

It's Back To School Time!

by John Isaac Edwards

Headed back to school? School days can present great opportunities and possibilities as well as considerable challenges and difficulties. Here are some spiritual things to think about as you go to school.

1) **Remember Who You Are.** Don't forget that you are a **Christian** — a learner and follower of Christ. "...the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). You wear the name of Christ and represent Him in all that you say and do. You are a member of His body (1 Cor. 12:27), a child of God (Gal. 3:26), one bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20) — "purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

2) **Yield Not To Temptation.** There will be allurements and enticements to sin. There may be pressures to drink, chew, smoke, use drugs, engage in pre-marital sex, use bad language, cut yourself, tattoo and pierce your body, dance, gamble, lie, cheat, steal, vandalize, fight, and do other things that are contrary to the will of God. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Prov. 1:10). Have the courage to say, "No!" Dare to be a Daniel — purpose in your heart that you will not defile yourself

(Dan. 1:8). Remember Joseph who "...fled, and got him out" (Gen. 39:12). "...keep thyself pure" (1 Tim. 5:22).

3) **Watch Your Associations.** There is such a thing as 'guilt by association.' Before you go somewhere with others, you might want to find out who is going to be there and what is going to be taking place. The Wisdom book teaches, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20). Paul wrote the Christians in Corinth, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15:33). Don't allow your good to become corrupted by evil.

4) **Keep Your Priorities In Order.** With all kinds of extra-curricular activities, it can be easy to so fill your schedule that you don't have time left for God. Remember Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..." And the admonition of the Hebrew writer: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..." (Heb. 10:25). In your learning, don't neglect the greatest book in the world — the Bible — the only book that is "...able to make thee wise unto salvation..." (2 Tim. 3:15).

5) **Dress Modestly.** 1 Timothy 2:9-10 says, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." Which does your dress profess: godliness or worldliness? Don't conform to the world in your dress (Rom. 12:1-2).

6) **Be Respectful.** In a time when many have little to no respect for anyone, including themselves, remember to "Honour all men..." (1 Pet. 2:17). Respect your parents, your teachers, and your fellow students. Practice the Golden Rule: "...all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them..." (Mt. 7:12).

7) **Set A Good Example.** Be the salt of the earth (Mt. 5:13). Let your light shine (Mt. 5:14-16). "...be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12). Many simply have not been taught how to act or behave. You can set the example of proper conduct.

Have a good school year!

The Servant Of The Lord

by John Isaac Edwards

Please take your Bible and read 2 Timothy 2:24-26. The apostle Paul lists some outstanding duties and responsibilities of the Lord's servant. Thus, we study.

1) **Must Not Strive.** The word "strive" means to fight or quarrel. The Scriptures reveal some things which cause men to strive: Talebearing (Prov. 26:20), whispering (Prov. 16:28), meddling (Prov. 20:3), pride (Prov. 28:25), wrath and anger (Prov. 15:18), and foolish questions (2 Tim. 2:23). The servant of the Lord must do nothing through strife (Phil. 2:3).

2) **Must Be Gentle.** To be "gentle" is to be mild. The word "gentle" was often used by Greek writers as characterizing a nurse with trying children. Paul is a great example of gentleness (1 Th. 2:7; 2 Cor. 10:1). The fruit of the Spirit is gentleness (Gal. 5:22). The Lord's servant must be gentle unto all (Titus 3:2).

3) **Must Be Apt To Teach.** "Apt to teach" suggests that the

Lord's servant is to be skilled in teaching; ready and able to teach. The qualifications of elders involve being apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:2). Are elders the only ones who are to know how to teach? Of course not! Every servant of the Lord is expected to teach. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers..." (Heb. 5:12). "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). If servants did their duty, we would have more men qualified to be elders in the house of God.

4) **Must Be Patient.** Patience requires that we be forbearing and hold up under evil. The servant of the Lord must be enduring, even when wrongfully treated. "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable

with God" (1 Pet. 2:19-20). We need a good dose of patience!

5) **Must Instruct Sinners.** There are those who have been taken captive by the devil and are in his snare. The Lord's servant is to instruct sinners so they might be saved. This must be done in a spirit of meekness. Our whole life should be characterized by meekness (Eph. 4:2; Mt. 5:5). Paul impressed this responsibility upon the hearts of the Galatians. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

This is a description of the servant of the Lord. We encourage you to become the Lord's servant by being baptized in obedience to the Lord (Rom. 6:16-18).

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