

## Back To School

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Summer break has ended. Some students are already back in school—all shortly will be. We hope all the best to those with eager, young minds open to learn and grow because through your efforts this year your quality of life will improve now and on into the future. As proof of this point, consider a survey published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 2011, the average amount of weekly salary earned by those with less than a high school diploma was \$451, and with a high school diploma the amount of weekly pay rose to \$638. Add some college even though no degree has been attained and again we go up this time to \$719. Get that Associates Degree under your belt and your new paycheck becomes \$768. A Bachelor's Degree will award you \$1,053. A Master's Degree will allow you to hope for \$1,263 on average. A Doctorate Degree will boost your income to \$1,551. And, a Professional Degree is bringing in \$1,665 per week on average. (Source: [http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_chart\\_001.htm/](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm/)). No one even wants to argue with the numbers; it is a good thing to be going “back to school.”

If the benefits of an education can be quantified so readily like this, does it occur to you that the surpassing benefits of a spiritual education may also possess intrinsic value? Please, read Psalm 112:1-3 as a case in point:

*Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.*

Once more the Psalmist is referenced to show the value of spirituality, “I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches” (Psalm 119:14). But, does the value of spiritual blessings actually surpass that of great wealth? Oh, yes! Solomon wrote, “Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death” (Proverbs 11:4). The Lord wants His people to be good stewards but not to trust in riches as is seen in Proverbs 27:23-24, “Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?” Jesus urged trust in God rather than riches when He said, “Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:24-25). Paul's language is elevated when he by the inspiration of God observed, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Romans 11:33).

Have you seen our attendance board in the front of the auditorium? If so, did you notice the disparity between Sunday School and Morning Worship? Clearly, it is time that many of us went “back to school” don't you think? Imagine some rebellious child saying to his parents, “I don't want to go to school anymore!” Guess what? They are going to send him anyway! But, why? You know the answer: because it is good for him and for all those around him. Do you think it would hurt for us to evaluate our Sunday School attendance a similar light?