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Integrated Education – An unscriptural choice!

by Rev Brian McClung

Much comment has been made in many circles, in recent days, on the subject of Integrated Education. There is presently a growing lobby who desire this form of education and are becoming ever more public and vocal in their demands concerning it. An editorial in the Belfast Telegraph called for this form of education to be the mainstream. The First Minister Peter Robinson has also voiced his support for it.

Integrated Education is a choice that every evangelical Christian should recoil away instantly from. This is easily seen when those who support and desire this form of education are considered:

1. The Ecumenist. It has long been the desire of the ecumenical Protestant churches, in conjunction with the Government Department of Education, to attack and destroy Biblical Protestantism in the classroom.

For many years the Education for Mutual Understanding programme and its successors have been running within the state education sector.

The desire is to change children's way of thinking and to have them reject any semblance of difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.

This is akin to Nebuchadnezzar's plan for the Hebrew captives in Daniel ch 1. He wanted to change the mindset of these Jewish captives and to teach them the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

This conditioning work would be carried out over a period of time with the outcome being that any difference between the Hebrew captive and the Babylonians would be removed and the Hebrews would be integrated into the wicked Babylonian society. It was not the natives of Babylon who would change their thinking and language, it was the Jewish captives.

In like manner the ecumenical churches today laud Integrated Education. They see it as a means of changing the thinking of the children of Protestants. They desire children to reject the old views of Romanism, that she was full of false teaching and blasphemies and something to be separate from and to now accept Romanism as a Christian Church and just another Christian denomination.

2. The Secularist. Another group which sees potential in Integrated Education are those who seek to remove all semblance of religion, and Bible religion particularly, from the School Curriculum.

If changes are going to take place in the manner in which Education is delivered in Northern Ireland then they want to lobby for a secular system where there is no teaching of religion or influence of any Church in the classroom.

We live in an increasingly secularised society where many attempts are being made to remove all semblance of religion from public life and have it as something a person practices in the privacy of their home but never brings out into the open to interact or influence others.

Dr Henry Cooke, the eminent contender for 'Christian education' in the mid 1800s, within the then Synod of Ulster, argued that any system of education that did not have the Word of God at its core and centre was not worth having. It results in the mere educating of fools who will say in their heart: "There is no God", Psalm 14:1.

3. The Public Accountant. A third group lobbying for this form of education are those who judge things merely by what they cost, be they politician or bureaucrat.



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Their argument is that the cost is too high to teach children separately any longer. Principles, and Bible principles particularly, don't come into it. To them it is purely an issue of cost and economics.

This argument presently finds considerable traction because of the financially-challenging times we live in. Everything must bow to the god of commerce and therefore if there is a cheaper way of providing education, never mind the principles that have to be set aside, then economics wins the day.

It would be a sad and tragic day indeed if evangelical Christianity in this country walked blindfold into an integrated form of education having been persuaded by, among other things, a monetary argument.

The Lord pronounces a blessing upon the individual who lives a separated life, Psalm 1:1-3. If this is true for an adult, how much more relevant is it for our children who are impressionable and in grave danger of being taught wrong principles, by ungodly teachers, within a system that has rejected the authority of the Word of God.

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