Back-to-School Sunday: A Blessing for Students, Parents, and Teachers

Written by Dan Wunderlich (DefiningGrace.com)

Pastor invites students, parents, and teachers to come to the front of the sanctuary (or stand in place).

PASTOR: John Wesley lived in a time when education was not available to or even encouraged for all. Yet he believed that education was a universal right based on the Scriptural truth that we are all created in the image of God. We all equally deserve to learn and grow in knowledge, wisdom, and grace.

He inherited from his mother the view that each and every child is “a talent committed to [us] under a trust by the great Lord of all the families, both of heaven and earth.”

And so today, as we begin a new school year, we take a moment now to recognize and bless our students, parents, and teachers.

To the parents, grandparents, and all in this community that help to care for these young people, I remind you of these words from Proverbs:

“Train children in the way they should go; when they grow old, they won’t depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6, CEB)

Their success in the classroom can be aided and even amplified by the love, support, and direction you provide to them. Many times throughout the Bible, God tasks parents and caretakers with the responsibility of participating in the education of children.

With that responsibility on our hearts and minds, we extend our hands in blessing toward you and pray together:

CONGREGATION: O God, our eternal and heavenly parent, bless now these families. Fill their homes with joy and their hearts with love. Give them energy, strength, and discernment as they raise these children. And remind them that we, their community and church family, are here to support them. Amen.

PASTOR: To the teachers who serve in our schools and at this church, I remind you that teaching is not only a profession but a calling. It is not simply a skill, but it is prominently featured in Paul’s listing of spiritual gifts.

John Wesley believed that education was a channel for God’s grace and that excellent teachers have the ability to transform the lives of their students.

We thank you for the commitment you make to our children. We recognize that you do not simply recite information, but you teach our students how to learn, understand, and apply knowledge.

With that commitment on our hearts and minds, we extend our hands in blessing toward you and pray together:

CONGREGATION: Holy Spirit, the source of all wisdom, bless now these teachers. Fill their classrooms with learning and their hearts with compassion. Give them focus, patience, and creativity as they educate these children. And remind them that we, their community and church family, are here to support them. Amen.

PASTOR: To the students who stand before us today, I remind you of this promise that the Apostle Paul testifies to in the Scriptures:

“The one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion…” (Philippians 1:6, NRSV)

This means that while you are growing and learning at home and at school, God is working alongside of your parents and teachers to form you in to the person God wants you to be. God is equipping you and inviting you to be a part of the great adventure of life.

Listen to and respect both your parents and your teachers. At the same time, know that your voice and your point of view matter. The Bible tells us adults not to look down on you because you are young but to recognize that you can be an example to us in speech, behavior, love, and faith.

In gratitude for all that God will do in and through you this year, we extend our hands in blessing toward you and pray together:

CONGREGATION: Lord Jesus, who welcomed the children and held up their faith as an example, bless now these students. Fill their schools with community and their hearts with wonder. Develop within them wisdom, integrity, and maturity as they learn and grow this year. And remind them that we, their community and church family, are here to support them. Amen.