

one by it; but we must remember that Satan is harder and harsher still. There may be a way to engage in interscholastic sport that minimizes its inherent dangers, but our homes and schools have not found it. Instead, we have

raised interscholastic sport to a place of power and prominence, making it a corollary of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And that is a different ball game all together, a very dangerous game indeed.



## **CURRENT ISSUES**

# **Values in Education**

Brian Dykstra

In an article appearing in *The Grand Rapids Press*, Curtis Gans, director of the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, addressed the problem of voter apathy in the United States. In his article Gans pointed out that in the '84 Presidential election there were 80 million people who did not vote, and in the coming Congressional election there will be about 100 million people who will not vote. Gans also cited statistics which show that 20 million people have stopped voting in the past two decades. Gans claims that in this

year's vote the real results are likely to be Democrats 18 percent, Republicans 17 percent, and Non-Voters 65 percent.

Gans then goes on to list what he believes to be causes of this serious problem. The nation's values in education are partly to blame for this, says Gans. He writes:

We have an education system that is too much committed to providing the tools to earn a buck, too little committed to providing the values, skill and civic education necessary to develop an enlightened and participating citizenry.

We have a television-

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shaped society of spectators and consumers rather than investors and participants in the political process. With the viewing fare provided, it is a wonder that the collective American mind has not turned to mush.

The trap of calling education "good" if students are being taught money-making skills could easily snare us. Do we look at educating our children as some type of investment that must pay monetary dividends later if present tuition sacrifices are to be worthwhile? This is certainly the viewpoint of many students today. How often have not students raised the cry, "What do I have to learn algebra for anyway? None of the guys I talk to ever use it in their jobs."

We also tend to think that education is beneficial only if we "get something out of it." All too often what this means is that students must be entertained in class. It just is not worth the effort to pay attention to a teacher who is not entertaining. Teachers certainly cannot expect classes to pay attention if fun and entertainment are not incorporated into teaching plans. Because of this attitude, basic education has been sacrificed for pleasure. It has become somewhat scandalous for a teacher to expect or demand that students

work hard if there is not a great deal of fun involved. Schools are quickly becoming day-care centers for children.

Perhaps we forget from time to time what our true goals for education are. One of our priorities in education is the development of Christian values in our children. How can we expect a Christian pilgrimage from someone who has not learned Christian values? No matter what the job, Christian values will serve well.

Having students learn how to think clearly and logically is also an ideal. This requires math skills, since the language of math is the language of logic. Good communication skills are needed so that it is possible to express clearly what is thought. Clear and logical thinking requires more than merely producing a reasonable answer to stuff into a blank.

If the world is becoming concerned because the education system is not helping people to participate in society, then we should certainly be careful that our schools do not develop citizens who are incapable of participating in the church. How can we defend the truth if we cannot think clearly? How will we be able to discern the main ideas of sermons and religious readings without good listening and reading skills? How can we as people of the church make sound decisions concerning the truth if

