

Single-subject Booklet Series

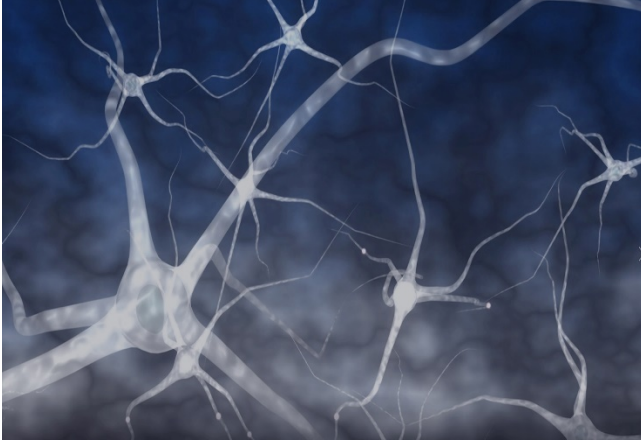
You Are What You Think

Applying a Christian Worldview to All of Life



Christianity and Education

What's the Role of Christians?



Applying a Christian Worldview to All of Life
Biblical Worldview Booklet Series

Christianity and *Education*

What Role Should Christians Play?



Extracted from our *“You Are What You Think®”*
Biblical Worldview Series Textbooks

Christianity and Education

By Roger Wheelock

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Dedication

These works are dedicated, above all, to the glory of God. HE is our Teacher, our Light, and our Inspirer for anything we do that is good.

Secondly, we dedicate this work to all who have come to saving faith in Jesus Christ, as well as those who may participate in these studies, but have not yet come to full faith in Him as the Author and Finisher of life.

We trust that these studies will cause all to think deeply on the ideas and issues discussed; and in the end you will have found greater understanding and clarity regarding what you believe and why you believe it.

As always and forever, a special thank you to my faithful wife, Elaine, who has had to endure the many hours I've spent in my office alone as this book and other GTI resources have been developed. Without you none of these tools would have ever come to be. I love you!

I'd also like to express my gratitude for many of those who have encouraged me and this ministry over the last several years:

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Dr. James Dobson and Focus on the Family Ministry
Family Research Council (FRC.org)
American Family Association (AFA.net)
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Josh McDowell Ministry (Josh.org)
Barna Research Group (www.barna.com)
Summit Ministries (Summit.org)
The Trinity Foundation (trinityfoundation.org)
The Heritage Foundation (heritage.org)
Hillsdale College (Info available at Imprimus@Hillsdale.edu)
Alliance Defending Freedom (adflegal.org)
Illustra Media (Creation science videos - illustramedia.com)
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Chapter One: The Christian Worldview of Education



Why WHO Educates Matters

For a healthy society, the proper moral and practical education of its citizens, from child to adult, is absolutely fundamental to the success of all individuals, families, churches, and cultures within that society. Consider the following classic quotes supporting this principle:

"If Virtue & Knowledge are diffused among the People, they will never be enslaved. This will be their great Security." - Samuel Adams, February 12, 1779

"The best means of forming a manly, virtuous, and happy people will be found in the right education of youth. Without this foundation, every other means, in my opinion, must fail." – George Washington, 1784

"As Piety, Religion and Morality have a happy influence on the minds of men, in their public as well as private transactions, you will not think it unseasonable, ... to bring to your remembrance the great importance of encouraging our University, town schools, and other seminaries of education that our children and youth - while they are engaged in the pursuit of useful science - may have their minds impressed with a strong sense of the duties they owe to their God, their instructors and each other. In this way, when they arrive to a state of manhood and take a part in any public transactions, their hearts having been deeply impressed in the course of their education with the moral feelings - such feelings may continue and have their due weight through the whole of their future lives." - Samuel Adams: Address to the Legislature of Massachusetts, January 30, 1797

“I feel ashamed that so many of us cannot imagine a better way to do things than locking children up all day in cells [age-segregated classrooms] instead of letting them grow up knowing their families, mingling with the world, assuming real obligations, striving to be independent, self-reliant and free... It is time that we squarely face the fact that institutional school-teaching is destructive to children.” – Educator John Taylor Gatto, *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling*, 2004



Building on Solid Ground

When building a home, every contractor knows that the most important element of the entire structure is the foundation. If the foundation is faulty, it will not matter how

masterfully the house is built. The entire structure will eventually collapse, and sooner or later it will have to be torn down and rebuilt. Jesus was quite clear on this point in the parable of the wise and foolish builder (Matthew 7:24-27).

The Bible emphatically states that the foundation of the Christian faith is knowledge of God through His Word and His Son, evidenced by emulating Jesus, walking according to God’s commands. Obviously, this doesn’t happen through osmosis. It takes a concerted, consistent, daily commitment to educate, and to be educated, in the truth of God’s Word. Spending only one or two hours a week in church can’t begin to build the moral and intellectual footings needed to combat the daily attacks on Biblical truth that are waged by the media and the state education system. For this reason, the Bible clearly states that it is the highest priority of parents and the church to educate each new generation (as stated repeatedly in Deuteronomy). Fulfilling this command is beneficial to both teachers and students. Learning together, pursuing God together, and sharing a love for Truth builds strong familial bonds and a firm foundation of knowledge and faith. Leaving education primarily to the state will result in a faulty foundation, one that won’t hold up under the stress from the winds and waves of life.

There is no higher responsibility and no higher privilege for Christian parents than to raise their children “in the ways of the Lord” (Proverbs 22:6); and there is no greater ambition for youth than to seek a well-rounded education

based foremost upon the moral and practical principles of Scripture. Obeying the Biblical directive to teach our children is not optional, it is essential.

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. - Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Likewise, we must follow the Biblical directive to seek wisdom like fine treasure (Proverbs 2:4-6). This is the foundation upon which all successful families and societies are built.

This doesn't mean that every parent must possess the complete knowledge and ability to personally teach their children every subject; but is there a biblical precept that encourages parents to send the children off to virtual strangers for twelve years of their lives for their entire education? Could it be that we find our society in its current predicament because the Church - and the families who make up the church - surrendered the education process into the hands of the state over one hundred years ago?

The good news is that we are still able – especially in America – to turn the tables on the radical declines we have seen in public morality and practical functionality. We start by realizing that all children are unique creations made in the image of a loving God who has gifted each one in ways that will complement the purposes for which He has created them (Eph. 2:10).

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Children are capable of learning far more than we imagine when they're not forced to learn at the same pace as others of the same age, to fall-in behind those who do not have the same moral code, or to blindly obey the instructions of those who have no vested interest in their lives.

Our Father is true to His promises. If parents follow His ways, and obey His instruction to teach their children His ways... when sitting at home and when walking along the road, when lying down and when waking up... He

promises, “That it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time.” (Deut. 4:40)

All Ideas are NOT Equal!

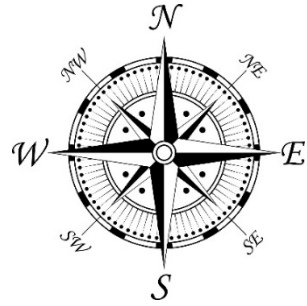
If you remember the introduction to the series, we basically asked the question, “Are you concerned about what's going on around us?” Are you concerned about the education system that continues to put radical and dangerous ideas into the minds of the children and all of society? Are you concerned about the rapidly declining moral conditions that we find all around us? And lastly, are you concerned that today’s youth aren't going to be able to enjoy the same freedom and benefits as those who came before them?



Ideas have consequences!

If these issues are concerning to you, it’s important to realize that a well-rounded Biblical worldview education is the key to peace, safety, and security for a society. What the people are taught to believe, they will, in large part, become. Therefore, those who hold the responsibility of teaching, also hold power to guide the direction of the culture.

Chapter Two – Our Manual for Life



We've stated before that *revival occurs when religion becomes relevant*. But what do we mean by *relevant*? Well, if our religion works, then it **should help us to make sense of the world**. Like a compass perfectly tuned to true north, our religion – or worldview - **should help us navigate successfully** in the time in which we live. If our religion is relevant to our lives, **we should be able to know our purpose** - the answer to the question, "Why am I here?" Knowing our purpose helps us become confident in life. Simply stated, *if your worldview works, it should lead to success in your life*.

The Christian worldview stands out because it is the only worldview in which God *promises* He will give you success if you follow Him and obey His words. Consider these words from Psalm 1:

"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, or sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night." Psalm 1:1-2

In other words, the Psalmist is saying that this man (or child) doesn't hang around those who despise God. He doesn't think like the people around him in the world who reject the Bible. He thinks differently because he delights in the words of God. This man loves God's Word and takes it with him everywhere he goes, day and night. He is saturated with God's Word and it affects every area of his life. Everything is sacred to such a believer because he knows there is no area of life that is outside of God's law.

Because he walks in such a way, God's promises are sure:

"He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither and whatever he does shall prosper." Psalm 1:3

This disciple is promised spiritual nourishment in good times and in times of trouble. Thus, he'll bring forth fruit in just the right times of his life. As he gets older, he'll continue to grow and be productive. If he meditates continually on the words of the Lord, God promises to make his way prosperous and he will have good success in all that he does (Joshua 1:8). In scripture, *success* and *prosper* do not necessarily imply material rewards. Rather, we are promised that whatever rewards come to us will be wonderful and good – tailored to fit our individual needs.

Education prepares us for the battles of life

The Old Testament is full of life-lessons intended for our education. Isaiah 5:13 says, “*Therefore my people will go into exile for lack of understanding.*” The history of the nation of Israel is preserved for us so that we can learn from their mistakes as well as their successes. We learn that their successes came when they took the Word of God seriously. However, the Israelites lost their freedom when they didn't apply themselves to *understand* the words of God. Understanding requires that terms are defined clearly so that the basic principles upon which a disciple is to live are made crystal clear. The way we ought to *apply* those principles in every area of life is a vital part of the clarification needed. Clarification brings unification. And when we become unified, God says, “*No weapon fashioned against us can prosper.*” (Isaiah 54:17)

Religion becomes relevant when it brings clarity to the issues of our life. This occurs in Christianity when we can connect the dots between the principles and lessons of Scripture and the reality of our everyday lives. This is important because education without application leads to frustration!

Think of it like this; in times of war we are *not* told, “*Anyone who wants to join the army raise your hand. Here's a book to read. When you're done, the battle's over there. Get to the battle.*” No, of course not. The recruits are sent to basic training where everyone learns how to be on the same page. They are taught the mission, the principles, and the methods necessary to win the war. Then they go through actual training to employ those principles and methods. They learn what they are we called to do as individuals and as a group. They also learn the tactics of the enemy. In Christianity, we learn that we're in a spiritual war and that our enemy is the father of all lies. He mixes truths, half-truths and lies altogether into tempting, soothing, deadly ideas designed to

deceive us. Thus, we need to study and become disciplined at combatting those lies.

Education teaches us our role in life

“What is my role as part of the unit?” you ask. We must all learn to work together with others as a coordinated team. We’re not alone on this battleground into which we’re born. We are a part of the army of the Lord. As such, it's vital that we know our objectives, tactics, and fundamental beliefs. How else can we conquer an enemy and gain back lost territory? The fundamentals are the key to victory. If we learn the fundamentals, God will take us through to victory.

A Flight over Biblical History

At this point we are going to skim over Bible history to see the role that education has played in society since the Garden of Eden on through the New Testament. Then we’ll consider how what we’ve learned applies to today.

Class in Session

The first lesson is taught by God, the first teacher, in Genesis chapter two. He speaks to Adam, giving him one command. He says, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17). Notice He described the tree clearly as “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”, and He made only ONE stipulation -- *don't eat of it!* After some time passes, the serpent tempts Eve to question God, asking,

*“Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”
And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”
-Genesis 3:1-2*

Notice that God had warned Adam against eating the forbidden fruit because it would give the one who ate it *extra knowledge* that would result in consequences. What consequences? We’ll answer by asking, “*Why would one who lives in a perfect utopian world want to have anything to do with the knowledge of evil?*” The knowledge of evil would obviously ruin the utopia

God had created for them. But Eve clearly did not understand why that particular tree was off-limits (God did not want her to be harmed), so her defenses were weakened from the start. Secondly, she misstated God's terms by *adding to His words*. God did not say, "*Nor shall you touch it.*" This may have given Satan an opening to have her question God even more. Imagine for a moment what may have transpired next. The serpent tempts Eve further, saying, "*Oh, so God said you can't touch it? Here, just touch it, see if you die.*" So, she touches it and she doesn't die.

Now Eve begins to doubt God's words. The devil takes advantage of her doubt, openly contradicting God's words, saying:

"You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
- Genesis 3:4

She may then have thought to herself, "*Well, I didn't die when I touched it, so I guess it's okay to take a bite from it – after all, it looks tasty, it's a delight to look at it, and it will make me wise like God Himself.*" The rest is history.

Now, this scenario is only a product of imagination, but is presented to make the point that knowing God's actual words is vastly important. It appears that when Adam related the words of God to Eve, he either didn't teach her clearly or she didn't listen attentively. Regardless, we find as we read the New Testament that God holds Adam responsible for the fall because it was Adam's job to teach God's words to Eve, and of course to obey them himself.¹

The lesson we learn here in the very beginning, in the garden, is that the words of God matter. He meticulously and supernaturally made sure that His Word was passed down to us so that we might learn how to have success in all we do (Joshua 1:8). Education that is centered around His Word, then, is vital for the well-being and happiness of all individuals and societies.

Chapter Three - Words in Stone

Written by His Hand

The next stop in our helicopter ride is the book of Exodus. Here we see that God considered His Law so important that He wrote it on tablets of stone with His own fingers. He wrote on stone so that His Word wouldn't be erased or forgotten. People could read it, remember it, and pass it on. Then, through



*Moses bringing the Law
down from the mountain*

Moses, God adds to the Law the first five books of the Old Testament, known as the Pentateuch, or the *Books of the Law*. Deuteronomy 4:5-10 says,

“Surely I have taught you the statutes and judgments, just as the Lord God commanded me. Only take heed to yourself and diligently keep yourself lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren.”

God is saying that each word was carefully written and meant for teaching and obeying. Therefore, be careful to observe these words and pass them on to the next generation!

There are two key words in that passage: *diligently* and *forget*. *Diligently* means we are to search the Scriptures *industriously, meticulously, conscientiously, thoroughly and carefully*. Then, we're not to *forget*. We mustn't *forget*. History is incredibly important! In our day it's obvious that we've forgotten our origins and the story of how we got to this place. We don't realize all that God has done for His people throughout His-Story – throughout history. Without that context it's hard to know why we were placed here in these times; thus, we might live our entire lives without ever knowing our purpose.

Applying this passage

Who is God speaking to in these passages? He's speaking to every one of us. We are called to know God, know His words and ways, and pass them on to

the next generation. It was because the Israelites neglected these warnings that the older generation perished in the desert.

This lesson is expanded further in Deuteronomy 6:7-9,

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Notice the three main statements:

First, God’s people are called to diligently teach their children God’s Words by talking about them everywhere, all the time. They are to show the young that God is real and involved in every area of life.

Secondly, His people are to bind His words as a sign on their hands. What do we do with our hands? We work. We are to take the words of God to our workplace. We are to speak of the fundamental principles, the truths of God - even if we can't bring in a Bible or mention His name – because whenever we speak truth, we are bringing light into a dark world inundated by lies. Our friends and coworkers need to hear the truth - the other side of the story which the world tries desperately to suppress.

The third instruction speaks of “frontlets between your eyes”. Many believe this refers to the phylacteries, or small boxes containing Scripture verses, which dangle from the hats of some Jews. However, this really means that we are to view all of life through the lens of Scripture. It’s a way to describe having a Biblical worldview.

Joshua to Josiah

After the victory over Ai², Joshua gathered the people and read all the words of God, including the blessings and the curses. Notice the attention on both *the blessings* and *the curses*. Joshua held back nothing. It wasn’t a “feel-good” message. The promises for obedience and consequences for rebellion must both be proclaimed and explained. The passage says, “There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua didn't read to all of the

assembly” (Joshua 8:35). It appears that everyone - the men, women, children, and even those that weren't believers – were given the complete message. The result was that they conquered and took possession of the Promised Land. However, since they didn't obey *everything*, they didn't receive all the blessings God wanted them to have. But they did obtain many blessings because of their obedience to God's commands.

Their obedience didn't last. Before long, they stopped doing things by the Book. When we read about the next generation, we realize they hadn't been taught to know and understand the words of the Lord and they hadn't been taught their history. The lesson? *All that is needed for a nation to lose its blessings is for one generation to neglect passing along God's words to the next.* What happened? They began worshipping the pagan god, Baal (Judges 3:7). They began sacrificing their children on the red-hot metal arms of their idol. And though the thought of that is repulsive to most people, how different is it from abortion? Secondly, they had become overwhelmingly materialistic – which is also mirrored in the western nations in our day. They forsook the Lord God of their fathers who had delivered them out of slavery and blessed them so abundantly. Instead, they followed other gods and provoked their Father to anger. All this happened because they had not been taught to know God and His Word. Their parents had failed to obey God's command.

As we proceed into the book of Judges, we see this cycle continually repeating itself. God blesses the Israelites, they fall into complacency, they disobey God's words, and fall into slavery (which nearly always happens when we become complacent and disobedient). Then they repent, God delivers them, and the cycle repeats over and over and over again. But despite all that, God continued to send His prophets to give them further revelation of His Word in hopes that they might repent.

As we travel further into the Old Testament books and see the canon develop, we continue to observe the same cycle repeated. This history is important because each time the nation fell there were lessons to be learned. In Hosea 4:6, the prophet warns Israel not long before they're taken into captivity:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.”

The teachings of the Law were supposed to be passed on by the priests to the people and the people were supposed to then teach their children. It certainly appears that this did not happen because by the time we get to King Josiah, we find that Judah has fallen so far, they are on their last leg. Jeremiah the prophet, who began prophesying at the beginning of King Josiah's reign, repeats this same statement twice, *"And from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely"* (Jeremiah 6:13, 8:10). He adds, *"They have also healed the hurt of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there is no peace"* (Jeremiah 6:14). What does that mean? It means that they're basically applying an ice pack to a heart attack. Their words are making the people comfortable, but they're not attacking the source of the problem. They're not making God's words relevant. Therefore, God is ready to deliver them into captivity. But Josiah, a young child at this time, begins a time of revival in the land. Let's see how this comes to be (2 Kings 22-23).

Josiah gives the command for the priests to clean out the Temple, which had been in disarray for years. Someone finds an old and dusty scroll of the Book of the Law. The Book is read to Josiah and he repents, ripping his clothes and crying out to the Lord for forgiveness. He realizes the people haven't been following God's law. Why not? Because it had been buried among the trash in the Temple. God says, in effect, *"Okay, Josiah, because you've so sincerely repented, I will withhold judging the nation until you die. I will spare this generation; but after your life ends, great calamity will fall upon Israel."* So, Josiah inspires a national repentance by having the Law read to *"the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great"* (2 Kings 23:2), and a monumental revival occurs.

But after Josiah dies, we see the nation once again sink into corruption. The successors of King Josiah are all described as "doing evil in the sight of the Lord". 2 Chronicles 36:14 says: They led the people away from God's commands; the teaching of Scripture was ignored. The people learned to imitate the behavior of the leaders and soon they were taken captive to Babylon.



Many decades pass and the Lord raises up Nehemiah. Nehemiah is interesting. Here's a man who is not a king, prince, or priest. He's not a Levite. He's just a common guy working in government of all places ... in politics. But he is living

such a righteous life that King Artaxerxes gives him the freedom to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall. When the wall is finished, Nehemiah holds a solemn ceremony and Ezra brings out the Book of the Law. Note that in Nehemiah chapter 8, it says, “Now all the people gathered together as one in the open square and *they told Ezra to bring out the Law* (emphasis ours). It wasn't Ezra's idea - it was the people who cried out to hear the Law read to them!

Ezra then proceeds to read the Word of God to everyone in the open square. He reads it to men and women, and anybody who could understand. And notice this, the Scripture says, “And the ears of all the people were attentive.” They didn't cry out to hear a feel-good message. They knew that they needed to hear the truth. They wanted the whole Word of God. They wanted to get it right this time.

And it says that the priests and Levites, *explained the Law* to the people. They not only read from the Book of the Law of God, but *they went out among the people* - to individuals, families, and clans – “giving them *the sense of the words*” (Nehemiah 8:8). What does that mean? It means they made it relevant to them. They helped the people to understand in their language, in their life, in their circumstances, what these words meant – and how to apply God's words to their very lives. The result was that the people *understood* what God was teaching them and they celebrated. A great, great revival took place because, as Scripture says, they *understood* the meaning of the words of God.

Pause and Consider

A Key Element of Revival

Revival is always possible if the people are educated with the words of God and repent of their past neglect and sin. But when God's people become complacent about educating with the words of God and lose their zeal to walk in His ways, they will naturally fall into a form of slavery. And they will lose what they consider to be most dear.

That is the purpose of education. *Not just to give information, but to help others understand and apply it in a morally-righteous manner.*

Chapter Four – Education of the Heart



Now we move on to the New Testament. Even after all the Israelite's failures to obey God and worship Him only, God still sends His only Son to die in their place. But notice that He, to whom we all owe our lives and our salvation, is known as the greatest teacher - the greatest educator - of all time. We read throughout the Gospels that Jesus continually spent His time teaching. He said of Himself, *"I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me"* (John 8:28, ESV). So, as a humble servant of God, we see Him receiving the message from the Father, and obediently teaching it to us. John 12:49 says:

"... for I have spoken not on My own authority, but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak"

Jesus is our model. He paid close attention to the words of God, and He taught them to those who had ears to hear. With these words and by His example, He not only taught His disciples, but He gave them real-world training, sending them out in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit, to apply what they had learned. He spent three intense years with these twelve select disciples, preparing them for the day when He would be taken from them. His last words to them were a challenge from teacher to students, *"Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you"* (Matthew 28:19-20a). Those times of intimate teaching bore unimaginable fruit with the coming of the Holy Spirit!

Education is Personal

Jesus and the disciples did not spend all their time in the synagogues among the religious. They went out among the people. Notice the same with Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila. They worked in an occupation that required them to model the lessons they taught. Over the period of thirty years, Paul and his small entourage covered thousands of miles teaching, persuading and healing in the name of Jesus, suffering through many trials and persecutions for the sake of the Gospel. Some of the greatest missionaries of all time preached the

gospel in the way they lived their lives, and people came to know Christ by watching them and interacting with them. The lesson is that we can all be missionaries by keeping the Word of God central in our lives everywhere we go as we personally touch the lives of others.

Education is Propositional

Astonishingly, the whole New Testament was penned by the disciples within just one generation. They considered it vitally important to pass on the teachings of Christ – His priceless propositions, principles, and precepts - in written form. At the close of many of Paul's letters he challenges the churches to not only faithfully read and teach them to their congregations, but then to share the letters with the other churches. As was emphasized in the history class, it is noteworthy that within 300 years of Christ's ministry, there were over 24,000 manuscripts containing the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. The manuscripts varied in length, some were just short passages, others complete books which later formed the New Testament.³ There is no other book in all of history that has this amount of verification. One might wonder what made these words so powerful. Simply this: Christ's teachings were focused upon transforming the mind through the hearing and application of God's Word. The Bible is a book of propositions - truth statements - that must be processed and tested by the mind and in day-to-day reality. Its validity is not determined by emotions or peer pressure.

Education after the 1st Century

After the death of the Apostles, Christ-centered education became a priority for Christians.

David G. Scarbrough writes in *Exegete the Text*, (August, 2006)⁴

“In the early days of the first church, education was almost identical to that of the Jewish community. Although the bulk of Christian converts over the centuries have been gentiles, almost all the first converts were Jews. While these Jewish Christians made up only a small percentage of the Jewish population,⁵ their numbers were enough to bring notice to this new movement. Along with the new movement, a new church was started in Jerusalem. Again, with mostly Jewish Christians, the majority of these Jewish Christian parents continued to educate their children in the same way that they themselves were educated. Some of the education

was still carried out in the home, but the majority was given over to the synagogue school and to the attendant in charge of the synagogue. However, with the rise of Christianity, a rift began to emerge between the Christians and Jews. A rift that was so serious, that it would drive the Christians even further away from their homes and finally out of the synagogues and synagogue schools forever.”

Paul A. Kienel, in his *History of Christian School Education* adds,

“For the next several hundred years, education among Christians reverted back to being centered in the home, and it was through this system of home education that Christianity had its greatest number of converts. Although they had moved away from the persecution of the Jews, they moved into a new era of persecution from the rest of the pagan world. It was a persecution that started with the Roman Empire and is still continuing through various outlets today. But just like silver that is refined in the fire (Zechariah 13:9), the persecution only served to strengthen these early Christians.”⁶



Mr. Scarbrough continues,

“Unfortunately, as the persecution began, many Christians lost their lives in some of the most horrific ways imaginable. Like their Savior, some were crucified, others were fed to the lions, others were burned at the stake, and still others were beheaded. Even those that did not lose their lives still faced being exiled, sold into slavery, or put into forced labor. But this persecution only served to strengthen the faith of the churches and lent credibility to the story of the risen Messiah; because while many would possibly suffer some persecution to cover for a fabricated story, none were foolish enough to die for one. The fact that the early Christians were willing to die for their faith is even further proof that Christianity was based on fact and not fiction. Not only were they willing to die for the cause, they even took extra efforts to prepare

for it. In this case, they didn't exercise to build up endurance, they prepared spiritually by starting martyr's schools.

The martyr's school was one of the first forms of uniquely Christian education. In the years immediately following the fall of Jerusalem in 70AD, the persecution of Christians increased exponentially. Most Christians knew that on any given day they might have to choose between confessing their Savior and dying a horrific death or denying him and living in guilt and shame. And since martyrdom was such a real possibility, the early church trained for it!⁷ And although this training may not be considered by some to be the same as 'school education', it was well organized, and it profoundly affected the lives of Christians in the early church.”⁸



The Twelve Apostles (Pushkin Museum in Moscow)

The 1902 Encyclopedia Britannica states,

“The literary education of the earliest generation of Christians was obtained in the pagan schools, in those great imperial academies which existed even down to the 5th century, which flourished in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and attained perhaps their highest development and efficiency in Gaul. The first attempt to provide a special education for Christians was made at Alexandria and is illustrated by the names of Clement and Origen. The later Latin fathers took a bolder stand and rejected the suspicious aid of heathenism. Tertullian, Cyprian, and Jerome wished the antagonism between Christianity and Paganism to be recognized from the earliest years, and even Augustine condemned with harshness the culture to which he owed so much of his influence.”⁹

And the *New American Magazine* wrote,

“The early church fathers were fairly unanimous in their support of parents taking responsibility for the education of their own children. Faith was not viewed as a separated and segmented particle of life, but a comprehensive worldview that encapsulated their entire existence. They embraced the truth of Proverbs 9:10:

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.”¹⁰

With this priority in place, between 80 and 110 A.D. an instruction manual for new converts named the Didache (the Greek word for teaching) was written and widely distributed along the Roman roads. Newcomers to the church were instructed in the “catechumens”; that is, they were taught orally by the question-and-answer method in preparation for baptism and church membership. Both men and women were catechized, often over 2-3 years.

Chapter Five - Fathers of Christian Education

The Priority of Church Fathers

In 96 A.D., Clement I of Rome wrote to the church in Corinth: “.... *Let us instruct our young men in the lesson of the fear of God.... Let our children be partakers of the*

instruction which is in Christ: let them learn how lowliness of mind prevails with God, what power chaste love (pure love) hath with God, how the fear of Him is good and great and saves all them that walk therein in a pure mind with holiness.”¹¹



Ignatius of Antioch

Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch (110 A.D.) wrote to the early church in Philadelphia (modern-day Turkey): “*Fathers, ‘bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;’ and teach them the Holy Scriptures, and also trades, that they may not indulge in idleness. Remember that the Scripture says, ‘A righteous father educates [his children] well; his heart shall rejoice in a wise son.*”¹²

In 150 A.D., Justin Martyr - who is called the first great scholar of the Christian church - established catechism schools in Ephesus and Rome. In most cases, these schools taught not only theology, but also literary arts, mathematics, and medicine. Students learned both to read and to write the Scriptures.

The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) states,

“As a result of this emphasis on Christian education, Christianity became the major influence in the Roman Empire. Early church Christians used the Christian school to impact the pagan culture around them. Bunsen says, ‘The apostolic church made the [Christian] school the connecting link between herself and the world.’¹³ With reference to the early

church, noted education historians, Eby and Arrowood say, ‘The regular method of attack in bringing the new religion into any community for the first time was through the [Christian] school.’¹⁴ In other words, the Christian school was a major tool of evangelism used by our spiritual ancestors, the early church believers who ‘turned the world upside down.’¹⁵ Second-century church leader **Tertullian** chided Roman authorities for their grim treatment of Christians and taunted them with these words:



Tertullian

*‘We have filled all you have - cities, islands, forts, towns, assembly halls, even military camps, tribes, town councils, the palace, senate, and forum. We have left you nothing but the [pagan] temples.’*¹⁶

Education in those early days was focused on the principle that the most essential element of learning was *virtue*. The early church fathers warned Christians of the poisoning effect of the cultural norms and practices of the Greco-Roman society of the day. They spoke passionately against the church allowing herself to be drawn away from virtue and drawn toward the pagan arts and pastimes found in contemporary theater and stadiums.¹⁷

A Leap Forward

Finally, in 313 with the Edict of Milan, Christians began to publicly and actively train their children through distinctively Christian schools. It was by the efforts of the early Christians that the pagan schools of the day began to be replaced by schools that taught Christian doctrine.¹⁸



With the 313 AD Edict of Milan Constantine gave Christians and unspecified “others” indulgence to worship as they please. The edict also mandated the return of property that had previously been confiscated.

A translation of the edict text is at <http://gbgm-umc.org/umm/bible/milan.stm>

Scarborough adds,

“But just like any other freedom, there always comes abuses. It was during this time that the Roman Catholic Church began to

emerge. Although Christians had been around since the death of Christ, this formal organization known as the Roman Catholic Church had not. It was not until the year 438 that Emperor Theodosius II established the name "Catholic Christians", which simply meant Christians that were part of the universal church. Prior to that, they were simply known as Christians, or people of the Way, and their Christian leaders were primarily concerned with doctrine.

The main reason that many of the early church fathers - the leaders of the first church - came together, was to find common ground and to establish standard statements of faith. It was during some of these gatherings, such as the Counsel of Nicaea or the Council of Chalcedon that many heresies were put to rest and many of the official doctrines of Christianity, that up until this point were only transmitted verbally, were finally formally written down. But as this new church age began to form, many of the church "leaders" started to have a different focus, and by 590 AD, the Roman Catholic Church began to take more control over the state government."

"In the late Middle Ages and leading up to the Reformation, John Wycliffe, William Tyndale, and others risked their lives to provide the common people with the Bible in their own language. Christian schools sprang up by the hundreds, and many met in secret to teach people to read the Scriptures in their native tongue. The spread of the Scriptures in the people's native tongue would soon prove integral to the Reformation. Toward the end of the Reformation, Christian schools were no longer uncommon in Europe. According to some historians, during the sixteenth century France had more than two thousand evangelical Protestant Christian schools, organized and populated largely by the French Huguenots."¹⁹

Martin Luther (1483-1546) proclaimed: *"However, even if the high schools studied the Scriptures diligently we should not send everyone to them, as we do now, when nothing is considered but numbers, and every man wishes to have a doctor's title; we should only send the aptest pupils, well prepared in the lower schools.... But where the Holy Scriptures are not the rule, I advise no one to send his child. Everything must perish where God's word is not studied unceasingly ... I greatly fear the high schools are nothing but great*

*gates of hell, unless they diligently study the Holy Scriptures and teach them to the young people.”*²⁰ **Luther believed deeply that Christian schools would be absolutely essential for establishing a foundation for the church, saying:** *“When schools prosper, the Church remains righteous and her doctrine pure.... Young pupils and students are the seed and source of the Church. If we were dead, whence would come our successors, if not from the schools? For the sake of the Church we must have and maintain Christian schools.”*²¹

“In my judgment”, Luther stated, “there is no other outward offense that in the sight of God so heavily burdens the world, and deserves such heavy chastisement, as the neglect to educate children.”

Luther’s educational philosophy centered in the home, but he eventually supported state cooperation in education. He saw the state’s role as helpful with compulsory attendance and financing, but he still insisted on a fundamentally Christian education with the Scriptures at the center.

*“The reformers believed that the primary responsibility of educating children fell upon the church and parents (with possible infrastructure support from the state). Luther personally started numerous schools in existing churches. Congregations were expected to provide the necessary funding and oversight. Parents were also expected to play an important role, not only making sure their children attended class but also reinforcing instruction at home. Church leaders would shepherd the instruction process and assess a student’s progress by meeting with students and parents during the school year.”*²²



Martin Luther

“Luther believed that children should be educated as God-fearing, law-abiding citizens, and serving God also in every station of life. With that as the overriding principle, religion became relevant to people. They were taught how to apply Scripture into all of their life, and all the world was blessed.”

Chapter Six – The Power of the Bible

The Effects of the Gutenberg Press

The Protestant Reformation brought light to the world. With the invention of the printing press, the Bible made its way into the hands of the common people for the first time in history. These new believers now relied on Scripture alone for their spiritual learning, as opposed to trusting in the rampantly corrupt, tyrannical leadership of the European clergy and governors of that day. Now that the people had the Word of God to rule over them, they considered themselves to be capable of self-governance, a philosophy that promoted personal responsibility and accountability to God. This attitude eventually revolutionized the western world.



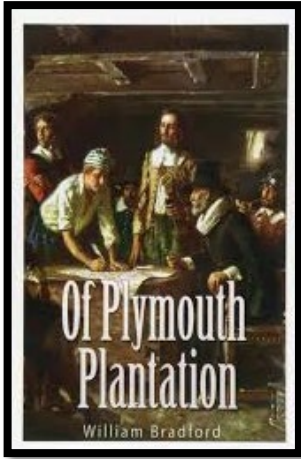
A replica of the Gutenberg printing press

Within 16 years of the landing at Plymouth, the Puritans turned their focus upon education in the Colonies. Between that time and 1776, not only had Christian denominations established countless one-room schoolhouses to assist in the education of the colonial settlers, but they also founded seven exceptional universities. As a comparison, Great Britain started only two universities in that same period. And notice the names of those seven American Christian universities: Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Brown, Rutgers, Dartmouth - all Ivy League schools - the greatest institutions of higher learning in those days, and all of them Christian at their core. Then, from 1776 to 1800, another 20 Christian colleges were established!

As we've mentioned before, the literacy rate by then had exploded, resulting in an electorate that was over 95% literate by the turn of the 19th century – a phenomenon never witnessed in all of history. And consider that the brilliant Founders who wrote the Constitution had nearly unanimously become equipped through this Christian system of education. Is it any wonder that America prospered so quickly?

We must emphasize, though, that it is not the nation of America we are trying to spotlight. Rather it is the power of the Bible that deserves to be

acknowledged and applauded. If the Bible had not been the source of the ideas upon which America was built, the nation as we know it would never have come into existence. But the principle stands: *When the Bible is laid as the educational foundation of any nation, community, or family, virtue will follow, and success is guaranteed.*²³



The Purpose and Standards of Early American Universities

William Bradford wrote in his detailed manuscript *Of Plymouth Plantation* (March, 1705) that after the Pilgrims had built their houses, become stable in their trades, established their churches, and settled their civil government, “*One of the next things we longed for and looked after was to advance learning and perpetuate [it] to posterity [in other words, to ensure biblical knowledge and wisdom was passed on to the next generation], because we dreaded to leave an illiterate ministry to the churches when our present ministers would*

lie in the dust.”

These wise Puritan leaders considered it among the highest of priorities to pass on the extraordinary level of Biblical and practical learning they had attained. They determined to educate pastors so that the next generations would be fully prepared to carry-on in the faith. Harvard was founded by ministers who realized the need for training clergy and fully equipping future leaders for the new commonwealth. The motto of Harvard was *Veritas Christo et Ecclesiae*, which means *Truth for Christ in the Church*. Students were required to prove their fitness for the bachelor's degree by showing that they could read the original of the Old and New Testament in Latin and then resolve them logically. What does that mean? It means they could explain how the two Testaments fit together perfectly like a hand in a glove. They were required to be able to speak about them logically and to apply their knowledge of Scripture to whatever vocation or location God's providence might lead them.

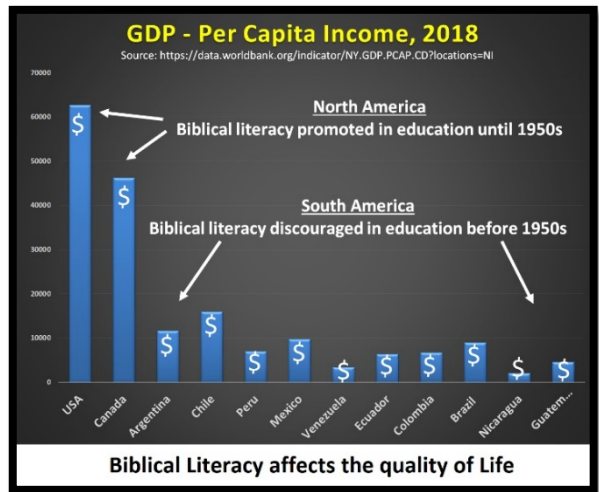
The Decline of the Christian Universities

Unfortunately, Harvard was taken over in the early 1800s by Unitarians, and it didn't take long for this once great university to become secularized. Within

50 years it became known as the Unitarian Vatican, which means that Harvard was considered the ultimate school of Unitarian teaching. What is Unitarian teaching? Unitarianism is known for rejecting the fundamental Christian doctrines of original sin and biblical inerrancy. This marked the opening of the floodgates for the spread of many similar anti-biblical philosophies into American universities. By the end of the 19th century, these ideas had taken root throughout the western nations and the authority of the Bible had come into doubt, deeply weakening the faith.

Biblical Education in North America vs South America

When comparing the standard of living, stability of governments, and literacy rates between North America and South America, a sharp contrast becomes evident. Let's consider why such an obvious imbalance exists.



Who colonized North America? The Pilgrims, Puritans, Baptists, Quakers, Methodists, etc. – in other words, the Protestant denominations that emigrated from Europe as a result of religious persecution. These people came with their own Bibles - or purchased them when they settled in the Colonies - and their education was centered around a biblical worldview. The result was that both America and Canada leapt forward in progress.

But South America had a very different history. The Latin American countries were mainly colonized by Spain and Portugal, two main exporters of Roman Catholicism. Why is this significant? Because the Roman Catholic leadership prohibited Bibles from being printed or distributed – specifically those that were translated into the language of the common person. Further, they banned any distribution whatsoever of writings from the Reformers (Wycliffe, Luther, Tyndale, Calvin, Knox, etc.). In most Latin American countries, the hierarchy placed legal bans on the sale of Bibles translated by non-Catholics. These bans lasted into the 1900s.²⁴

In 1408 the third synod of Oxford, England, banned unauthorized English translations of the Bible and decreed that possession of English translations must be approved by diocesan authorities. The Oxford council declared:

*"It is dangerous, as St. Jerome declares, to translate the text of Holy Scriptures out of one idiom into another, since it is not easy in translations to preserve exactly the same meaning in all things. We therefore command and ordain that henceforth no one translate the text of Holy Scripture into English or any other language as a book, booklet, or tract, of this kind lately made in the time of the said John Wyclif or since, or that hereafter may be made, either in part or wholly, either publicly or privately, under pain of excommunication, until such translation shall have been approved and allowed by the Provincial Council. He who shall act otherwise let him be punished as an abettor of heresy and error."*²⁵



- The Council of Trent (1545-1564) placed the Bible on its list of prohibited books and forbade any person to read the Bible without a license from a Roman Catholic bishop or inquisitor. The Council added these words: *"That if anyone shall dare to read or keep in his possession that book, without such a license, he shall not receive absolution till he has given it up to his ordinary."*²⁶

Rome's attempt to keep the Bible from men has continued to more recent times:

- Pope Pius VII (1800-1823) denounced the Bible Society and expressed shock at the circulation of the Scriptures. Pius VII said, "It is evidence from experience, that the Holy Scriptures, when circulated in the vulgar tongue, have, through the temerity of men, produced more harm than benefit."²⁷
- Pope Leo XII called the Protestant Bible the "Gospel of the Devil" in an encyclical letter of 1824.²⁸
- Pope Gregory XVI (1831-1846) proclaimed "We again condemn... the publication, dissemination, reading, and possession of vernacular translations of sacred Scriptures."²⁹
- In 1897, Pope Leo XIII proclaimed,

All versions of the Bible in the vernacular, even by Catholics, are altogether prohibited, unless approved by the Holy See, or published, under the vigilant care of the bishops, with annotations taken from the Fathers of the Church and learned Catholic writers.”³⁰ (emphasis ours)

With this in mind, is it reasonable to surmise that the cause of the relative successes or failures of these two continents can be traced to the Biblical foundation of education, or lack thereof? What other possible reason might there be to explain why so many people clamored to emigrate to America rather than to other countries in the world?

In closing this section, we must emphasize that we are not attempting to judge the heart of any person who claims Catholicism as his or her religion. Our purpose is only to present the truth that the Bible is the source of our faith, and thus it is the essential tool for learning. No leader, denomination, council, committee, or governor is to be honored or followed in place of God as revealed in Scripture – that would be a clear violation of the very First Commandment. To prohibit the common people from reading and owning Bibles translated into their own language is to deny them the most precious, powerful, treasure of life – the Word of God spoken directly to His children for their eternal benefit.

Chapter Seven – Schools: Luther to Dewey

Early Reformers and Puritans

From the time of the Reformation, Christian educators have been in the forefront of the development of schools. The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) writes:



“The impact on the European culture of Luther and his multinational movement of Christian schools can, without question, be characterized as a world-class revolution. Frederick Eby agrees:

*‘The Reformation was the most far-reaching and profound awakening in the history of western civilization. No aspect of human life was untouched, for it involved political, economic, religious, moral, philosophical, literary, and institutional changes of the most sweeping character’.*³¹

*Prior to Luther's historic stand against the errors in the Catholic Church, Catholic authorities had reduced literacy to ten percent of the population throughout the Western world and had placed the Bible on Catholicism's list of forbidden books. For nearly one thousand years literacy had been suppressed for all those not destined to serve the Catholic Church. As Andrew Miller says, ‘Learning was branded as the parent of heresy.’*³²

The Reformation was a giant shift from papal authority to biblical authority and with it a return to basic literacy for all people. Everywhere the Great Reformation spread, Christian school education was on the frontline educating the masses. Of the seven men who were the ‘movers and shakers’ of the Reformation - John Wycliffe, John Hus, Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, William Tyndale, John Calvin and John Knox - all seven were former Catholic priests. They all believed in common literacy so that the general population could have personal access to the Scriptures. Five of the seven - Hus, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and Knox - were

directly involved in the wide expansion of Christian schools and used them as a means of solidifying the gains of the Reformation.

John Calvin of Geneva, Switzerland, was responsible for the proliferation of thousands of Christian elementary and secondary schools in Switzerland, France, England, Hungary, Holland, Scotland, and America. Writing on the legacy of Calvin, Peter DeJong says: 'A systematic and sustained program of child education by the church was integral to Calvin's conception of the truly Christian life. To neglect this would not only mean losing priceless opportunities for the welfare of individuals, the church, and the whole community; it would be tantamount to disobeying God and thus depriving men of His blessing. Where this blessing was lost, man's life was plunged into ever-increasing errors and unhappiness'.³³



John Calvin

The Puritans in England and New England

"The Puritans in England, and the Puritans who migrated from old England to New England in America, were the spiritual descendants of all the Reformation leaders, but more specifically of John Calvin and John Knox. Both the Pilgrims and Puritans were Calvinists. They strongly opposed the pageantry and high church style of the Church of England, which was little more



than a hybrid form of Catholicism. The Puritans, more than the Pilgrims, were champions of Christian school education both in England and in America.³⁴

Secular literacy historian Harvey Graff says:

‘Puritan strongholds were among the most education-conscious and literate centers in England. In their intense piety and concern about individual access to the Word, Puritans expected their adherents to learn to read. Household and schoolhouse, as well as pulpit and chapel, were centers of schooling. Puritans were for their day a reading people, even if their tastes were often narrow. To an impressive degree, they effected an educational revolution. They also sought to bring their Word to other corners of the land, and to the colonies they established in North America in the seventeenth century.’³⁵

“There is abundant evidence that the early evangelical Christian schools of the Massachusetts Bay and the Connecticut Valley, which formed the greater Puritan colony, succeeded in their mission. Note these words of two leading nineteenth-century historians:

‘In New England every citizen is instructed in the elements of human knowledge; he is also taught the doctrine and the evidences of his religion; he must know the history of his country and the main features of its Constitution. In Connecticut and Massachusetts, you will very seldom find a man whose knowledge of all these things is only superficial, and anybody completely unaware of them is quite an oddity.’³⁶ -Alexis de Tocqueville, 1848

“John Clark Ridpath stated in 1876, ‘In matters of education, New England took the lead. Every village furnished facilities for the acquirement of knowledge. So complete and universal were the means of instruction that in the time before the Revolution there was not to be found in all New England an adult, born in the country, who could not read and write. Splendid achievement of Puritanism!’”³⁷

The Puritan fathers were zealously concerned for the education of the youth. They were adamant that the purpose of education was not only to prepare the next generation for their future vocations but to ensure that they learn how to apply their knowledge with both wisdom and virtue. In his insightful book,

Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were, author Leland Ryken quotes the following Puritan fathers:

- “Cotton Mather admonished his congregation with the comment, *‘If your main concern be to get the riches of this world for your children and leave a belly full of this world unto them, it looks very suspiciously as if you were yourselves the people of this world, whose portion is only in this life.’*”

- “John Milton paid this moving tribute to his father as he neared the completion of his college education: *‘Father, you did not enjoin me to go where the broad way lies open, where money slides more easily into the hand, and the golden hope of piling up wealth shines bright and sure..., desiring rather that my mind should be cultivated and enriched...What greater wealth could a father have given..., though he had given all things except heaven?’* Setting the right priority of values has been the hidden agenda for every generation of Christians. In a day of relatively modest material means, many Puritans showed by their actions that they valued learning above possessions.”



John Milton

- “The immediate occasion for founding Harvard College was religious. One rule observed at the new college was this: *‘Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3), and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning.’*”

Learning from History: What was different in the early years of America that caused Christianity to be such a powerful influence in our culture?

Any serious student of American history knows that the Puritan movement, beginning with the Pilgrims in 1620 and continuing through most of the eighteenth century, arguably had the greatest impact upon America – its government and morals – when compared to any other worldview or ideology in our history. A large portion of the innumerable blessings we take for

granted today can be directly attributed to the Puritan influence of those early years of our founding.

J.I. Packer provides the following historical commentary which describes how these early American pastors viewed the Bible and its connections to earthly life:

“The Puritans became men and women of order, matter-of-fact and down-to-earth, prayerful, purposeful, practical. Seeing life whole, they integrated contemplation with action, worship with work, labor with rest, love of God with love of neighbor and of self, personal with social identity, and the wide spectrum of relational responsibilities with each other, in a thoroughly conscientious and thought-out way.



“Though the Puritans, like the rest of the human race, had their dreams of what could and should be, they were decidedly not the kind of people that we would call “dreamy”!

They had no time for the idleness of the lazy or passive person who leaves it to others to change the world. They were men of action in the pure Reformed mold—crusading activists without a jot of self-reliance; workers for God who depended utterly on God to work in and through them and who always gave God the praise for anything they did that in retrospect seemed to them to have been right; gifted men who prayed earnestly that God would enable them to use their powers, not for self-display, but for His praise. None of them wanted to be revolutionaries in church or state, though some of them reluctantly became such; all of them, however, longed to be effective change agents for God wherever change was called for.”³⁸

Chapter Eight - The School System Takeover

Socialism and the American School System, 1900-1950

By the late 1800s, the church had given up their hold on America's educational system. The *New American* magazine states the following:



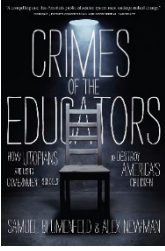
“It has taken more than a century and a half for the government schools to degenerate into the militantly anti-Christian, nightmarish system that it is today. However, the socialist propagandists of the 1830s did indeed intend that their proposed system would take us to our present predicament.

“One of the architects of the public-school movement during that period was Orestes Brownson, the very influential New England writer-editor-philosopher, then a disciple of socialist Robert Owen. Brownson, who converted to Christianity, broke with his former comrades and exposed their plot. He wrote: “The great object was to get rid of Christianity, and to convert our churches into halls of science. The plan was not to make open attacks on religion although we might belabor the clergy and bring them into contempt where we could; but to establish a system of state, — we said national — schools, from which all religion was to be excluded, in which nothing was to be taught but such knowledge as is verifiable by the senses and to which all parents were to be compelled by law to send their children.”³⁹”

Dr. A.A. Hodge, a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, warned the Presbyterian church in 1890: “I am as sure as I am of Christ’s reign that a comprehensive and centralized system of national education, separated from religion, as is now commonly proposed, will prove the most appalling enginery for the propagation of anti-Christian and atheistic unbelief, and of anti-social nihilistic ethics, individual, social and political, which this sin-rent world has ever seen.”⁴⁰

His words have proven to be prophetically accurate.

Samuel Blumenfeld and Alex Newman write in *The Crimes of the Educators*,



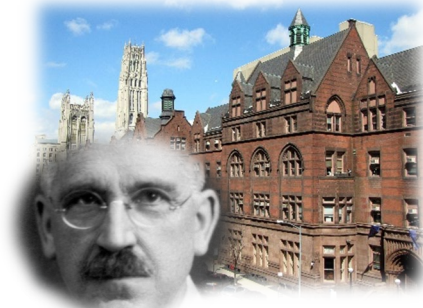
“Socialist thinking became dominant in the universities around the turn of the 20th century. What was needed, they believed, was a new curriculum that emphasized socialization and taught children to read by a whole-word method that would lower the nation's literacy level and make its children more amenable to collectivist values. That the conspirators' utopian fantasy would destroy our constitutional republic did not faze them at all. They considered themselves peerless intellectuals and socialism a morally superior way of life.

“The most important question we must ask ourselves today is, did Dewey and his colleagues have a right to implement a scheme to destroy our form of government, which protects our people's God-given rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? Was their utopian fantasy more worthy of devotion than the values of a free society? Dewey preceded such tyrants as Vladimir Lenin, Fidel Castro, Mao Tse-tung, Pol Pot, and other communist leaders, who used brutal force to impose their utopian nightmares on their entire nations, killing millions in the process. But he knew that socialism could not be imposed on America by force. Thus, he told his followers that ‘change must come gradually.’ That was the only strategy that would lead them to success.”

“But in America, the greatest, richest, and freest nation on earth, the imposition had to be subtle, slow, patient, and ‘democratic.’ The primary vehicle for this gradual change would be the public schools, where the dumbing-down process could be carried out without parents knowing what was being done to their children.

John Dewey and the Columbia Teachers College

“All of this required a massive cooperative effort by progressive educators at all levels of the education system to carry out the plan. Of course, there would be



John Dewey & Columbia Teacher's College

debate among them on how best to implement this radical program. For this purpose, in 1902 they established their own private forum, the National Society for the Study of Education, in which they could discuss the various changes in curriculum needed to advance the plan. The society's yearbooks provide members of the conspiracy - and conspiracy is the right word here, because it is secret, immoral, and involves more than one person - with what is being discussed by progressive experts in each area of the school curriculum.

“Since Dewey and his colleagues were convinced that nobody would believe in the existence of such a conspiracy, they felt free to discuss their plans without fear of discovery by parents. But as Abraham Lincoln reportedly said, ‘You can fool all of the people some of the time. You can even fool some of the people all of the time. But you can't fool all of the people all of the time.’

“In reality, Dewey's plan was to impose on America a form of cultural genocide never before imposed on any nation. The way to do it was to disparage high literacy and teach children to read by a method that would prevent them from achieving the kind of high personal literacy needed to develop their independent intelligence.

“Dewey was joined in this endeavor by a new breed of ‘progressive’ educators who came on the scene around the turn of the twentieth century. They were members of the Protestant academic elite, concentrated mainly at Teachers College, Columbia University, who no longer believed in the religion of their fathers even though many of them came from good Christian families. Some of their fathers were ministers and missionaries. These atheist renegades were also behaviorists who rejected individual freedom. Control of human behavior was one of their chief goals.”⁴¹

The Frankfurt Invasion

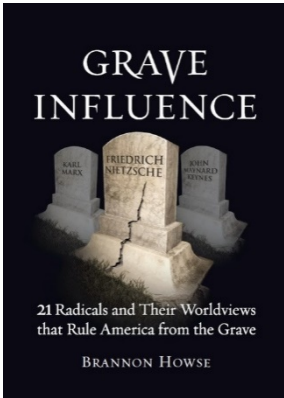
Probably one of the most deceptive but influential schools that was instrumental in turning America away from the Christian worldview to socialism was the Frankfurt School. This was a group of intellectuals from Germany who



Frankfurt School

joined together in 1923 to create a philosophical system of socialist/Humanist thought that is still affecting us today. Dr. William Lind points out that from the beginning these men had an underlying plan:

“The intended name for the Frankfurt School was the ‘Institute for Marxism’. The Institute’s father and founder, Felix Weil, wrote in 1971 that he ‘wanted the Institute to become known, and perhaps famous, due to its contributions to Marxism as a scientific discipline ...’ Beginning a tradition of Political Correctness that still carries on, Weil and others decided that they could operate more effectively if they concealed their Marxism; hence, on reflection, they chose the neutral-sounding name, the Institute for Social Research.”⁴²



Brannon Howse, in his powerful book *Grave Influence, 21 Radicals and Their Worldviews that Rule America from the Grave* states:

“The founders of the Frankfurt School were directly connected to Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, George Hegel, and Friedrich Nietzsche. Dr. Lind writes:

“The Frankfurt School blended Marx with Freud, and later influences (some Fascist as well as Marxist) added linguistics to create Critical Theory and deconstruction. These in turn greatly influenced education theory, and through institutions of higher education gave birth to what we now call Political Correctness. The lineage is clear, and it is traceable right back to Karl Marx!”

According to the online Britannica Concise Encyclopedia:

“Intellectually, the school is most indebted to the writings of G. W F Hegel and the Young Hegelians ... Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud.”



Frankfurt - American Style

Mr. Howse continues:

“In 1933, when the Nazis came to power in Germany, many members of the Frankfurt School conveniently found refuge in America at the invitation of John Dewey, who was on staff at Columbia University in New York. Dewey saw the opportunity to place these Marxists at leading colleges and universities around the country. **He and his cohorts specifically targeted education and media as the means by which to inculcate their worldview into American culture.** (Emphasis ours)

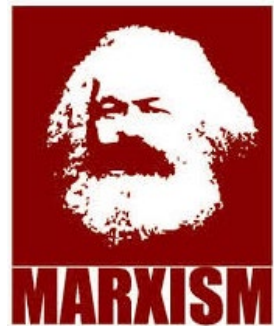


Edward Murrow

“Dewey had help from Edward R. Murrow in disbursing the Frankfurt School refugees. In 1934, Murrow became the Assistant Secretary of the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced German Scholars. Murrow was then hired by Stephen Duggan, the director of the Institute of International

Education, who advised the Soviet government on issues related to their workers' colleges. Duggan was a crusader for the Communist agenda. Murrow also joined the American Russian Institute, which had been founded with the help of John Dewey. Eventually, Murrow went to work for CBS, where he became a famed newscaster.

“Murrow is perhaps best known for using his broadcasts to destroy U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy, who was investigating the infiltration of Communists into education, media, and Hollywood ... many experts now admit that McCarthy was correct in his view that Communists had infiltrated American education and the media. Murrow knew it to be true because he helped settle many of these Marxists in America, dropping them into influential positions. Murrow was out to destroy McCarthy before he could uncover the anti-American agenda of Dewey, Murrow, and their friends.⁴³



The Agenda of the Frankfurt Philosophers

“The author of the Communist Manifesto, Karl Marx, called for a powerful central government, a punitive progressive income tax system, the merging of education with industrial production, the elimination of a free press, and much more. Thanks to many from the Frankfurt School, Marxism is alive and well in America, but this destructive worldview has been hidden from most Americans under terms that mask the reality of what is going on.”⁴⁴

It is clear from these historical records that the United States – and even the entire western world – has been under aggressive assault for many years, yet in a way that is nearly invisible to the undiscerning eye. This is real-world history that explains why we see such chaos in our society today; and as such, it is important that it be exposed as part of a worldview education. The question is, can we learn from these historical lessons?



Charles Francis Potter

“Education is thus a most power ally of humanism, and every public school is a school of humanism. What can the theistic Sunday school, meeting for an hour once a week, and teaching only a fraction of the children, do to stem the tide of a five-day program of humanistic teachings?” *Charles Francis Potter, Humanist, 1885-1924

Although God can override any weapon used against His people, the strategy of our enemy is not to be trivialized or ignored!

*Humanist and adviser on the Bible to Clarence Darrow in his defense of John Thomas Scopes, a schoolteacher who was charged with teaching evolution in his classes.

Chapter Nine - Education in America Today

The Breakdown of the American Education System



When and why did the majority of America's churches turn away from their commitments to the worldview education of children and families? By the late 1800's, due to the highly successful promotion of Darwinism in the universities, coupled with the lack of reasoned counter-arguments by church leadership to combat those godless ideas, the focus among the churches at large turned to evangelism. Nearly all churches began abandoning their commitment to education, resulting in a movement toward emotionalism and away from biblically informed, intellectual engagement in society. Within the next fifty years, most major denominations dismissed the concept

of Biblical inerrancy. Without an immovable source for all truth, the nation lost its footings. The result is that most Christians today are ill-equipped to provide answers to the divisive and destructive ideas and philosophies that are infecting the culture, the church, and our families. The Christian community is hardly able to defend itself as those godless worldviews are pounded into society 24/7 from the media and education establishments. Sadly, the children are at the epicenter of the attacks against the Christian worldview.

Pause and Consider

"Whoever Controls the Schools Rules the World" – Gary DeMar

"One of the most useful tools in the quest for power is the educational system."⁴⁵ The implication of this statement is obvious: Whoever controls the educational system will set the goals for the nation, establish its religious values, and ultimately control the future. From Sparta and Athens to Geneva and Harvard, education has been the primary means of cultural transformation.⁴⁶

Educator John Taylor Gatto taught in the state of New York – mostly in Harlem – for 35 years. He was honored twice as New York city teacher of the year and once as New York state teacher of the year. He now speaks around the world at educational conferences warning of the extreme

dangers and hazardous results of compulsory, state-driven K-12 schools, and pleading for radical reform. Here are just a few quotes from his best-selling book *Dumbing Us Down – The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling*:

“I began to realize that the bells and the confinement, the crazy sequences, the age-segregation, the lack of privacy, the constant surveillance, and all the rest of the national curriculum of schooling were designed exactly as if someone had set out to prevent children from learning how to think and act, to coax them into addiction and dependent behavior.” The trouble was that the unlikeliest kids kept demonstrating to me at random moments so many of the hallmarks of human excellence—insight, wisdom, justice, resourcefulness, courage, originality—that I became confused. They didn’t do this often enough to make my teaching easy, but they did it often enough that I began to wonder, reluctantly, whether it was possible that being in school itself was what was dumbing them down.

I dropped the idea that I was an expert whose job it was to fill the little heads with my expertise and began to explore how I could remove those obstacles that prevented the inherent genius of children from gathering itself. One of the biggest problems is we’ve built a way of life that depends on people doing what they are told because they don’t know how to tell themselves what to do...Self-evaluation, the staple of every major philosophical system that ever appeared on the planet, is never considered a factor. The lesson of report cards, grades, and tests is that children should not trust themselves or their parents but should instead rely on the evaluation of certified officials. People simply need to be told what they are worth.”

“Only a few lifetimes ago, things were very different in the United States. Originality and variety were common currency; our freedom from regimentation made us the miracle of the world; social-class boundaries were relatively easy to cross; our citizenry was marvelously confident, inventive, and able to do much for themselves independently, and to think for themselves. We were something special, we Americans, all by ourselves, without government sticking its nose into and measuring every aspect of our lives, without institutions and social agencies telling us how to think and feel. But we’ve had a society essentially under

central control in the United States since just after the Civil War, and such a society requires compulsory schooling—government monopoly schooling—to maintain itself.

“We don’t need Karl Marx’s conception of a grand warfare

A sample of a standard 8th Grade Exam in 1912 in Kentucky

Eighth Grade Examination for Bullitt County Schools, November, 1912

Spelling (KENTUCKY)

Exaggerate, incentive, conscious, pennyweight, chandelier, patient, potential, creature, participate, authentic, bequest, diminish, genuine, vinegar, incident, monotonous, hyphen, antecedent, autumn, hideous, relieve, conceive, control, symptom, rhinoceros, adjective, partial, musician, architect, exhaust, diagram, encyclopaedia, associate, associate, associate, benefit, masculine, synopsis, circulate, eccentric. 100

Reading

1. Reading and Writing, (given by the teacher.)

Arithmetic

1. Write in words the following:
5764; 000003; 123416; 653.0965; 43.37. 10

2. Solve: 35.7 plus 4, 5.8 plus 5.14 - 59 1/12. 10

3. Find cost at 12 1/2 cents per sq. yd. of kalsomining the walls of a room 20 ft. long, 16 ft. wide and 9 ft. high, deducting 1 door 8 ft. by 4 ft. 6 in. and 2 windows 5 ft. by 3 ft. 6 in. each. 10

4. A man bought a farm for \$2400 and sold it for \$2700. What per cent did he gain? 10

5. A man sold a watch for \$180, and lost 16 2/3 %. What was the cost of the watch? 10

6. Find the amount of \$50.00 for 3 yrs., 3 mo. and 3 days, at 4 per cent. 10

Geography.

1. Define longitude and latitude. 10

2. Name and give boundaries of the five zones. 10

3. Tell what you know of the Gulf Stream. 10

4. Locate the Suez Canal; what waters does it connect, and why is it important? 10

5. Locate the following countries which border each other: Turkey, Greece, Servia, Montenegro, Roumania. 10

6. Name and give the capitals of States touching the Ohio River. 10

Physiology.

1. How does the liver compare in size with other glands in the human body? Where is it located? What does it secrete. 10

2. Name the organs of circulation. 10

3. Describe the heart. 10

4. Compare arteries and veins as to function. Where is the blood carried to be purified? 10

5. Where is the chief nervous center of the body? 10

6. Define Cerebrum; Cerebellum. 10

7. What are the functions (or uses) of the spinal column? 10

8. Why should we study Physiology? 10

9. Give at least five rules to be observed in maintaining good health. 20

between the classes to see that it is in the interest of complex management, economic or political, to dumb people down, to demoralize them, to divide them from one another, and to discard them if they don’t conform. Woodrow Wilson, then president of Princeton University, said the following to the New York City School Teachers Association in 1909: ‘We want one class of persons to have a liberal education, and we want another class of persons, a very much larger class, of necessity, in every society, to forgo the privileges of a liberal education and fit themselves to perform specific difficult manual tasks.’” 47

Mr. Gatto agreed with H. L. Mencken, who wrote in The American Mercury for April 1924:

“...the aim of public education is not to fill the young of the species with knowledge and awaken their intelligence.... Nothing could be further from the truth. The aim...is simply to reduce as many individuals as

possible to the same safe level, to breed and train a standardized citizenry, to put down dissent and originality. That is its aim in the United States... and that is its aim everywhere else.”⁴⁸

But even though he saw so many of his students’ talents being frustrated and wasted within the state-run schools, Mr. Gatto still saw the potential for greatness in every child simply lying dormant, waiting to be unleashed. His hopeful conclusion after 35 years of experience as an acclaimed teacher in public-schools may seem like the rosy whims of an imagination run wild, yet it is quite in agreement with the Biblical truth of Genesis 1:27 which states that we are all made in the image of God. Mr. Gatto, who is not an evangelical Christian, emphatically states:

“I’ve come to believe that genius is an exceedingly common human quality, probably natural to most of us.”

Indeed, that quote proclaims a profound truth about the possibilities of excellence God has instilled in each of us. Proof of these possibilities begins appearing in the earliest ages.

With Him or against Him?

Today’s government schools claim to teach without bias of any kind – suggesting that they are morally neutral. But Christ said,

“He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.” - Matthew 12:30

Jesus is saying that those who contradict any of His moral positions are His enemies. It is not possible for any moral statement to be neutral. By nature, a moral statement is making a judgment of right or wrong.

The New American puts it this way:

“Government schools purport to transmit knowledge comprised of supposedly neutral facts. Many “public school” advocates would claim they do not indoctrinate children, but instead, simply give them a values-free education, that allows children to determine for themselves what they believe (from many bits of

amoral data). Political conservatives rightly cry “foul,” and point out that there is an awful lot of moralizing that happens on everything from sexual ethics, to environmentalism, socialism and much more.

So, once the student acknowledges God as the source of all creation, the attention then turns to the questions of ethics and right living. We find even in the pagan cultures of old that inculcating the young in virtue was a primary concern. For what does it profit the individual, the family, or society if a youth is filled with all worldly knowledge and practical skills but is an insufferable brat? Or even worse, uses his education to become a brilliant, vicious criminal or tyrant?”⁴⁹

Chapter 10 –Conclusion

The Importance of Christ-centered Education

Early America’s Christ-centered schools provided the very basis of the foundation upon which the nation grew. The fact is that when the youth are taught from the very earliest ages to hear the words of truth and apply the truth in their lives, they are given the greatest of all treasures. When grounded in the truth - truth given by the Author of Life – the foundations are solid and the possibilities for a successful society are boundless. As we have seen, when the nation’s first government-sponsored public schools began, they were uncompromisingly Christian and remained that way until at least the mid-1800s. But by the early 1900s they had begun creeping away from their Christian roots and by the 1930s, Humanist principles were being substituted in their place. Hosea 4:14 says, “*The people without understanding are ruined.*” When the education we receive is full of deceit and there is no truth to combat the deception, there will be no markers in place to help us distinguish right from wrong.

To summarize:

1. We are personally responsible for knowing God's Word and practicing it in every area of our life.
2. We are to be disciplined disciples, learners of the truths of God.
3. We are personally responsible to pass along that faith to the next generation. This means that the youth must learn, above all, to be *virtuous*: to be God-fearers, to be truthful, to have integrity, and to be men and women of character.
4. Education is primarily the responsibility of parents and the church – not of the government!
5. We can do all things through Christ Who strengthens us! (Philippians 4:13)

Biblical traits and virtuous character must be learned at home and at church and reinforced in the schooling.

A Final Note

We will close with a passage from Psalm 37, followed by a powerful commentary by Charles Spurgeon on these verses:

(34) *Wait on the Lord, and keep His way, and He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it. (35) I have seen the wicked in great power and spreading himself like a native green tree. (36) Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; Indeed, I sought him, but he could not be found. (37) Mark the blameless man and observe the upright; For the future of that man is peace. -Psalms 37:34-37*

Spurgeon's commentary begins at verse 36:

"Yet he passed away. Tree and man both gone, the son of man as surely as the child of the forest. What clean sweeps death makes! And, lo, he was not. To the surprise of all men the great man was gone, his estates sold, his business bankrupt, his house alienated, his name forgotten, and all in a few months. Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Moved by curiosity, if we enquire for the ungodly, they have left no trace; like birds of ill omen none desire to remember them.

*Some of the humblest of the godly are immortalized, their names are imperishably fragrant in the church, while of the ablest of infidels and blasphemers hardly their names are remembered beyond a few years. Men who were in everybody's mouths but yesterday are forgotten tomorrow, **for only virtue is immortal.***

(Verse 37) Mark the perfect man and behold the upright. After having watched with surprise the downfall of the wicked, give your attention to the sincerely godly man, and observe the blessed contrast. Good men are men of mark and are worth our study. Upright men are marvels of grace, and worth beholding. For the end of that man is peace.

*The man of peace has an end of peace. Peace without end comes in the end to the man of God. His way may be rough, but it leads home. With believers it may rain in the morning, thunder at midday, and pour in torrents in the afternoon, but it must clear up ere the sun goes down. War may last till our last hour, but then we shall hear the last of it."*⁵⁰

Our hope and prayer is that God will raise up His church to rebuild our foundations and to lead the society once again. We

believe that He will bless His Church if we will commit to prioritize the education and discipleship of our people. He promises that if we do what He calls us to do, He will watch over our families, churches, and nations.

The process begins with one individual, one family, one church, and one community at a time. You simply start in your home and watch what God can do!

Endnotes

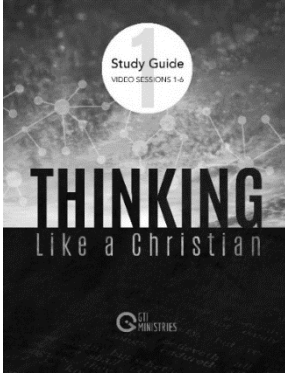
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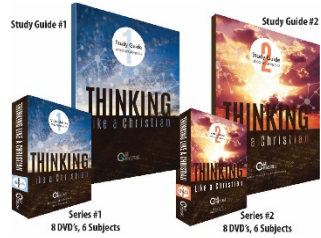
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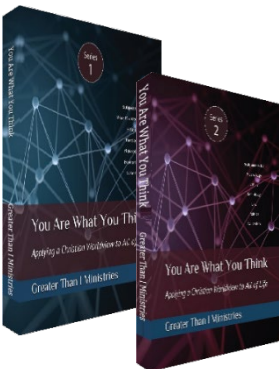
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