

conflicted



Pulling
Back the
Curtain
on Public
Education

John Stamper

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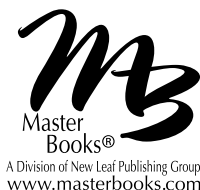
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DEDICATION

To my wife, Jenna, for her love and support.

To my parents — my first teachers — for their continued
love and guidance.

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Foreword

In 1990, a husband and wife — both barely 30 years old — made the incredibly difficult decision to pull their four young children out of public school and to teach them at home. With only high school educations, and four rambunctious children under the age of 12 (three boys and a girl), this was an intimidating decision, but one they knew they had to make

because they feared for their children's future. They saw where things were going: more and more of the biblical Christian values they wanted instilled in their children were being taught less and less, in favor of secularism, Marxism, and politics. That young set of parents was my mom and dad.

Over 30 years later, in 2021, I made the same decision — to leave public schools — but this time as a teacher. The example set by my parents and the Christian values I learned while home-schooling prepared me to face my own conflict of conscience. My hope is that this book will be a source of encouragement for parents of school-aged children as they face their own conflicts at school.



The Stamper family, 1991: (front, left to right) Phyllis, John, Bobby, Bob, (back) Kelly, Jimmy



Section One:
Beginning
at Home

“Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.” — Colossians 3:23–24

1



It's Time to Leave Public Schools

Public schools are proudly promoting ideologies that are racist, prejudiced, discriminatory, and destructive to our society — all in the name of equity and equality. These ideologies are often kept behind the curtain and snuck in through mandatory staff trainings — where parents and community members cannot see them. The teachers are trained first, then teachers train the students — it's as simple as that. But where are teachers getting these materials and who is pulling the ideological strings? We will discuss this more throughout the book.

America is in a spiritual battle, and public schools have been ground zero for several decades. America's long-held belief in God has been supplanted by the atheist ideologies of Marxism and communism; Critical Race Theory and Gender Theory are two of the byproducts. Not only are these ideologies becoming more common, but they are being embraced, promoted, taught, and defended in public schools and universities. Public schools are a battlefield, and children are on the front lines going up against trained adults in positions

of influence and authority — backed by teachers unions and government bodies like the Department of Education. For Christian parents, if you haven't already decided to leave the public schools, you and your children are certain to be faced with a major conflict in values.

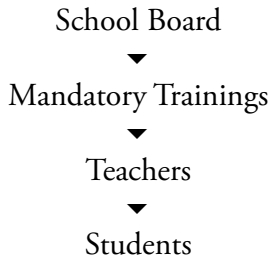
“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.” — Proverbs 14:12; ESV

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”
 — Proverbs 14:12; ESV

As that Proverbs verse rightly points out, two paths are laid out before us — both as individuals and as a nation: 1) we can go our own way, or 2) we can go the way of God. America has turned its back on God, and

biblical values can scarcely be found outside of church walls, or sometimes even within church walls. There's perhaps no better example of this than our public school system, which has removed any semblance of biblical morality, is sowing confusion and racial division among students, and has undermined the role of parents, labeling some who dare to speak up as domestic terrorists.

The school closures and virtual classrooms that began in early 2020 with the onset of Covid presented a rare opportunity for the indoctrination process to be streamlined. Teachers could share any image, graph, or document they wanted on screen and take it down in an instant. That means nothing goes home — things can be done in secret, behind the curtain. Parents are never part of the equation.



Parents may hear about fiery school board meetings or lawsuits in the news and on social media, where the topics of CRT and Gender Theory are hot, but many school corporations and districts deny that they are being taught in their schools. Proponents of these ideologies often point to the lack of physical evidence — in essence saying, “Prove it!” That’s the tricky part. In many cases, it’s difficult to prove that public schools really are teaching Critical Race Theory and Gender Theory, because most schools aren’t passing out textbooks and assigning homework on the topics; some absolutely are, but in general it’s not the type of information that gets printed out and sent home for parents to see on a regular basis, let alone approve. Often times, as I will discuss later in this book, parents don’t know these ideologies are being taught in school until their child comes home with a new pronoun or membership to a new, secret club at school.

The indoctrination process became paperless and even more streamlined during the Covid outbreak when school closures and virtual classrooms became the norm — a practice that is still being used by schools around the country. I’ll discuss examples of materials that I received as a teacher in mandatory staff trainings and which I was encouraged to share with my students. Teachers could simply show these materials on the screen during virtual classes and take them down in an instant with no physical proof for parents to see. This makes it difficult for parents to see what’s going on in school.

The political propaganda I encountered in my teaching for Chicago Public Schools was shocking and I couldn’t, in good conscience, go along with what the school system was promulgating. In my last year of teaching for a public school (2020–2021), I experienced the following:

1. Marxist, socialist, and communist ideologies being taught and promoted to students grades K-8

2. Critical Race Theory being used to teach that skin color, gender, sexual orientation, and income level are the most important things about a person
3. Gender Theory, gender dysphoria, and homosexuality being promoted to school-age children as early as kindergarten
4. Society being divided into two groups: oppressors and victims
5. Parents being removed from the education process and intentionally kept in the dark about the most intimate details of their child's life
6. The political-leftist, extremist agenda being instituted as truth — not as one of several competing viewpoints
7. A school board that refused to investigate instances of racial and religious prejudice occurring in their schools

Schools can implement an ideology in a quiet and discreet manner. This can be done through curriculum adoption, mandatory staff trainings, or regular staff meetings — curriculum adoption is the least discreet option, because it provides hard-evidence. Curriculum adoption is when the actual textbooks, workbooks, and programs that kids will be learning from are chosen, so parents would eventually see this stuff (you'd hope). This is usually done every year depending on which textbooks or programs are being pushed. For example, if Common Core is being taught in your school, it's because your teachers, principals, or school board members adopted that curriculum. Critical Race Theory and Gender Theory, which are founded on Marxist and communist ideals, have already taken root in American schools. Not in some other state, not in some other city, not in the future, but right now.

I know that “destructive ideologies” sounds a bit extreme, but that’s why I think these ideologies have been able to creep into our public schools over the years — because it’s simply hard to believe that something like communism could “take over America.” How would schools even get away with something like this?! It happens by keeping the curtain closed to unsuspecting parents and using mandatory staff trainings to implement Critical Race Theory and Gender Theory. “We cannot continue to send our children to Caesar for their education and be surprised when they come home as Romans.”¹ It happens because schools have control of kids (yes, control is the right word) for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, 180 days a year.

I’ve seen many fads come and go in my 13 years of teaching in public and private schools. For example, I experienced the controversial implementation of Common Core and I’ve been through numerous math trainings, science trainings, social-emotional trainings, and reading trainings — too many to remember. I’ve seen them come, and I’ve seen them go. It seems like the more programs that schools try to implement, the worse the students perform. America’s global education ranking, which we will discuss later, will show this to be true.

The difference now is that teachers and students are being taught to see a person’s skin color instead of the person. Students are being taught that their “gender identity” is the most important or interesting thing about them, and that they can change genders at any time. Schools are endorsing ideologies that undermine parents and divide society into two groups: the oppressors and the oppressed.

Schools are endorsing ideologies that undermine parents and divide society into two groups: the oppressors and the oppressed.

Few schools seem to be presenting traditional math and science programs anymore. Instead, schools are using innocent

1. Bauchman, Voddie T., *Family Driven Faith: Doing What it Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk With God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007).

children as guinea pigs to affirm their own political agendas and ideologies. Schools are teaching that if you're not white then you're a victim of systemic racism, that being white is oppressive, that all men are abusive, that being heterosexual is abusive, America is racist, gender is fluid, and that boys can be girls — to name a few.

My goals are to:

1. Share my personal experiences as a Christian teacher in public schools
2. Connect my experiences with other similar stories from around the country
3. Pull back the curtain on the indoctrination process and show parents how mandatory teacher trainings are used to implement radical ideologies in schools
4. Warn parents about public schools that are promoting Critical Race Theory and Gender Theory
5. Show parents how Marxist, socialist, and communist ideologies are dominating public schools
6. Encourage parents to homeschool their children

My belief is that — if your family can do it — it's time to pull your kids out of public schools and begin homeschooling. My hope is to make parents more aware of the dangerous things going on in public schools today, to encourage parents to keep the faith in your homeschooling journey, or to take that initial leap of faith into your homeschooling journey if you haven't done so yet. For families that cannot homeschool or simply choose not to homeschool, I offer the following suggestions:

- Talk to your children daily about what they're learning at school

- Demand that you be involved in your school's textbook and curriculum adoption process
- Demand opportunities to join your school's regular grade level meetings (elementary schools) and department meetings (middle schools and high schools)
- Demand access to all mandatory staff trainings; the same trainings that the teachers complete
- Demand cameras be installed in every classroom (people watch their dogs on camera through the day, so we should be able to watch our children)
- Participate in local elections (school board, sheriff, mayor, state representatives, etc.)
- Run for school board member positions
- Push to have elected school boards instead of appointed school boards
- Attend school board meetings regularly and schedule time to speak and ask questions
- Communicate with teachers and principals on a regular basis
- Join the PTO and attend meetings
- Advocate for School Choice in your state

I've found that most parents are shocked when I share my recent experiences in the public school system. We all hear things on the news or on social media about destructive ideologies being pushed on students and people might think, "That stuff only happens in the big cities, it would never happen in *my* school." There are certain ways for public schools to

implement destructive ideologies or policies without parental consent or knowledge — it’s happened already with Common Core and is currently happening with CRT, Gender Theory, Marxism, socialism, and communism.

To be clear, the problem is the government’s overreach into education — not the teachers themselves, but the system that allows and promotes destructive ideologies. There are many great teachers who are wonderful role models, but that’s becoming less and less the norm as more and more teachers are taking part in the indoctrination process. Not all schools are the same and some have drawn a line in the sand in terms of protecting children from CRT and Gender Theory. Regardless, parents need to know what’s going on in schools today. Why? Because you need to be prepared for the conflict of values that is sure to come if you choose to send your kids to a public school. That’s why I’m writing this book.

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that.” — Martin Luther King Jr.²

Homeschooling isn’t just an alternative to public and private schooling. Christians who homeschool are a direct rebuttal to the onslaught of wickedness that’s taken over our society. Children whose education is founded on biblical and moral truths are the cultural counterpunch to the woke school systems.

If you’re worried about the future and what the world will look like for your children and your children’s children, take heart in knowing that by raising your children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, you’re working to spread the Light of Christ, not just in the hearts of your children, but in the hearts of all the people they will meet in their future. This is the good fight.

In all things, it’s important to learn from history. Many say that history repeats itself, but I like how my former history professor taught it. He explained that history is not a

2. <https://www.gardnerkansas.gov/Home/Components/News/News/684/72?arch=1>.

repetitive circle, but it's more like a helix that spirals upward; we may recognize similarities between different points in history, but there is never really a true repetition of history. It is imperative that Americans understand world history, particularly instances when government authorities used the education system to implement their political ideologies, so that we can change course as a nation and avoid the tragedies that took place in the 20th century.

My wife and I traveled to Poland in 2019 and were able to tour Auschwitz; it was one of the most impactful experiences of my life. We saw the train tracks that led the boxcars full of Jewish families to the platform where the selection process occurred — who would go straight to the gas chambers and who would be forced into slave labor and eventual death. We saw the bunk houses, latrines, and prisons. We saw the mountain of shoes that were collected from the victims, so many of whom were children. We saw the ovens where the dead bodies were cremated. But perhaps the most shocking and lasting image was the encased room of human hair. The Nazi soldiers would shave the heads of the prisoners upon arrival and use the human hair as a resource, like fabric. When Auschwitz was liberated in 1945, there were stores of human hair still preserved and now encased at Auschwitz to serve as a reminder of what happened there.

Those horrors were the end results, but how could something like that ever begin in the first place? The education system played a major role.

Adolph Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933. He immediately began to reform the German education system to support the National Socialist party. Hitler's indoctrination process was so successful that in less than a decade of his reign, scores of German children were taken from their parents to form the *Hitler Youth*, serve as Nazi soldiers, and eventually carry out the horrors of the Holocaust during WWII. The Nazi propaganda machine was so powerful that, when the time came, regular German citizens would turn in

Jewish neighbors to the Gestapo. The following statement describes how Germany fell to such a dark state.

Everything that has been built up over a century of work by the teaching profession is no longer there in essence. . . . They have been willfully destroyed from above. No thought any more of proper working methods in school, or of the freedom of teaching. In their place we have cramming and beating schools, prescribed methods of learning and . . . learning materials. Instead of freedom of learning, we have the most narrow-minded school supervision and spying on teachers and pupils. No free speech is permitted for teachers and pupils, no inner, personal empathy. The whole thing has been taken over by the military spirit.³

Below were steps taken to imbed Nazi propaganda into the German education system.

Change the school curriculum

- Inject race into the curriculum; teach that certain races are superior, and some are inferior.⁴

Position individuals within the system to support the agenda

- Hitler appointed Bernhard Rust as Minister of Education whose role was to rid the educational system of Nazi opponents.⁵

Gain student support of political agenda

- Students were taught to stand and raise their hands toward a picture of Hitler on the classroom wall.⁶

3. Richard Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (NY: Penguin Books, 2005), p. 270.

4. Cate Haste, *Nazi Women* (Channel 4 Books, 2001) p. 101.

5. Louis L. Snyder, *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich* (Cody, WY: WordsWorth Publishing, 1998), p. 303.

6. Tomi Ungerer, *Tomi: A Childhood under the Nazis* (Roberts Rinehart Publishers 1998), p. 63.

Replace textbooks

- Old texts were replaced with new texts that supported National Socialism.⁷

Replace teachers

- All Jewish teachers were dismissed from teaching in German schools and universities in 1933. Races were separated into different schools to maintain racial purity.⁸

Train new teachers

- Most teachers were required to complete mandatory trainings which urged support for Hitler and the Nazi regime; teachers were then expected to train their students accordingly.⁹

Undermine the family unit

- Teachers encouraged students to report if their parents were not Nazi supporters, demanding their allegiance to Hitler.¹⁰

Keep these strategies in mind as you continue to read through this book and as I share my public school experiences. There are chilling similarities between how the ideology of the Nazi educational system and the current American public school system were incorporated.

Education is important, but the *type* of education is more important. Prior to Hitler and the rise of the Nazi party, Germany had the reputation as being one of the most highly-educated societies on the planet — known for its school system, high literacy rates, and esteemed universities. As of 1913, Germany published more books annually than any other country.¹¹ It did not take long for that to all be torn down.

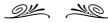
7. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power*, p. 264.

8. Bernhard Rust, *National Socialist Germany and the Pursuit of Learning* (1936).

9. Snyder, *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich*, p. 79.

10. Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (2001), p. 236.

11. <https://www.intellectualtakeout.org/blog/nazi-germany-was-highly-educated/>.



DEFINITIONS

Marxism, socialism, and communism will be discussed throughout this book, as well as their offspring — Critical Race Theory and Gender Theory. Below are reminders of some key characteristics of these systems:

Marxism:

- Social, political, and economic theory that separates people based on class, race, and gender
- Casts one group as the *oppressor* and the other group as the *oppressed*
- The goal is to establish communism
- Atheist

Socialism:

- People do all the work
- Government distributes the goods, services, and money as it sees fit
- Everyone gets equal wealth and provisions (in theory)
- Disincentivizes hard work and creativity; promotes greed, mediocrity, and laziness
- The goal is to establish communism

Communism:

- People do not own land, resources, or businesses
- Often results in forced labor
- Government owns everything and determines who gets what
- Promotes class warfare and creates extreme levels of poverty
- Atheist

Free-Market Capitalism:

- People own land, resources, and businesses (private property)
- Free exchange of goods and services; mutually beneficial
- Government enforces laws and doesn't interfere with the market (ideally)
- Supply and demand drives the economy and promotes competition
- Promotes creativity and growth
- Rewards hard work; allows for unequal levels of wealth

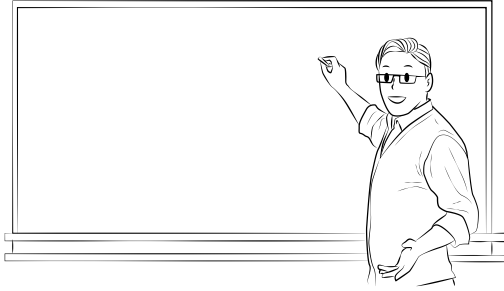
Vladimir Lenin famously stated that, “The goal of socialism is communism.”¹² As history proves, governments must use force, fear, coercion, and power to achieve Marxism, socialism, or communism, all of which are ideologies that have been embraced and implemented by the most brutal dictators in human history. They encourage sacrifice of anything to achieve “utopia,” which is why such governments of the 20th century were able to perpetrate the most significant mass murders on their own citizens.

Vladimir Lenin famously stated that, “The goal of socialism is communism.”

Marxist, socialist, and communist ideologies are entirely evil. Disturbingly, as I will point out, many of these ideological principles are being implemented and glorified in Chicago Public Schools, and schools around the country, through mandatory staff trainings and then through teacher-student interactions.

12. https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/vladimir_lenin_136421.

2



My Personal Testimony

Before we get into the serious issues that families are facing in public schools today, I want to share a bit about myself — my upbringing, my salvation story, and my career as a teacher and coach. I believe it will give context to my story and my point of view.

I was born in 1985, the youngest of four. When I was three years old, my parents moved our family from the Chicago suburbs to small-town Indiana. My siblings and I grew up on 50 acres of farmland and wooded pasture. Both of my parents were new Christians by the time I was born, so I was raised in a Christian home my entire life; that's all I've ever known. For most of my childhood, my parents took us to church on Sunday morning, Sunday night, and to Bible study on Wednesday night. We had regular Bible studies at home or at a family member's house. We even held potluck-sing-a-longs where people from church would come to our house, bring food, bring instruments, and we'd have a praise and worship service right there in our house. Most kids would probably want to go play and let the adults do the adult things, but I actually really enjoyed those nights as a kid and I really long

for them now — nothing can replace the Presence of God! I would not describe my parents as religious, rather I would say they loved the Lord and wanted to fellowship with other believers as much as possible — it was always about relationship, not religion.

In my teenage years, I did not have a personal relationship with Christ. My time, energy, thoughts, concerns, and heart were consumed by anything and everything other than God. Concerts, parties, friends, movies, girls, sports — you name it. My parents did a great job teaching us the Word of God, but I had not experienced God personally yet. I knew the stories of the Bible and I knew it was all true. I believed the Bible to be the inspired Word of God ... but I did not *know* Him. I had the head-knowledge, but I did not have the heart-knowledge. My parents had a wonderful, powerful, and miraculous salvation story, but their salvation was not my salvation — that was something I had to receive myself.

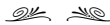
I graduated high school in 2003 and went off to college at Indiana University that fall. At the time, IU was ranked the #1 party school in the country (whatever that means) and it lived up to the hype. Having “fun” was the top priority for my friends and me. What I considered to be “fun” at the time was really just a reflection of my sinful lifestyle; it was fun on weekends but miserable, lonely, and unfulfilling during the week. Sometimes God lets us sink so low that we have no place else to look but up. That was the case for me. I had sunken to the lowest point of my life — socially, emotionally, and most importantly, spiritually.

Thank God for godly parents who pray for their children!

In the spring of 2004, during my second semester of college, God began to draw me out of my self-centered world and unto Himself. Over a two or three-week period and through a series of seemingly insignificant, unimportant events, the Holy Spirit got my attention and showed me my true spiritual condition, and I thank God for that.

It wasn't long until I was back visiting the church I'd grown up in and responding to an altar call. I remember, as I knelt to pray the sinner's prayer, that the song "Amazing Love" was being played. I wanted to know Him as well as He knew me and I remember the moment I was saved; it was as if a million pounds was lifted off my shoulders and, even though my eyes were closed, all I could see was light — I was brought from darkness into the glorious light! That was in February of 2004 and I'm still living for the Lord today.

My parents getting saved changed the whole trajectory of my family; it changed our future. If my parents cared nothing for God or the Bible, they would not have made the decision to pull my siblings and me out of public school.



MY TEACHING BACKGROUND

I graduated from Indiana University in 2008 with a Bachelor's in Elementary Education (K–6) and a minor in Special Education (K–12). After graduation, I stayed in my hometown and taught 6th grade, which included the core subjects (Math, Reading, Science, History). In year two, I moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, and became an after-school teacher for a private school. There, I was responsible for the 2nd–5th grade students that were involved in the program — mostly helping with after-school studies. I left Knoxville and returned home to northwest Indiana in 2010, where I began my third year of teaching at a private treatment facility for kids. At the same time I returned to college to add Physical Education and Health & Wellness (K–12) to my teaching degree. The children living at this facility were court-ordered to live there. These youth came from difficult backgrounds and were often predisposed to violence, drug abuse, or expulsions from school. At this treatment facility, I was responsible for teaching boys from age 12 to 17. It was a one-room-schoolhouse

environment where I had to meet each student at his individual grade level while still teaching all students as a group. This was the most difficult experience of my life, but also provided me the most freedom I've ever had as a teacher. I was able to craft the curriculum to tailor my students and teach subjects they were interested in. In this way, the one-room-school-house approach, which is like homeschooling, is superior to today's public schools.

In 2011, I left the treatment facility and landed what would become my dream job — teaching Elementary Physical Education. During my nine-year tenure in Munster, Indiana, I earned my Master's in Leadership & Sport Management from Trine University. When schools closed during the 2020 Covid outbreak, I created an educational website that offered online P.E. courses to students that were unexpectedly stuck at home. These online courses have since opened the door to a career in homeschooling, for which I've left my career in public schools.

In addition to my 14 years of teaching, I've also enjoyed 13 years of coaching. I've been a volunteer coach, assistant coach, and head coach in five different sports, ranging from elementary to varsity athletes. I began as a volunteer coach for my old high school baseball team. This initial coaching position opened the door for an assistant position as a high school swim coach as well as an assistant position as an elementary basketball coach. The swim coach position led to me becoming the Pool Director for the entire school corporation. The director position led to my next position as head coach of a tiny high school track and field team, which then led to my position as head coach of a huge high school track and field team. Since childhood, I have consistently found myself in leadership positions, whether it was as a team captain, supervisor, coach, or teacher. In my experience, one opportunity has led to another.