

## APPLY YOURSELF

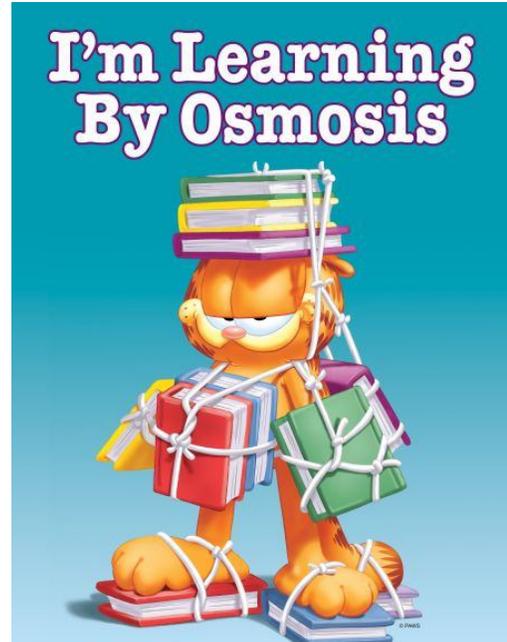
-Ryan Parsons-

If I could characterize my attitude towards education from 6th-12th grade, I would liken it to the Garfield cartoon where he tied books to himself wishing that the contents would just magi-scientifi-cally permeate his existence, and he would become smart and wise. It screams, “Can’t I get this done the easy way?”

It should come as no surprise that “Apply yourself!” was a common exhortation received by me during my adolescent years. Not only did I not want to hear these words, but I rebelled against them. The capacity was within me to learn and do well in school; however, I just didn’t care as much as I should have. I wasn’t motivated, and I didn’t see the long term benefit it would provide me.

### **Proverbs 23:12**

*Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge.*



When I read these words of the “proverbial” dad speaking to his son, it stings a bit. Now that I am a father and the roles are reversed, I appreciate the wisdom that I once thought was garbage. Not only that, I desperately want to communicate it in an effective way to my sons. I want them to apply themselves to book/school learning, but more importantly, I want them to learn the ways and wisdom of God so that they might be able to navigate a life faithful to God successfully.

But it doesn’t just apply to my kids. It still applies to me. I too must find the self discipline and manage my heart to not only know but live by God’s way.

### **Proverbs 23:19**

*Hear, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way.*

I must seek it out and hold on to it with all my might. It is going to cost me, but it is well worth it.

### **Proverbs 23:23**

*Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.*

I must apply myself!

God bless you as you continue to seek out God’s wisdom and live your life according to it!

Keep Studying,  
Ryan