

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

I once visited a church where a Pastor's wife was teaching during a Sunday night service. She said that she doesn't care how many degrees a person has; or how many times a person reads the Bible from cover to cover. If God doesn't speak to the person then all the reading and learning doesn't matter. She failed the congregation in her teaching. She also failed to understand that God not only speaks to us in the Bible, but also through many other avenues in life. The Words of God falling out of the sky in an audible voice, as she assumed, may never happen to us in this life. It would be too obvious for us to be deceived by such a voice, and Satan, as the great counterfeiter he is, could easily disguise himself as 'god' speaking to us. The Lord wants us to get to know Him, and learn His voice so that it would be impossible for us to be deceived by a false voice in disguise of being His holy and perfect voice.

In today's world, we find many people that devalue Christian education. While devaluing Christian education they support and praise their children off to secular schools to seek a non-biblical education. In my experience, I've seen that many of the people who de-value and reject Biblical related degrees are those who themselves do not have a degree in a Biblical discipline. It is uncommon for people who have a degree(s) to reject its necessities; but they also encourage others to pursue a degree(s) in a Biblical related discipline(s) as well. Learning occurs in different ways, and at different levels. Some learn by seeing, others by hearing, and by speaking. This all goes back to the basic discussion of our five natural senses, which are: sight, hearing, taste, touch (or feel), and smell. Through these, we are given the ability to communicate to the physical and material world around us. If one of these senses are impaired, it produces struggles in the human learning process. It very well can result in a lack of motivation to learn. Especially

when others or peers around the person at the same age group appear to excel.

Apart from senses, age plays a role in the human learning process as well. For example, a three year old cannot process information as well as a twelve year old. And a twelve year old will not be able to understand life on a level that only comes through time and experience. That said, there are many issues that affect ones learning ability. I also think two of the biggest deficiencies among the learning process are negative influences to education and a lack of self discipline. A good formula for un-success is: lack of application + lack of study + lack of focus = lack of learning achieved. And finally, the student throws away money on tuition because nothing has been learned. In the field of Psychology, Jean Piaget is the founder of the theory of Cognitive Development. In this theory, the concern is on *how we develop thinking capabilities (how we learn and understand)*. A rough definition is *the gradual, orderly process by which mental processes become more complex and sophisticated*. So the theory of cognitive development is concerned with what factors affect and contribute to our learning. A question will be: How does this theory affect Distance Education?

Distance Learning is not as expensive as the on-campus experience because of less-transportation, less-travel, and less-cost in living expenses. Also, the affects of the learning process cannot only be limited to the cognitive side. But, other contributing factors cause a spread across the other two: Behavior and Humanistic.

For behavior, such factors that should be considered are:

Learning disabilities

- Seeing or hearing ailments, unable to study, read, comprehend due to other mental problems, or write in the absence of a tutor

- Childhood problems that one failed to deal with such as loneliness. Maybe the parents did not spend enough time with the person during childhood. Later, they may feel a need of lack of attention, or loneliness (therefore they feel the need to be around others and cannot work alone through a Distance Learning program).

For humanistic, such factors include, but not limited to the following:

Financial needs (situations causing one to work more than one job leaving no room for study),

Personal problems dealing with family or others, lack of motivation, and/or poor study habits

Other Personal problems (person not properly investing time in school material due to spending time meeting their other personal human needs)

These are only examples! It may sound a little trivial to some, but, however, they are true. There are people, who actually deal with such problems, others might not be aware of. Sometimes we even wonder why students receive low grades while others are always at the top of the dean's list. The best route to take is the humble route. Just because you may not experience learning disabilities, it is no excuse to look down on others. God may have to cause the right circumstance to manifest your weaknesses for you to begin taking a humble route. This then causes us to have compassion on others who deal with the problems in others that are so exposed.

In conclusion, I would like to share my experience with Distance Education. It has actually boosted my learning and education all for the positive. My experience has given me a greater

return as supposed to sitting in a classroom. I can name a few advantages: **Classroom lectures** (I hear the same lectures as the classroom students. The greater benefit is that I get to rewind them for study over-&-over again), **Less expensive** (I do not have to spend money on high gas prices to get to the campus, or pay dorm expenses, but rather can complete classes in the privacy of my home at my own pace), **less demanding** (as a semester for on-campus students normally is about three months long, I am given up to one-year to complete my classes. Also I am not expected to be at a specific place at a specific time for role-call). This is in no way exhaustive, but I wanted to highlight a few important points to explain some Psychological Learning Deficiencies in Distance Education Students Compared to the Traditional Classroom.

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