learn it quickly and learn it well, and have the psychological hardness to adapt to it, are going to be the ones that survive.

And this is one of the reasons I would like to see many thousands of Christian families across our country have family enterprises like this, because we then would be the folks who would come out ahead on the competition against these people. Because they're very fragile in their thinking, because they really do believe that competition is bad. Now I'll illustrate that for you. In the State of Maryland I had a large Christian school of about 800 and some students. And we started the Band Program, in which I designed a program that the students had to practice their instruments daily. I didn't leave it to be practiced at home, because I knew they didn't have the discipline to do that.

So I insisted that the music teacher had a special period every day in which those students had to study. Well, in very short order, the band became championship in its caliber. And we asked the public schools if we could come

and participate in their music competitions. And they agreed to do so. However, their music competitions were called a festival, because they didn't like competition. And they didn't like grading one school against another. Our students on the other hand were very offensive to them, because whenever they got a grade one, meaning they did very well, they would cheer and clap.

They were, naughty, naughty, the judges would say. This is a festival, and this is not supposed to be a competition. And our students, of course, were aghast, because in the Christian school that I was an administrator of, I kept injecting competition in, rather than taking it out. But this is a small scale of what the educators everywhere have done, where they can. And one of the reasons they dislike sports so [highly 00:18:13], again, is because you just can't take the competition out of the sports and pretend that winning isn't important. It is important. It's important in every area of life, that's the way the real world is established.

R.J. Rushdoony: What you said about sports I want to underscore. And I think what you said is also very, very important. When about 50 years ago I first went to an Indian reservation ... I guess, a little more than 50 years ago. One of the things that interested me was that at the Indian school, the white teachers would teach them a variety of games, sports. And they would be played there, at school. Basketball, or rather baseball, and basketball also, appealed to the Indian boys. But what happened was this, if it were a non-school day, or a summer vacation, and a group of Indian boys went out to play some baseball, if five or six-year-old toddlers were around, they would run up and ask to be included in the game. And the Indians never refused anybody.

They didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings, not that of a child. You never heard a baby cry. They got what they wanted. So the children of five and six would be included in the baseball game, which would quickly end the game. Because, how can teenagers play with two or three, five or six-year-olds in the game? Let alone won. The result is, the game would quickly end. They were thoroughly non-competitive. They're the ideal of what some educators want, in the way of, cooperative people. Now, when you don't have frustration, and these children did not, this leads to a major crisis. You begin to grow up, and suddenly find the world is frustrating. You don't get everything you want.

Pastor McIntyre: Exactly.

R.J. Rushdoony: And every time you turn around, you're being frustrated. Well, the net result was that a very high percentage of the children, boys and girls, were alcoholics by their mid-teens. And it was a very sad fact. Some of them were highly talented. In terms of IQ, the Indians, I would say, probably rank number one in the country, and a test about that time showed that they did. But in achievement, they're at the bottom by quite a margin. They have no sense of competition, because this has been schooled out of them. The reservation system, the collapse of family incentives, you have a non-competitive people and alcoholics.

Pastor McIntyre:

Yes. The surest way to raise a wild man is just give him anything he wants. And then whenever they get too disobedient, you just drug them down with Ritalin, and allow them to somehow overcome it that way, and I suppose one day they will substitute with alcohol. Of course, sports is one way to make sure the competition stays in, in spite of liberal teachers. Music is another, because there's instant feedback. You hit the wrong note, there's no excuse. The child hit the wrong note. The same as the peg and the home plate. You either got the peg to the home plate on time, or you didn't. There's instant feedback in sports about whether you did something right or not.

And you always have your peers, who are not going to be as tender on you as some liberal teacher might be. And the same thing is true with a good musical training. So I would advise parents out there that don't have a Christian school to put their child in ... or some Christian schools, I'm afraid, are well down the road on this non-competition as well. A musical instrument is a good idea, because there's a tyranny to that, that's very good. I have had educators tell me that musicians and mathematicians, the math ability and the music ability run together.

And it isn't all together a gifting sort of thing. It's just that, in math the wrong answer is the wrong answer, in spite of what modern math people may say. And the wrong note is still the wrong note. So if your child is gifted in math or gifted in music, or in athletics, to get them away from that non-competitive environment would be certainly good parental training. And of course, if they can get them out of that system entirely, with a family daycare school as we have, that would be the best of all worlds.

But to indulge a child and to give him anything he wants, is not to give him a proper view of the world. The world is very unforgiving to people who make mistakes, and we have to learn to take failure, and to be hardened by it, just as our muscles would be hardened by work. I think the fact that suicide is perhaps the leading cause of death of young children nowadays in our society ... I think if you took the accidental deaths, and converted those that were really suicides that looked like accidents, that would be the leading cause of death of our young people.

And I think it's because they're so fragile in their background. They have not been exposed to the toughness that comes from working and learning how to do things correctly, and taking correction, and taking it well. They just can't seem to take correction. This is one of the reasons the family enterprise has become the largest business that many men can handle. Because we bring young people into our school system as employees, and we find them very difficult time training them. They just are overflowing with this idea that somehow it's unloving and uncompassionate. Their argument against the six-year-olds, playing with the teenagers, the first thing, that's not compassionate.

Well, the thing is, for the sake of the game, if the game is going to be played correctly, if the game is played with any meaning, and if the teenagers are going to make any progress, we're gonna have to have some discrimination here against who plays on this particular team, and who plays on them, to make the

team. To make the cut. All of those things are valuable, valuable lessons to learn. And sometimes the most valuable lesson that's learned is by the student who is cut, rather than by the student who makes the team.

But some people act as though, if a student doesn't make the team, or doesn't make it in some particular area, his life is over. No. He's just discovered that that isn't his area of expertise. But the character that he's developed in the meantime, that toughness of being able to take disappointment, that's something that will be with him the rest of his life, and will help him when he gets into that area where he really has the gift and calling to be a success.

Mark Rushdoony: You see a lot of that carried over into the professions now, where you have certain groups saying, the standards are unfair. The standards are biased against white males, therefore you must change the standards, so we can compete as well. And to give us a whole separate set of standards.

Pastor McIntyre: Yes. The covenant that we teach, blessings for obedience, curses for disobedience, is very unforgiving, and it's toughness to the child saying, good things will happen if you do this. Bad things will happen if you do that. This is also softened by this mamby pamby Armenian gospel that we have out there. Somehow it doesn't matter that you can't quite tell the truth, and you can't quite work as you should, and you can't quite respect your elders. Well, all of those things indeed do matter, and they're sins. And good things aren't going to happen if you continue to do them. And it all starts in the classroom, where the teacher says, no one is going to speak without permission. No one is going to get out of their seats without permission. Is that clear?

And if the teacher manages to just get that child to follow those two simple rules, they're learning a valuable lesson. Good things happen when you obey the authority and you obey the teacher. And bad things happen if you don't. And that follows us all of our lives. There are rules and regulations, and certainly God's law, which overarches all, that we must obey, and there isn't any alternative. It's a hard fact of reality. And it's not a mark of compassion for a teacher to give the students some hope that he can break the rules and still be a success, and still have a happy life. They may end up being a suicide.

R.J. Rushdoony: I'd like to pick up on what you said about suicide. The suicide rate in this country is highest among American Indians. They have been, through the reservation system, placed in a non-competitive world, and everything has accentuated that non-competitive aspect of their life. As a result they grow up, face frustration, and they readily go into alcoholism and after a while as readily into suicide. I think we are doing the same thing in the state schools, with all the teaching that is non-competitive, there isn't the satisfaction of winning. There is a frustration in our present situation.

Pastor McIntyre: Your point is very important, Rush. And I'd like to make an application with that to many of the folks out there that are homeschooling their children. In our school system we've had to hire parents, who have been homeschooling their children. We've discovered to our horror that they've used the home school situation to take all of the structure out of the child's life. He doesn't do things

on a particular schedule. He doesn't have affirmed assignments that he must complete on time. And, as a consequence, they have become an exaggerated and horrible version of what we're talking about in the public school environment.

And all of a sudden they're put into our school and they have to line up, just do something as simple as line up to go to the rest room, and that becomes very traumatic to them. All of a sudden they have to obey rules, and all of a sudden they have to have work done at a particular time, and all of a sudden mother isn't there guiding them at every step of the way. And I would say to the homeschool people out there, who seem to dream endlessly about getting that better curriculum, that this problem is so easy to correct.

Get some structure into that child's life, some assigned tasks that they must do, even if it's as simple as speaking with permission, getting out of the seat without permission, making up your bed, or whatever it is. Hard and fast tasks that they must do in order to get recognition, in order to get love. And they get something else if they fail in these tasks. But if we fail in our homeschooling to teach children responsibility, we'll be raising wild men just as sure as the Indians that you've described.

And this is a horrifying thing to us, that we've brought these homeschooling students in, and in every case the mother is so certain that the children are so far ahead. And then whenever we test them against our students, almost always they're deficient, deficient compared to children that's in our system. Now, of course, they're ahead of the public school. But that's certainly nothing to measure ourselves by. We should be years ahead of the public school in testing. And our typical student is at least two years ahead of the public school environment.

For example, this month we sent out a photograph of a young girl who just completed first grade with us and ran off the scale. She's seventh grade, six months, in her abilities. She answered nearly every question right on the standardized Stanford Achievement Test. In other words, if she was given a more difficult test, she could even run up further. But she doesn't feel that she's been overworked or anything. She's just been in the system since she was two years old, where she was asked to do certain tasks and it was expected of her that she'd do them correctly.

And she's a very happy, well-adjusted child. We're very pleased with what she's doing. And this we must do, or we're not doing a favor to our children, to take them out of the public school system and remove what little competitiveness there is from their lives that still remains there. A very good point.

R.J. Rushdoony:

I recall some years ago a parent whose attitude toward the child was ... he loved the child dearly, was that the child needed frustrating. And I believe that's very true, because if we are never frustrated, we are never given a proper direction. We are then very easily bored. I never heard a child say when I was young, I'm bored. But since World War II that's a common comment, I'm bored. And to me

that's amazing. It indicates a lack of discipline in one's life, an inability to organize and to function, unless they get what they want immediately.

For example, one of the things I loved greatly when I was a child, and still love, is fishing. And I cannot recall how many times as a boy, when I was about four and five, my cousin and I went to the river to fish. Didn't get a thing. But it was no less exciting to us, and we kept going again and again until we caught something. And that was an exciting day. But now too many young people, children, are taken fishing and after a few minutes they say, I'm bored. This is no fun. I'm not catching anything.

And that's typical of the impatience and the lack of discipline in the lives of people today. And that, and I don't believe I am overstating it, is a pre-suicidal tendency. You won't take frustration. If you throw your line into the water, a fish has to do that, or you're bored, or the world is not treating you right. Well, I think parents should nip that in the bud immediately. If a child complains they are bored, something should be done. Like the saying that was common when Dorothy and I were growing up, I'll give you something to cry about if you complain.

And the whole premise was sound. You were not to be a complainer and a whiner.

Pastor McIntyre:

Yes. The parents instinctively many times understand that something is wrong, but they don't know what it is. But as I initially said, you don't have to have a college degree and a master's degree and a perfect curriculum. Homeschool people drive me crazy with, what curriculum are you using? And endless questions about the curriculum, as though this was the heart of the matter. The heart of the matter is teaching techniques. The heart of the matter is developing character.

Because, let's face it, many of the things that the student learns in the classroom are going to have no real direct application to what that child is going to do later in life. The character, however, will have a great deal to do with it. Character is directly related, of course, to our covenantal theology. Character is what's going to enable us to pass up the adulterous and the fornicating situation. Character is what's going to enable us to defer gratification for greater gratification, sometime in the future.

If we don't catch any fish today, that's just going to be the greater pleasure later when we make that hit big. Deferred gratification is what that salesman needs. He knows he got so many turndowns now, but if he keeps on going, and he has the grit to keep going when others stop, he's going to be the successful man. He's going to be able to keep going whenever weaker men stop. All of these things are not necessarily what the country people would call book learning.

These are the things that come from character that's developed in doing many times repetitive, boring tasks, but doing them better and having character to keep at it longer than weaklings who cannot. And these, I think, is one of the reasons, very often, that the dropout and the C-student becomes the multi-

millionaire, and the A-student ... who things come so easily, because maybe they have good recall, but they never developed the character necessary to make it in the real world. And then they get out in the real world, all of a sudden they can't understand why people aren't handing them things on a platter, as it was in the academic world.

Well, people don't hand you things in the real world. You have to do these boring, repetitive tasks. You have to sell people. You have to persuade people. And you have to build things and do things that are small to begin with, in order to have the character to do great things later on. And all of these things are not learned from a curriculum. They're learned from a teacher who understands them. And the understanding of it comes right down to the Ten Commandments and the idea that the child must obey God's law and learn to obey God's law better and better, or they are not genuinely saved.

We must not teach children that salvation comes to them and could be known by anything except a growing character that obeys the commandments better and better. A genuinely saved person grows in the power to obey God's law. If there isn't any growth in this character that we're talking about, there is every good reason to doubt that child's salvation. And this must be presented to them in the classroom in the mundane, simplistic things, again, like you don't get out of your seat without permission. You don't speak without permission. You get your homework done, and all of these other things.

And, of course, as I said before, the music training and sports is more unforgiving than their weakling parents very often. And that's why these are very good things many times, to supplement these ideas with.

R.J. Rushdoony: To me one of the impressive things about my first visit to your school was that there was no free play time. It was organized play. And I felt that was very, very important, because at that age, two to five, the children are not capable of organized play. Free play means that it's just an opportunity for the teachers to do nothing, while the kids run around and hurt each other and get into trouble.

Pastor McIntyre: You're quite right. The teachers look at the playground time as a break time. However, the students who have been in schools in which they have no organized activity, which was nearly all other schools for children this young, the students are delighted with the fact that now they have a game with rules to play, and they're not being bullied. They're not being knocked down, not being pushed around. They have something to do that has meaning to them. And they're getting recognition from the teachers. But the children are very, very happy, as I'm sure you've noticed, at our school.

R.J. Rushdoony: Yeah.

Pastor McIntyre: Because the playground time and the classroom time, all of these things are structured, which is another point that I think every educator and every preacher knows instinctively. That is, the more structure that's in a child's life, and the more secure he is ... and security is the key to a child's happiness. Insecurity or not knowing what's going to happen next is what will make them

unhappy in a hurry. This is why a divorce tears them apart. They're not sure about the affection that the mother and father have for each other. They're not sure about what's going to make mother and father angry and what's going to make them happy. They're not sure about what's required of them.

They come into a world that's extremely frightening to a young child. The world doesn't seem systematic, it seems chaotic. And we as parents, and we as mature Christians, we teach them, no, that the world does have order and the world does have purpose. And it all works together for the good, providing they learn God's law, and they apply this in their life, and they develop the character that all the world becomes their friend. And even the stones and the field will be at league with them if they learn to obey, and to worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is our message, but it's all keyed down to structure. And this produces security. We're secure in our purpose. We're secure in why we're here. We're secure in where we're going, and our whole meaning in life. And the more obedient we become, the happier and more purposeful we become. The enemy of our souls, however, takes this out of education. And the child is introduced into a frightening world of chaos, and the chaos is added to, in the name of compassion, which is really hatred. Because to teach a child that the world cannot be conquered by themselves in the help of the Holy Spirit is to be very cruel to them indeed.

This is a wonderful world and a wonderful country that we live in, provided you're a disciplined person, and a person who finds his gift and calling and does it well to the glory of God. We have the key with our covenant, and with the Lord Jesus Christ, and with discipline. This is the basis of a Christian education. And so for that reason, we introduce more and more structure into the lives of our children. Now, let me give you an example. The arch-enemy of Christianity, Plato, for example, in his Republic advocated no systematic work or study of any kind until the child was nearly, I think it was 10 or 12 years old.

And this is largely believed instinctively by people who hate Christ and are not regenerate. They believe that children are happiest when they're doing nothing of meaning. The very opposite is the truth. The child is happiest whenever he's doing something that has the most meaning and the most purpose and the most structure. That's why the old fashioned Christian schools were very structured indeed. And the new progressive educators took it all out, because they were antichrist in their viewpoint.

Now they were conscious in what they were doing, but God help some of our reformed Christians, who are unconsciously following this progressive model and doing the devil's work. All the time thinking that, because they begin the class with prayer, and because they smile and hug and talk about God's love ... when they should be talking about disobedience and the consequences of it as well, to balance their presentation, God help them. Because they're not helping these children at all. They're setting them up for horrible failure.

Mark Rushdoony:

Something I've noticed in recent years, parents are very much against the whole idea of competition. Parents are very much against the idea of anything that the

child spends too much time on. Parents will come to us as, oh, the child is becoming a perfectionist. The child wants to redo their homework papers until they're perfect. And I have to tell my child to go to bed, and stop doing their school work, as though this is some kind of a problem. I have to tell them, you know, you should appreciate that your child wants to achieve excellence. It's a rare commodity.

Another problem I often see, and you've probably seen this too, is parents will come and we'll say, this child needs to be in third grade. We need to skip this child up from second to third grade. It's too easy for them and we can't expect the teacher to always be giving them special things to do. The child belongs in the third grade. They say, "No, no. That will affect him socially for years to come. I want him to stay in second grade, and just give him extra work."

We lost a child last year, because we were very insistent that he needed to go to third grade. And the father, who we rarely saw, came to the school and said, "Sorry, but I don't think you're meeting the needs of my child." He's been here since kindergarten and we needed to skip him ahead a grade, but we weren't meeting his needs. The parents wanted him to have fun with his social age group, whether it was to his detriment or not. So parents are very, very ... and, of course, many of our parents now have been raised in a public school, and they don't like the competition. They don't want their child to work too hard. They don't want them to work too hard on any one thing. They want them to have a good social life.

Pastor McIntyre:

Yes. And it carries forth with your teacher and also, again, if I might bring up the homeschooling mothers. Drill is the key, particularly in the early years that we specialize in. Our motto is, college can begin at two. And we have youngsters many times who will read fluently before their fourth birthday. We've had three-year-olds that have tested out way up, as high as the fifth grade on their standardized tests. And the way you get them there is through drill. But drill is very boring to the teachers, and the teachers have been told by their liberal professors, work on the concept, work on understanding, but don't drill.

However, the Bible teaches line upon line, concept ... here, there, a little bit. In other words, memorization of things that are not comprehensible to the child is very, very important. The concept will come with maturity. But they don't know anything if they can't at least recite it back to you. To memorize the sounds of the alphabet letters and to memorize numbers, facts and all of these things are very, very important, again, because of the character development. It's either right or wrong. It's either rote perfect, or it isn't.

And as soon as you say rote, I'm sure there's some liberal educated homeschool parents out there, and school teachers, that are just running around in circles with foam in their mouth right now toward me, but it's not the case. The very opposite is the truth. The Word of God does teach rote learning, and rote learning is very, very important. It's key for developing this character that we're talking about. And the teachers have taken this out of the classroom because nothing is more boring to a teacher than running flash cards over and over again in a contest between this group and that group.

We have developed an elaborate system of prizes and rewards and recognition and games, boys against girls, this team against that team, in order to make it less of a boring humdrum thing. But we must not take drill out of the educated life of our children. This is comparable, again, to the music where you have to hit the right note, and you have to hit it every time and you have to know it. And there isn't any excuse. You have to know it automatically, just as you would with muscle memorization of tying your shoes. If we get that point, then we can work on the conceptual ideas and the application of the ideas, the esoteric ideas, which go beyond that.

But unless we build this foundation .... And the most important thing, again, we're doing, is not building memorization of the multiplication tables. What we are building is the character of saying, this is the right answer and this is the wrong answer. That's the main thing, and that's built through drill, and lots and lots and lots of drill. And the parents out there who homeschool children, they should have that, and they should not give up on it. And many times you can have students drill other students. If it drives you crazy, have the older students drill the younger ones, if you have a chance to do it. And work out rewards for them.

While I am on the subject of rewards, I also find the homeschool parents want to have an honor roll for six weeks or three weeks, or something like this. Long-term reward is very ineffectual with children. Short-term reward is very ineffectual. What they do in the next five minutes, reward them for that. Whether you get it correct on this particular paper, do it for that. Their attention span and their character is very weak, so you make short-term goals that they can do and achieve, so that they develop the character to do longer and longer goals.

So shrink in those things. The six-week honor roll is one of the dumbest things that educators ever did, because the child doesn't have enough character to think six weeks into the future. That's forever. Or, for example, some preacher preaching to a chapel of kids, you're going to go to hell if you sin. Well, it's very ineffectual. For example, when my mother said to me, your father is going to give you a paddle whenever you came home, that was not very effectual. When he was going to come home, that was several hours away. That was a lifetime. And she might forget, and he might ... but that didn't frighten me very much.

Well, how about telling your child he's going to go to hell when he dies? Well, when he dies is ... death is so distant from him, it isn't even funny. There is no fear in that. Now, the old people, when you preach to them, they'll go to hell when they die, there's a sermon that's going to have some effectiveness. Well, with young children it's much more effective to say, you're not going to get that piece of candy in the next five minutes unless you do this. And you're not going to get this reward if you don't give these correct answers. Shorten it up. Make it more meaningful to them. This brings greater results.

R.J. Rushdoony:

Well, one of the things that's very important in my perspective on this view of things, education and so on, is that we have totally lost an awareness of what insanity is. The disciplined life is the free life.

Pastor McIntyre: Amen.

R.J. Rushdoony: Erratically, undisciplined life is not only unfree, but it is insane. I have had the misfortune, over the years, to have to take part in dealings with people who are insane. They are totally self-centered. They are incapable of focusing on anything outside of themselves. And they are impatient with any terms that anyone sets down for them. They are, in other words, totally modern. They cannot organize their lives in terms of anything but their purely selfish, egocentric concerns. Well, we have an insane age as a result. We have people doing things without any thinking, without any concern.

Pastor McIntyre: But it's also an age ripe with opportunity for us. If we just do things like putting structure into our children's lives, getting them to memorize things, having them take up a musical instrument, having them go into sports activities, having them do chores around the house and, of course, if they can start a family enterprise ... I'm speaking to preachers out there, very often children end up being some of the worst testimony in their church. If these preachers had a school and got their children to work at meaningful tasks, they probably would develop this character that we're talking about. But it's so easy to correct.

And it all begins with a correct understanding of the gospel. Obedience to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the evidence of a changed mind. And there has not been a born-again experience that doesn't produce this. We must look upon this, not as a darkening thing, but as an opportunity. If these people are going to be nutty and these people are going to be insane ... and in many respects they are, and they're going to be non-competitive, they're going to have to go to the Marine Corps and get kicked in the backside by a sergeant, or something, and learn what discipline is all about.

Or they're going to be years late getting into the fight. Where our people can be ready from the time they hit the ground, to succeed in business enterprises across our country, if we, as educators, as parents, give them this rote learning, this discipline, this task-oriented approach to life, the security that comes from having a structured life. If we can give that to our students, opportunities have never been greater. The man with the one eye is king in the land of the blind. And as the world is becoming blind, more opportunity for us.

R.J. Rushdoony: In the 1950s a team of sociologists wrote a book, *The Lonely Crowd*, still exceptionally good reading. And their thesis was, what had happened was that the population here in this country that had been inner-directed, that is, governed by their faith and their conscience, and production-oriented, had become consumer-oriented. They were consumers, not producers. And they were not governed by their conscience, but by the crowd, the group-think aspect. Well, we've seen that, in a fearful way, it is continuing to develop to its logical implications, so that no one thinks in terms of moral standards and conscience, unless they are strong Christians.

Just a few nights ago on television I heard one man who was involved, a young man, in a very brutal murder, say, when he was asked why he had done it, "They

were going to kill him, so why not?" Well, our time is up. Thank you all for listening and, Mac, God bless you, and continue to prosper you in your work.

Pastor McIntyre: Thank you for your blessing, sir.

Speaker 2: Thank you for listening to the Easy Chair with R.J. Rushdoony. Please visit [Chalcedon.edu](http://Chalcedon.edu) for more materials by R.J. Rushdoona, and the Chalcedon Foundation.

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