

## Book Review

REVIEWED BY PATCH BLAKEY

The Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, “To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe” (Phil. 3:1b). In response to the accusation that he was covering old ground in his sermons, a contemporary pastor has paraphrased this comment by stating, “I’m going to keep preaching this until you start doing it!” Indeed, you may look at the book’s title and be tempted to lament, “Ah, yet another book telling Christian parents to pull their kids out of the public schools.” But before you do, you will want to consider Brad Heath’s valuable and thought provoking contribution to the growing number of authors and Christian leaders who are promoting this idea.

*Millstones & Stumbling Blocks* is a short book and a quick read. But don’t let its diminutive size mislead you. It’s graciously and thoughtfully composed, yet doesn’t pull any punches in stating the hard truths the author is compelled to communicate. It is a philosophical book without all of the graphs, charts, studies and data. Heath has compiled a list of excellent supporting quotes, spreading them liberally throughout his book, and often drawing heavily from the Bible, the ultimate authority for us as Christians. He writes in a logical and engaging, metaphorical style that draws the reader along with him as he develops each of his ideas.

He points out that “the content of education must be validated by the context in which it is presented. Context confirms content.” In other words, not only should parents be concerned about what their children are being taught, but also the context in which they are being taught. Based on reflections of his own

public school education, he goes on to point out that “every day for twelve years the *content* and *context* of my public schooling said there is no God, and even if there is, He does not matter.” Is it any wonder then, that we see daily reports of the problems that are arising with increasing and alarming frequency in the public schools?

Throughout his book, Heath drives the point home in a number of ways that “education is enculturation.” He connects the dots between contemporary evangelicalism, the church, and the public school system, and how they have all worked together (if not cognitively, certainly by default) to form our present postmodern culture in post-Christian America. The evangelical church is sadly one of the strongest proponents and promoters of the public school system, and yet there is

government’s public school system. The Lord Jesus Christ might not be openly denied in the public schools (although we often hear that He is), but at best, His exalted position is diminished to a level on par with the broad range of the American pluralistic, multicultural pantheon.

God desires godly offspring. Yet Christian parents in America, Heath points out, are all too quick to turn their children over to be instructed in godlessness, and then wonder why their children don’t retain their faith by the time they graduate from high school. It is a true American tragedy.

You may think that because your kids go to a classical Christian school that this book doesn’t really apply to you. But stop and consider for a moment. Are there Christian families in your church or neighborhood that

have their children enrolled in the local public school? Does your pastor teach that there are a broad range of means available for Christian parents to educate their children,

and that the public school is one of them? Is your local public school one of the primary uniting mechanisms for families within your community?

If you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, you will want to read Brad Heath’s *Millstones & Stumbling Blocks*. Once you do, you will also most likely want to obtain copies for your pastor and friends. Brad Heath’s message needs to be proclaimed until it’s evident that Christian parents in America are actually withdrawing their children from the government’s public school system and placing them in a Christ-centered learning environment. May the Lord hasten the day!

### **Millstones & Stumbling Blocks: Understanding Education in Post-Christian America**

by Bradley Heath

Tucson, AZ: Fenestra Books, 2006, 144 pages, \$15

an embarrassingly vast accumulation of documentation that shows that Christian children are being hijacked (kidnapped?) from their parents’ Christian beliefs and converted to secular humanism, the reigning civil religion in America.

Heath also goes into several reasons why Christian parents are so supportive of the public school system, and provides strong, positive and biblical alternatives. He also notes that reforming the public school system is like trying to reform communism; it can’t be done because Christianity and communism are antithetical to one another. And this is the same situation that exists with the