

School Habits

by Wayne Goff

We are getting very close to the start of the new school year, and a mother/teacher on the news this past week was advocating getting children used once again to the routine of homework and proper sleep. She said that parents could begin now to regulate the sleeping pattern of their children to that which they will face when school begins. She also suggested giving children homework as preparation for school.

My guess would be that a majority of homes will do nothing of the sort to help prepare their children for the new school year. Parents tend to dread the battle with their children to go to bed on a regular schedule, and to do their work. So they just wait until both school and the “war at home” begins.

The homes that maintain some semblance of routine during the summer are the ones most likely to succeed when school begins. Habits are hard to form, but once formed are harder to break. As Christians, we have habits that we need to form and keep — summer and winter alike!

Do you have the habit of personal Bible study? Many of us prepare to teach our Bible classes but don’t really study on our own otherwise. This is not necessarily wrong, but it does mean that you need a “goal” to accomplish your personal Bible study.

Do you have the habit of self-discipline? The apostle Paul wrote, *“But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified”* (1 Cor. 9:27). Self-discipline is difficult because you are ultimately accountable to yourself, and it is easy to placate yourself! But discipline and self-control are the building blocks of the Christian life. Preachers, elders and members must all learn to do this in order to get to heaven.

Do you have the habit of prayer? By prayer I mean speaking to God at times other than meals. God knows what we need so why do we need to pray? Because you and I need to learn *daily* dependence on God! Prayer reminds you and me of that dependence. Look at Jesus’ prayer for us in Matthew 6:9-13 and see how much *dependence* is there. We need to be aware of God’s omnipresence, and prayer helps us in that.

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