

Give to Caesar What Is Caesar's

A testimony from Bonnie J. Horn, Copyright 1998

This letter is written to Christian mothers of home-educated children, both veterans and new comers such as myself. My purpose in writing is two-fold, to offer an apology, which comes from a repentant heart and to encourage families to educate their children within the private sector. (i.e. Christian private schools and private home schools.)

Dear sisters in Christ Jesus,

I have four beautiful children ages: 5, 3, 2 and 9 weeks. My husband and I decided that we would school our children at home five years ago when our oldest child was not yet born. We had wonderful role models within our home church and we asked many questions of them. Last year was the first year that we attended a conference. We came away spiritually refreshed, renewed and recommitted to the goal of a godly education for our children in their home environment. I had confidence that I could be successful as a home school mom. I also knew that I would benefit from the support and guidance of godly women. One wonderful sister took me by the hand and introduced me to many great curriculums and bookstores. She encouraged me to establish a private school for our family.

I knew that I could do this and I knew that I *should* do this. The reason being, my husband and I had accepted the sole responsibility of educating our children and we wanted freedom from any authority that would not allow godly principles, goals or methods. (i.e. public schools and public school independent study programs.)

Then something tragic happened. I fell into the trappings of this world and greed took hold in my heart. I had discovered that "Caesar" (the state government) would fund our home school efforts via an independent study charter school. We were promised funding and the freedom to establish our own goals and methods as long as they were not doctrinal. We could teach doctrine "on your own time" or use non-funded godly materials only documenting the outcome not the method.

I was choosing to pull out of the private sector and place over our schooling efforts an authority that required me to *separate* God within

Find many more articles at www.wordofhisgrace.org.

our home. I would have been teaching our children a double standard: God is O.K. for home but not for our school. Since our school is in our home that standard would not have stood for God at all! My idea to use a charter school was not consistent with our original goals. I knew this and the Holy Spirit was promoting me to stay true to my God.

But I soon squelched His still small voice in my heart and convinced my husband to go along. (I proved that I'm Eve's descendant!) God even placed in my life an article by Roy Hanson. I read it and had many questions for my representative of the school. The answers that I received dispelled my concerns and justified the motives of my decision to use "the system" and take full advantage of "my" tax dollars.

It didn't take long until I was making other statements in defense of my choice such as: "our non-supportive family will not take offense at a charter school approach to home education and thus, will support us." And, "I'm not sure of myself, I think the supervision will be helpful." These only served to cover the real motive inside my sinful heart. The bottom line was, "I wanted the money." And I was tempted by the offerings of books, consumables, toys, manipulatives, computers and software, supports, games, tutoring, and extra curricular activities such as music and karate lessons. All of this was available to us at no cost to our family budget.

Oh, but dear sisters, there is a cost. I did not consider the preciousness of all of you. You who have worked for many long years to keep your freedoms and pave the way for others and me. You who not only pay your taxes but also choose to pay, out of pocket and budget, for the godly education of your children. My greed blinded me and hardened my heart concerning you. I aligned myself with "Caesar," took his yoke upon me and pledged my allegiance to him. My heart softened toward "him." After all, one does not bite the hand that feeds them.

I have no doubt that my voting power would have been influenced serving "him" well in increasing control over our rights to keep our children in their homes. Just my very decision to leave your numbers would have served "him" well in weakening you. I ask for your forgiveness and confess my wicked heart before God. For I have realized my serious error in discernment.

And to you dear sisters who may be contemplating joining an independent-study charter school and to those who have already, I

appeal to your good Christian heart[s] that you also may see the truth behind these schools as I have. Within their system is the disintegration of home-education, as we know it. This may not be obvious to you now. Yet, if this fast growing trend of families leaving the private sector continues, there will come a day when our ears will hear the mourning of those who came before us. Their toil will have been in vain.

I ask that you examine your hearts before the throne and commit your way to the Lord, wholeheartedly. Be ever mindful of God and in your schooling serve Him with a willing and faithful heart. He will remove the obstacles from your pathway and bring you to your appointed goal. Trust in the Lord for *all* your needs. He knows them and will care for you even in your schooling endeavors, I'm convinced of this. Do not desire for yourself a portion of that which you pay to the government, as I did in my sinfulness. But instead, desire God's provision and sustaining grace. Give to Him your heart, body, and mind as well as your children's...

And Jesus answered them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." Mark 12:17

Permission is granted to reprint this letter in its entirety for free distribution. Many thanks to *Homeschool Christian* (<http://www.homeschoolchristian.com/allabout/editorials/govintervention/govhorn.php>) for making this letter from their Leadership Position Papers available.