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# Christian Liberty in Daily Life

Though this be madness,  
yet there is method in 't

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# Questions We're Trying to Answer

-  # What is the definition and purpose of Christian Liberty?
  -  # How do I recognize whether something is a liberty issue?
  -  # How do I decide what to do for a given liberty issue?
  - # What do I do when others disagree with me about liberty issues?
  - # Does respect for liberty negate the pursuit of wisdom?
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# Biblical Foundations

# Romans 14

# 1 Corinthians 8

# 1 Corinthians 10

# Galatians 5

# Colossians 2

The basic theology of Christian Liberty is summarized in Chapter 20 of the Westminster Confession of Faith

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## Definition Reviewed

# **Christian Liberty**: The condition of being able to act in any desired way **to glorify God** without **biblical** hindrance or restraint; faculty or power to do as one likes **to glorify God**.

Therefore, whether you eat or drink,  
or whatever you do, do all to the  
glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

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# Recognizing Liberty Issues

# Does the Scripture ***explicitly*** or by ***good and necessary consequence*** require particular behavior?

- ▶ If so, then the issue is not a liberty issue
- ▶ If not, then ask the next question

# Does ***applying relevant Scriptural principles*** require particular behavior?

- ▶ If so, then the issue is not a liberty issue
  - ▶ If not, then apply the relevant principles to determine the bounds of your liberty
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**Specific Example:**

**How shall I educate my  
minor children?**

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# Disclaimers

# Tonight's discussion will be necessarily incomplete.

- ▶ We will have to make many simplifications.
- ▶ We will not be able to fully develop any arguments.
- ▶ This is an example of how to address liberty issues, not a self-contained discussion of this particular topic.

# Nothing that I say should cause anyone to change the way you currently educate your own children.

- ▶ Depending on your current views, it might prompt you to reconsider what you think about how some others are educating their children.
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# Incomplete Universe of Options

**Public School**

**Christian School  
(reformed)**

**Christian School  
(benignly non-  
reformed)**

**Home School  
(co-op)**

**Home School**

**Charter School**

**Christian School  
(militantly non-  
reformed)**

**Private Tutor  
(similar theology)**

**Private School  
(another religion)**

**Private School  
(secular)**

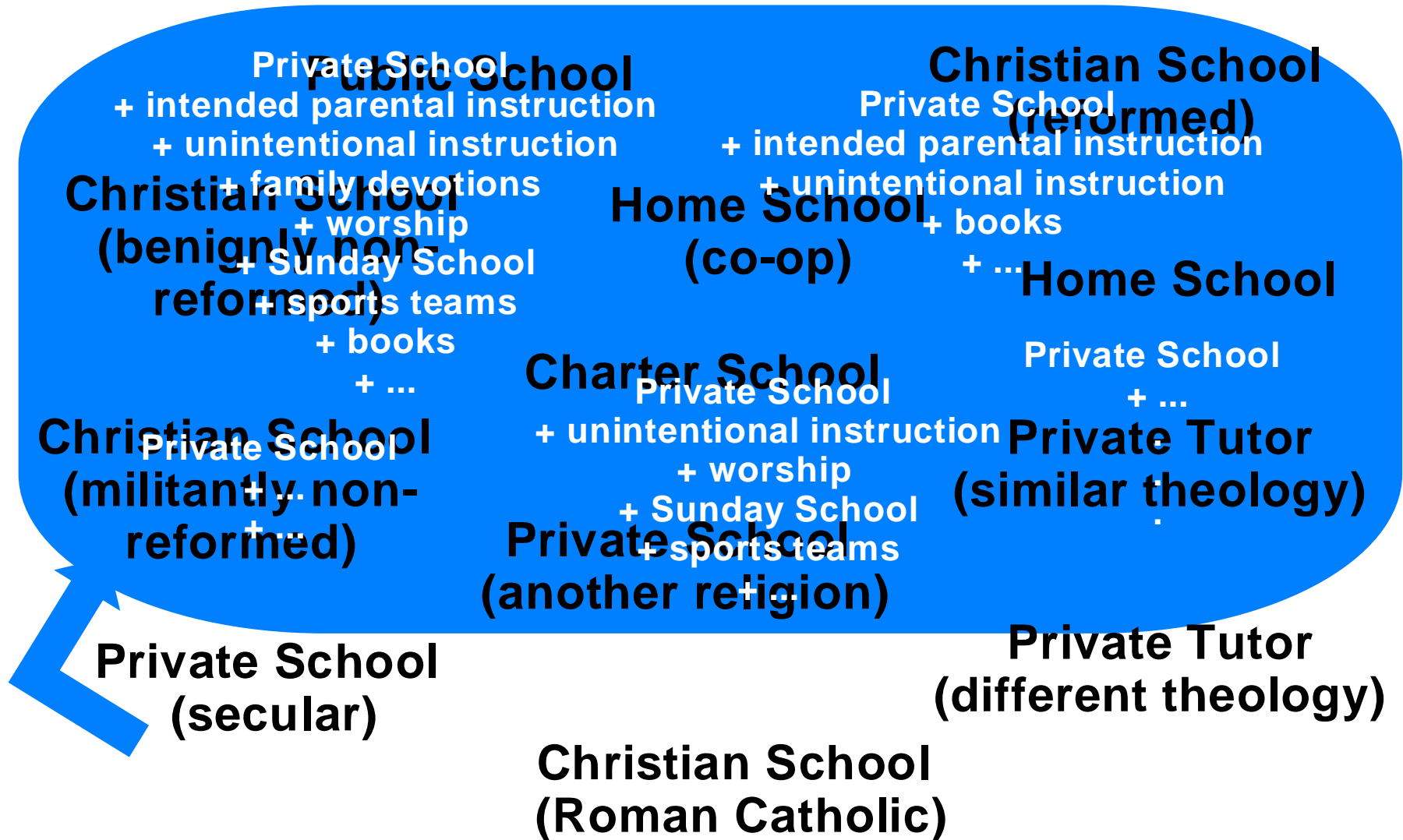
**Private Tutor  
(different theology)**

**Christian School  
(Roman Catholic)**

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# Incomplete Universe of Options



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# Very Simplified Universe of Options

**Public School**

**Christian School  
(Reformed)**

**Christian School  
(Non-Reformed)**

**Home School**

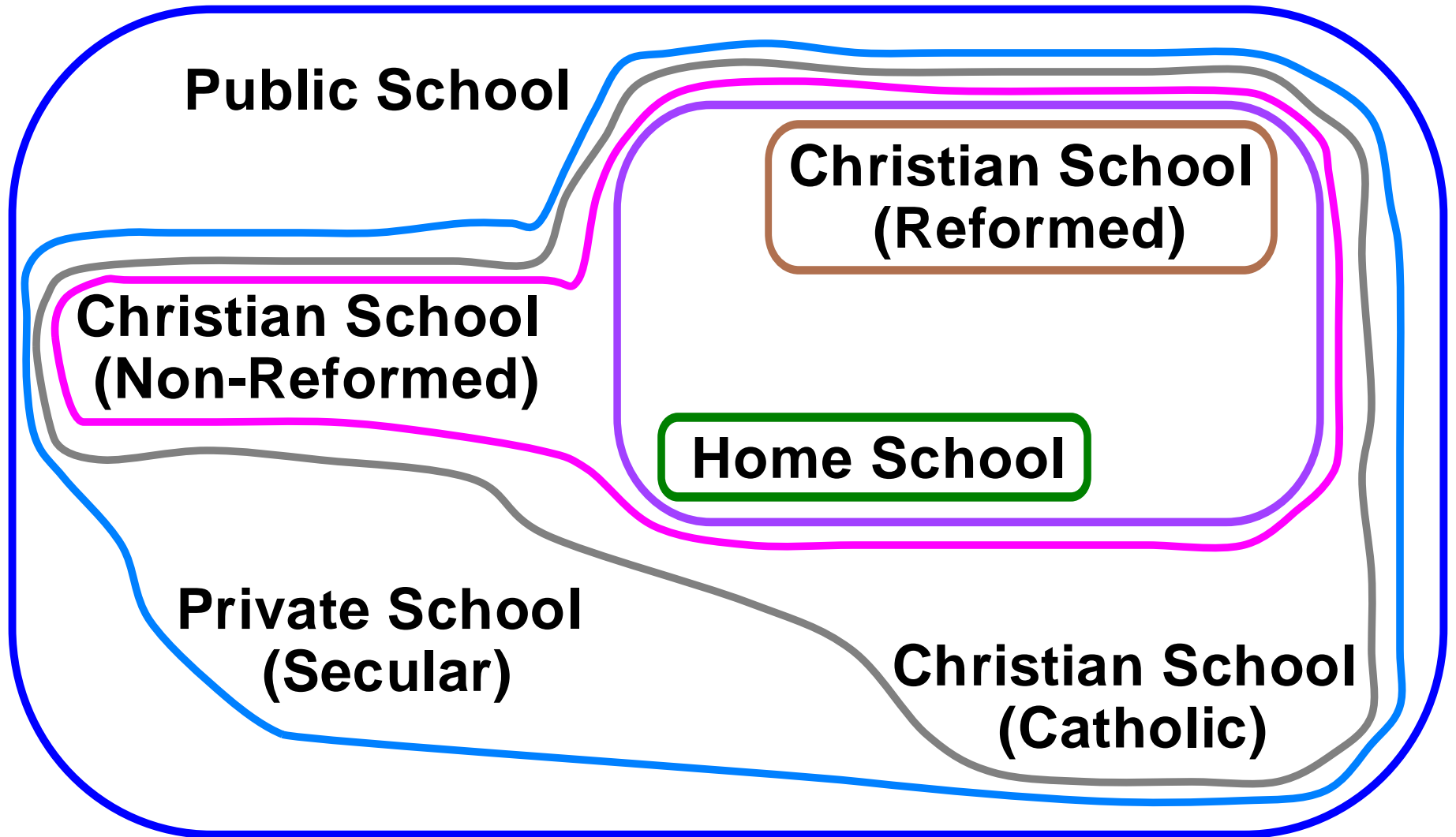
**Private School  
(Secular)**

**Christian School  
(Catholic)**

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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds



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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds

**Public School**

**Christian School  
(Reformed)**

**Christian School  
(Non-Reformed)**

**Home School**

**Private School  
(Secular)**

**Christian School  
(Catholic)**



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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds

**Public School**

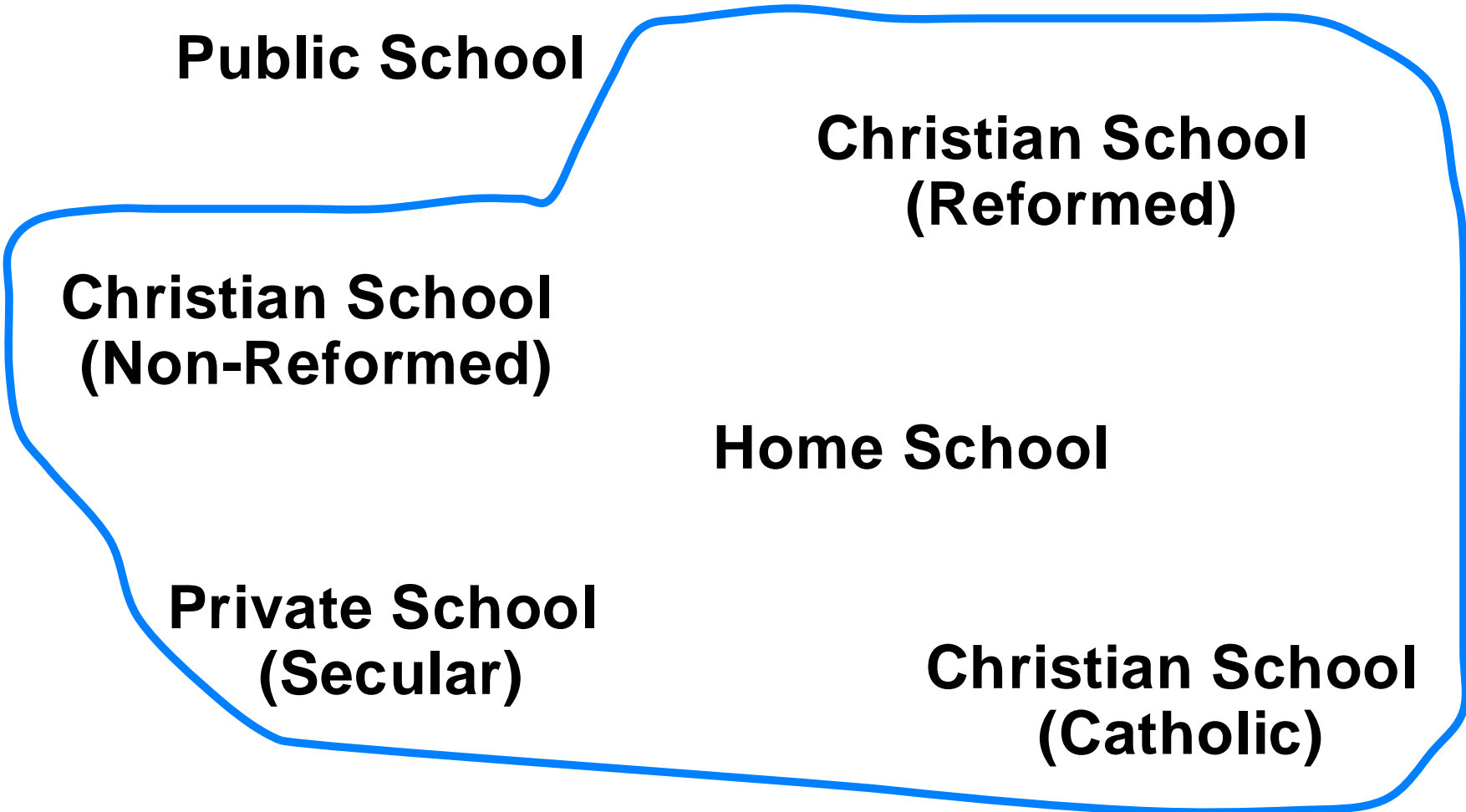
**Christian School  
(Reformed)**

**Christian School  
(Non-Reformed)**

**Home School**

**Private School  
(Secular)**

**Christian School  
(Catholic)**



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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds

**Public School**

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**Christian School  
(Non-Reformed)**

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(Catholic)**

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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds

**Public School**

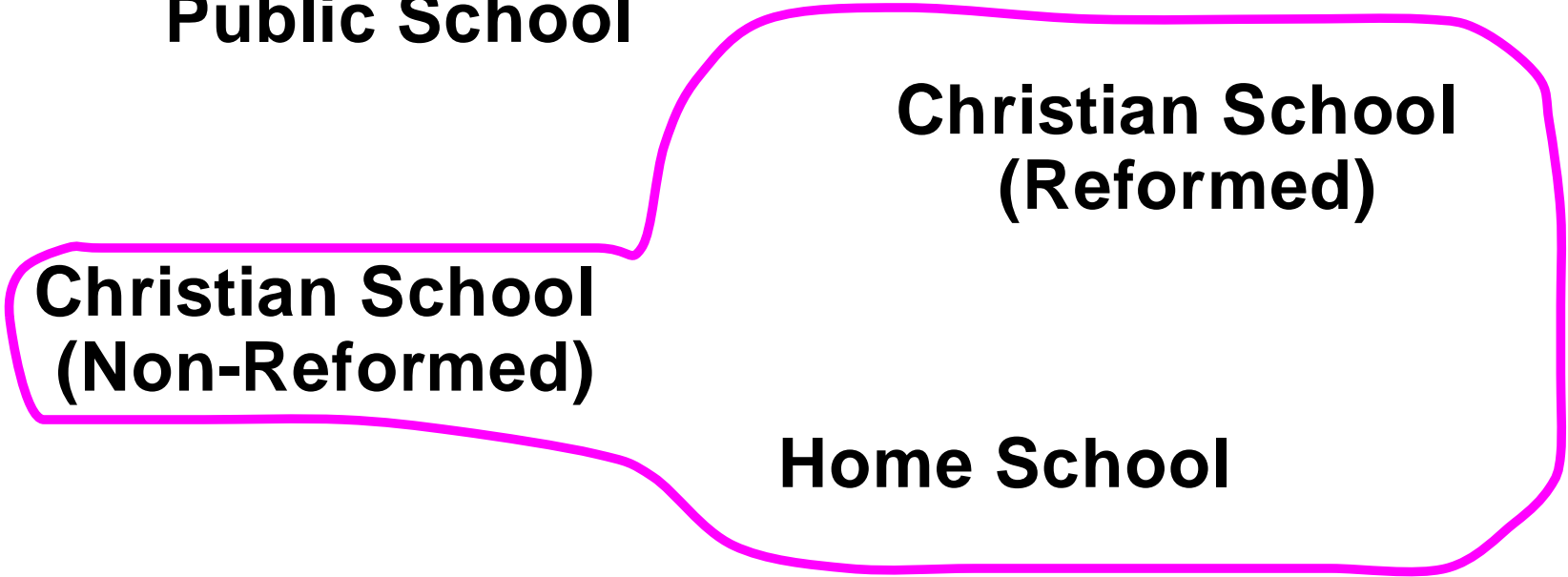
**Christian School  
(Reformed)**

**Christian School  
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**Home School**

**Private School  
(Secular)**

**Christian School  
(Catholic)**



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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds

**Public School**

**Christian School  
(Non-Reformed)**

**Private School  
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**Christian School  
(Reformed)**

**Home School**

**Christian School  
(Catholic)**

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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds

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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds

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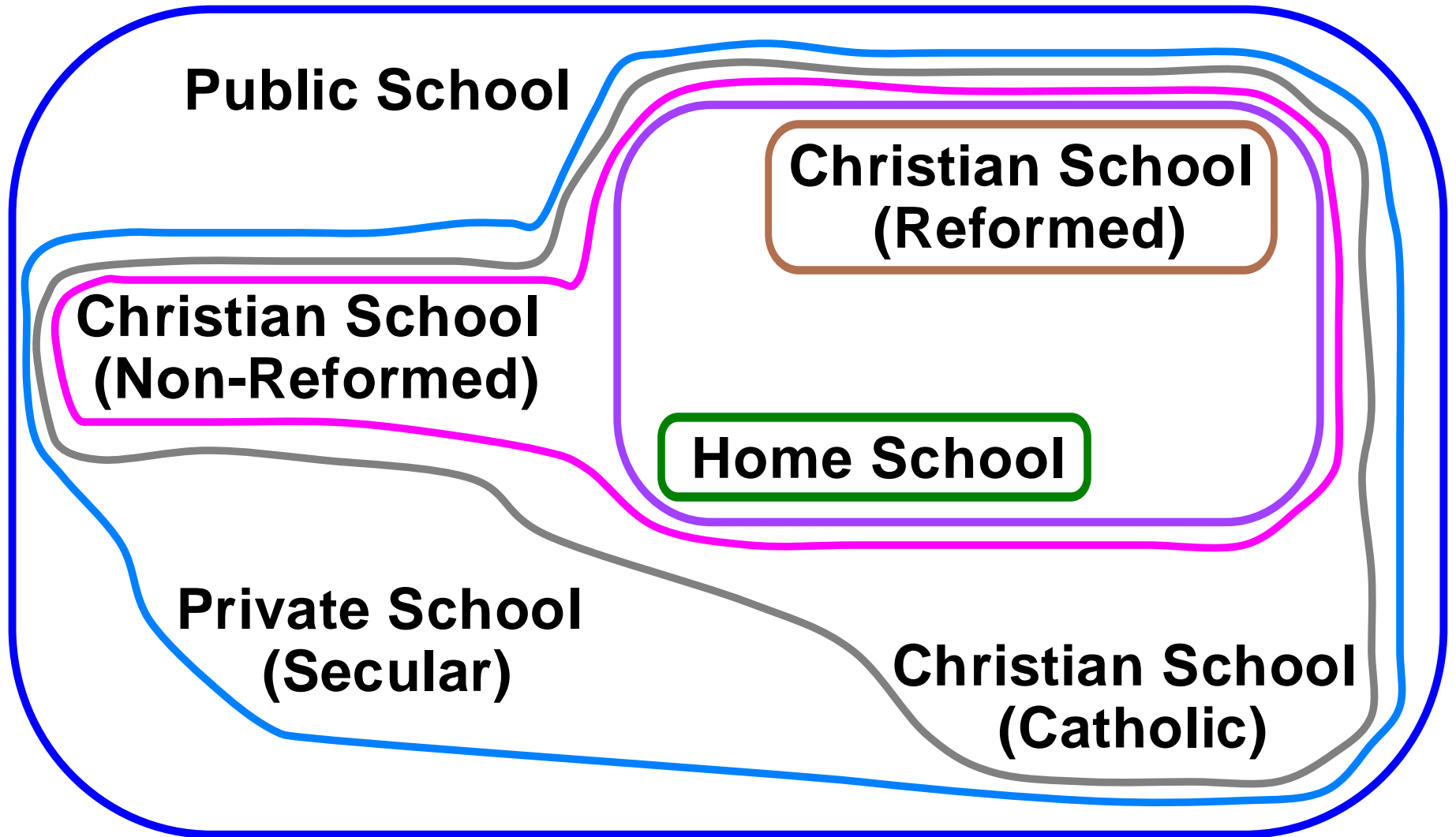
**Private School  
(Secular)**

**Christian School  
(Catholic)**

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# Some Claimed Liberty Bounds



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## First Question

# Does the Scripture *explicitly* or by *good and necessary consequence* require that I educate my minor children in a particular way?

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## First Question: Explicit

- # Does the Scripture *explicitly* or by *good and necessary consequence* require that I educate my minor children in a particular way?
- ! What does the Scripture *explicitly* say about educating minor children?



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# Explicit Statement

# Does the Scripture *explicitly* or by *good and necessary consequence* require that I educate my minor children in a particular way?

! What does the Scripture *explicitly* say about educating minor children?

▶ Parents are responsible for educating their children about God's Word.

★ Deuteronomy 6:5-9; 11:18-19

★ Ephesians 6:4

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# First Question: G & N Consequence

# Does the Scripture *explicitly* or by *good and necessary consequence* require that I educate my minor children in a particular way?

! What does the Scripture say by *good and necessary consequence* about educating minor children?

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# G & N Consequence

# Does the Scripture *explicitly* or by *good and necessary consequence* require that I educate my minor children in a particular way?

! What does the Scripture say by *good and necessary consequence* about educating minor children?

- ▶ Parents are responsible for educating their children about everything else, too.
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# Home School Only Then?

**Public School**

**Christian School  
(Reformed)**

**Christian School  
(Non-Reformed)**

**Home School**

**Private School  
(Secular)**

**Christian School  
(Catholic)**

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# Counter Examples

- # **1 Samuel 2:11** Then Elkanah went to his house at Ramah. But the child ministered to the LORD before Eli the priest.
  - # **Psalms 119:99** I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation.
  - # **Luke 6:40** A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.
  - # **Galatians 4:1-2** Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.
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## Second Question

# Does *applying relevant Scriptural principles* require that I educate my minor children in a particular way?

! What are the Scriptural principles that are relevant to educating my minor children?

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# Some Relevant Principles

# Does *applying relevant Scriptural principles* require that I educate my minor children in a particular way?

! What are the Scriptural principles that are relevant to educating my minor children?

- ▶ **Chief End, Providence, Diligence**
  - ▶ **Root of Truth:** God is truth
    - ★ *Proverbs 1:7; Proverbs 9:10; John 17:17; ...*
  - ▶ **Companion:** We are affected by our companions
    - ★ *Proverbs 13:20; 1 Corinthians 15:33; ...*
  - ▶ **Diversity of Ability:** God is not egalitarian with gifts
    - ★ *Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 12; ...*
  - ▶ ...
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# Education Principle

We should strive to educate our children  
so that (by God's sovereign grace)  
they will become adults  
who are able to use  
the gifts and abilities given to them by God  
to glorify Him  
and further His kingdom on earth.

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# Are Any Necessarily Out of Bounds?

**Public School**

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(Reformed)**

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(Catholic)**

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# Are Any Necessarily Out of Bounds?

# NO

- ▶ Generically (for believers in the aggregate)
- ▶ Thus we ought to be much more circumspect than we often are in criticizing educational options.



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# Are Any Necessarily Out of Bounds?

## # NO

- ▶ Generically (for believers in the aggregate)
- ▶ Thus we ought to be much more circumspect than we often are in criticizing educational options.

## # YES

- ▶ Specifically (for individual families)
  - ▶ Thus we ought to make our own choices very, very carefully, keeping clearly in mind all the principles that should guide our choices.
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# One Specific Application

**Public School**

~~**Christian School  
(Reformed)**~~

~~**Christian School  
(Non-Reformed)**~~

~~**Home School**~~

**Private School  
(Secular)**

~~**Christian School  
(Catholic)**~~



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# Concluding Remarks

# How we educate our minor children is a Christian liberty issue.

- ▶ As such, it ought *never* be the cause of divisions within the Church.
- ▶ Those who make a specific educational choice a condition for fellowship are wrong.

# Christian liberty is not an excuse for sin.

- ▶ Parents who fail in their responsibility to educate their children are sinning, no matter what formal educational method they may have chosen.
  - ▶ Just as no particular choice by itself entails sin, no particular choice by itself prevents sin, either.
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# Where We Stand

- ✓ # What is the definition and purpose of Christian Liberty?
  - ✓ # How do I recognize whether something is a liberty issue?
  - ✓ # How do I decide what to do for a given liberty issue?
  - # What do I do when others disagree with me about liberty issues?
  - ✓ # Does respect for liberty negate the pursuit of wisdom?
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**Notes and audio will be  
available (*deo volente*)  
within a couple of days at:**

**<http://www.logicteacher.com/liberty/>**

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