

A Christian Worldview of Things

Education

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- B. What I am not going to talk about.
- C. What I am going to talk about.

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- A. What is it? What is the goal?

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1. GOD IS

2. GOD HAS SPOKEN

C. View of Man (student)

1. General Principles

a. Image bearer of God

i. Dignity

ii. Creative Potential

b. Fallen in Adam

i. Sin (not a blank slate)

ii. Needs Christ

2. Specific Considerations of the Child

a. Foolishness

i. Foolishness bound up in the heart.

ii. Needs correction

b. Childishness

i. Thought patterns

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c. Discernment and Enjoyment

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2. Writing

a. Handwriting

b. Spelling/Grammar

c. Composition

i. Narrative

ii. Expository

iii. Poetry

3. Rhetoric

B. Sciences

1. Math

2. Logic

3. Biology

4. Chemistry

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6. Earth Science (Geology, Meteorology, Oceanography, etc.)

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- 1. Visual**
 - a. 2-D: Drawing / drafting / Paint, etc**
 - b. 3-D: Sculpture**
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 - b. Dance**
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- 4. Technical / Industrial / Domestic**

IV. The Context: A Christian View of Schooling (Pros/Cons of Options)

A. Local Christian Schools

- 1. Curriculum**
- 2. Cost**
- 3. Socialization**

B. Local Government Schools

- 1. Curriculum**
- 2. Cost**
- 3. Socialization**

C. Home School

- 1. Curriculum**
- 2. Cost**
- 3. Socialization**

V. The Challenges: Sin and the World

A. Culture of Fools

- 1. Despise God**
 - a. Secular/Sacred Dichotomy**
 - b. Hyper independence / Pride / Humanism**

- 2. Despise Wisdom**
- 3. Despise Hard work**

B. Educational Climate

- 1. Addicted to novelty**
- 2. Addicted to drugs**

Christian Education (Outline with Lecture Notes)

ON BOARD:

1. A KEY
2. Dabney's definition

I. Introduction

A. Everybody's got an opinion!

No man who worships education has got the best out of education... Without a gentle contempt for education no man's education is complete. *G. K. Chesterton (1874-1936)*

I have never let my schooling interfere with my education. *Mark Twain (1835-1910)*

Everywhere I go I'm asked if I think the university stifles writers. My opinion is that they don't stifle enough of them. There's many a best-seller that could have been prevented by a good teacher. -- Flannery O'Conner

ALBERT EINSTEIN: It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education.

ARISTOTLE: All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER: Give me the children until they are seven and anyone may have them afterward.

The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life.

Plato (427 BC - 347 BC), *The Republic*

“Promote then as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.” (*Founders' Almanac*, pg. 150) *George Washington, 1796*

MARTIN LUTHER pg. 197 *Philosophy and Education*

B. What I am not going to talk about.

- I will **not be talking about specifics**. That is, I will not be making an argument for this or that model of schooling (traditional, classical, Montessori, Charlotte Mason, etc) nor will I be arguing for a specific method (i.e. home school, government school, private, etc.)
- Will **not** spend time arguing for a **specific curriculum provider** (Bob Jones, A Becca, Veritas, etc.) I have my ideas and opinions about the matter, but I will have to save those for another context.
- Not be talking UNIVERSITY EDUCATION... because of the constraints of time and because of my own expertise, I will limit these thoughts to K-12.

C. What I am going to talk about.

- My assignment is to present a CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW of EDUCATION. In other words, what are the glasses through which we view this topic?
- What are the biblical categories and themes that should shape our thinking?
- My goal is to present some general principles, and point you to a few key texts that have helped shape my thinking...

II. The Concept: A Christian View of Education (What is Education?)

A. What is it? What is the goal?

- What is education or what does it mean to educate?
- A modern dictionary tells us that education is, “the action or process of educating or of being educated.” It further states that “to educate” is to train by formal instruction and supervised practice, and to develop mentally, morally, or aesthetically, especially by way of instruction.
- Noah Webster in his 1828 dictionary gives us this:

EDUCA'TION, *n.* [*L. educatio.*] The bringing up, as of a child, instruction; formation of manners. Education comprehends all that series of instruction and discipline which is intended to enlighten the understanding, correct the temper, and form the manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future stations. To give children a good education in manners, arts and science, is important; to give them a religious education is indispensable; and an immense responsibility rests on parents and guardians who neglect these duties.

- His explanation of the verb form is also very helpful.

ED'UCATE, *v.t.* [*L. educo, educare; e and duco, to lead.*] To bring up, as a child; to instruct; to inform and enlighten the understanding; to instill into the mind principles of arts, science, morals, religion and behavior. To educate children well is one of the most important duties of parents and guardians.

- The word comes from the Latin *educare*, meaning to bring up, to nourish to maturity, to rear. It has the sense of encompassing all of those actions in which a parent engages in order to facilitate and nurture the child’s growth to maturity.
- Although the Bible doesn’t give us a concise definition of the word, we do see the scriptures teaching on the many issues involved in our understanding of the term.
- Childrearing texts could be considered “education texts.”
- In the Vulgate (Latin translation of the New Testament) the word is used in Ephesians 6:4b, “...*educate illos in disciplina et correptione Domini.*”
- “bring up” in most English translations of the scripture.

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. (NKJV)

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. (ASV)

- An excellent and succinct statement defining education is given by R.L. Dabney who wrote, “**Education is the nurture and development of the whole man for his proper end.**” R.L. Dabney *Works* vol. 3 pg. 277

- The Westminster Shorter Catechism asks the next obvious question. If education is to nurture and develop the whole man for his proper end, then... “What is the chief end

of man?” The Westminster divines reply, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.” John Milton wrote,

“The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith makes up the highest perfection.” *Of Education* Harvard Classics

- We can say that education is the entire activity of raising a child to love, fear and serve God. This is cannot merely be the activity of the Sunday school and pulpit or family devotions. Nor can we say that education is merely that activity that occurs in the school or classroom.
- It is all of it together. So please, in your mind, make a distinction between education proper and what we usually think of as education which might better be called Schooling. (later when we get to talking about the subjects don’t think any school alone could do it all... much of “education” must be done outside of the school)
- Furthermore, it has one single supreme goal. All of a child’s education has one end in view...

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (I Cor.10:31)

*...bringing every **thought** into captivity to the obedience of Christ... (II Cor.10:5b)*

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Goal is to bring glory to God.
2. Recognize distinction between EDUCATION and SCHOOLING

B. View of God

1. God IS...

a. the true and living God

- In **Ex. 3:13 – 14**, Moses asked God who should he say sent him and God replied, “I AM WHO I AM” and then said to tell the people of Israel, “I AM” has sent you.
- This is key... God did not say he was the great “could be” or the great “might be”. He did not say, “It doesn’t matter, you can get along fine with or without me.”

That God is MUST BE central in every aspect of our lives... AND IT CANNOT BE JUST A VAGUE “GOD” NOTION. As you have already seen in previous lessons, all your epistemological and metaphysical ideas break down if you reject this truth... GOD IS.

Furthermore it is the God who has revealed Himself in the SON
...turn to COL. 1:15 – 18 and Col 2:3

Deut. 6:4-9 “Hear, O Israel: **The LORD our God, the LORD is one!** You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. **You shall teach them diligently to your children...**”

Ps. 111:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

(...better rendering “chief part” instead of “beginning”)

b. the author and only infallible interpreter of all reality

Rom. 11:33-36... “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

2. God has spoken...

a. Full Inspiration

- **II Tim 3:16, 17 (turn there)**
- II Pet.1:21 ...for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

b. Supreme Authority

- Mat. 4:4 ...Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.
- Is 8:20 ... To the laws and the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

c. Practical Perspicuity

- Ps.119:105 – Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

THEREFORE: Prov.1:7 (the fear of the Lord...), Rom.3:4 (Let God be true and every man a liar), and Ps.119:130 (The entrance of your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.)

- Romans 12:1, 2 – Our thinking must be positive transformational thinking with the discovery of the will of God as our goal.
- Psalm 1:1 & Eph 4:17 – We must then reject the emptiness of the world’s thought processes.

C. View of Man (student)

1. General Principles

a. Image bearer of God

i. Dignity

Gen. 1:27, 9:6

ii. Moral

iii. Dominion / Creative Potential

Gen. 1:28

b. Fallen in Adam

i. Sin (not a blank slate)

Ps. 51:6 and Rm. 8:7

Luke 11:23 & Romans 1:18 ff – Man is not neutral to truth.

“Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil.” C.S. Lewis

ii. Needs Christ

Acts 16:30, 31, and John 3:16

2. Specific Considerations of the Child

a. Foolishness (Prov. 22:15)

i. Foolishness bound up in the heart.

ii. Needs correction

b. Childishness (I Cor.13:11)

i. Thought patterns

ii. Immaturity to maturity

D. View of Knowledge

1. Objective

2. Revelatory

3. Progressive

Is.28:9, 10

Prov. 22:6

KEY CONCEPTS

3. Our “WORLDVIEW” is crucial.

E. View of Pedagogy (Teaching)

1. Teacher (Mt. 10:25)

a. Character:

- The teacher must embody the goals of education

b. Competence:

- Calvin wrote “None are good teachers but those who have been good scholars... They alone are ‘learned’ who, by continually learning, do not refuse to make constant progress.” *Calvin’s Wisdom pg. 353*
- The teacher must have proven competence in the subject matter
- The teacher must have the ability to communicate the required material

2. Methods (Christ as the model...)

a. Direct instruction (lecture and/or text)

- Sermon on the Mount
- Parables / Explanations

b. Demonstration / Modeling

- Miracles
- Spending time with sinners

c. Experiential / Self discovery

- Sending out the disciples

(Also... Consider God’s various methods of revealing truth... narrative, poetic, legal writings, symbolic/allegorical, demonstration, etc.)

LESSON #2

ON BOARD:

1. A KEY (key concepts)

Goal is to bring glory to God.

Recognize distinction between EDUCATION and SCHOOLING

Our "WORLDVIEW" is crucial.

2. Dabney's definition

3. Fibonacci Sequence: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, 233, 377, 610, 987, 1597 ...

4. Ref: Prov. 1:7, Rom. 3:4, Ps. 119:130, Rm. 12:1, 2, Ps. 1:1, and Eph. 4:17

REVIEW:

Last week I tried to lay before you some foundational perspectives that ought to form our "Christian Worldview of Education"

1. Definition I like to use: (Dabney's on the board).

2. KEY CONCEPTS:

-Goal

-Distinction "education" is larger than just "schooling".

-WORLDVIEW is important.

-View of God

-View of Man

-View of Knowledge

-View of Pedagogy (Teaching)

3. If our worldview should shape all of our educational endeavors, how do we apply these perspectives to the subjects we generally associate with schooling? So, before we take up the topic of the content...

▪ **Eph.6:4 (LOOK UP AND READ)**

▪ **Prov.1:7 (LOOK UP AND READ)**, Ps.119:130 (The entrance of your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.) and Rom.3:4 (Let God be true and every man a liar)

▪ **Psalm 1:1 & Eph 4:17** – We must reject the emptiness of the world's thought processes.

▪ **Romans 12:1, 2 (LOOK UP AND READ)** – Our thinking must be positive transformational thinking with the discovery of the will of God as our goal.

▪ **2 Cor 10:5**

So here we go... a few thoughts on what we do in school from a Christian Worldview.

III. The Content: A Christian View of the Subjects

A. Language Arts

Students should learn to read well because God has revealed Himself in the written word. Phonics and Grammar should be taught so that students understand the mechanics of the written word. People need to be well equipped to read and understand God's revelation.

We ought to be people of the book with a strong desire to read...

2 Tim. 4:13 We see Paul's example, a man in prison writing to his friend...
"Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come – and the books, especially the parchments." Calvin wrote about this verse... "This passage gives to all believers a recommendation of constant reading, that they may profit by it."
Calvin's Wisdom pg. 353

At the higher grades students read secular literature and learn to critique its content and appreciate that which is true, beautiful, and good.

("God has made man to be social and the means to facilitate that is language..."
Comment by Sam F. during lesson.)

1. Reading

- a. Basic Skills: Phonics / Decoding / etc.**
- b. Comprehension and Fluency**
- c. Discernment and Enjoyment**
 - i. Literature**
 - ii. Poetry**

2. Writing

- a. Hand writing**
- b. Spelling/Grammar**
- c. Composition**
 - i. Narrative**
 - ii. Expository**
 - iii. Persuasive**
 - iii. Poetry**

3. Rhetoric

B. Sciences

Psalms 111:2 proclaims, “*The works of the LORD are great, studied by all who have pleasure in them.*” God’s wondrous creation is ours to discover. The study of its mysteries should make us wonder at God’s greatness and move us to worship Him. Science is much more than just refuting the fallacy of Darwinism. Science is the diligent study of God’s creative work in which He has revealed His own glorious wisdom and might.

Romans 1:20

Isaac Newton wrote: “This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the council and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being... This Being governs all things, not as the soul of the world but Lord of all.” Quoted in *Repairing the Ruins* pg.64

Psalms 19:1-3: That “GOD IS” is no mystery. There is no language where the voice of creation is misunderstood.

A contemporary of Newton wrote: “...it is especially in the sciences and the knowledge of nature and the arts that we see the wonders of God, his power, His wisdom, and goodness... That is why, since my youth, I have given myself to the sciences that I loved.” Quoted in *Repairing the Ruins* pg.65

1. Math

When math is taught to a child, it must at some point be accompanied by a discussion of God’s faithfulness to maintain a stable universe and that there is regularity and consistency in the world because God does not change.

2+2=4 because “GOD IS” and the Bible reveals HIM as the God who does not change... Num.23:19 (**Col. 1:15 – 18 and Col 2:3**)

For the “honest” unbeliever there is no explanation for the reliability of mathematics, especially in the realm of nature. Let me illustrate...
Repairing the Ruins pg.62, 63

2. Logic

3. Biology

4. Chemistry

5. Physics

6. Physical (Geology, Meteorology, Oceanography, etc.)

7. Geography

C. History

- **MARK TWAIN:** *Many public-school children seem to know only two dates-- 1492 and 4th of July; and as a rule they don't know what happened on either occasion.*

We have become a nation that has forgotten the days of old. We have forgotten the blessings of our own heritage. Is it a “godly” perspective to not know history?

- **In Psalm 143:5** David sings, *“I remember the days of old; I meditate on all you works; I muse on the work of your hands.”* History is another study of the works of God, not in creation but in providence. It really is HIS story. All of human events reveal God’s providential dealings with man. It honestly looks at the events and people (both sinners and saints) that God used to shape the story of mankind.
- **Psalm 111** also declares that God’s works are to be remembered.
- In the *Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis has Screwtape explain a devilish strategy of using historical ignorance as a means to destroy men...
“It is important,” writes the senior Temptor, “to cut every generation off from all others; for where learning makes a free commerce between the ages there is always a danger that the characteristic errors of one may be corrected by the characteristic truths of another.”
- **THUCYDIDES:** History is Philosophy teaching by examples.
- **Joel 1:2, 3**
- **C.S. Lewis** "History is a story written by the finger of God." *Christian Reflections*

D. Physical Education

I Timothy 4:8 - *For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things...*

- In a world where there is so much we can do that has no value, we should at least consider those things the bible declares as having a little value
- On the other hand, the verse does remind us of the priority.

Mark 12:30 – *...And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength...*

- People are not just mind, but body as well and we must love God with all that he has given us.
- P.E. is important to develop good bodily stewardship
- Athletics is a good way to develop and test those graces we strive nurture in children.

E. Arts

I won't spend much time covering this since Jimmy spent two weeks covering the idea of ART. Let me just add a couple thoughts to what he said...

- **First consider this verse... Philippians 4:8** – *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things.*
- We must teach our kids to think about those things that are lovely, noble, praiseworthy, etc.
- It assumes that we ought to recognize the difference.
- **Secondly, consider the creation account** in Genesis chapter one... When God finished creating, He said that it was good. Like our Father, we should create. Furthermore, we should create in such a way that we recognize and appreciate that which is good, beautiful, and sublime.

1. Visual

a. 2-D: Drawing / Drafting / Paint / etc.

b. 3-D: Sculpture / Architecture / Pottery / etc.

2. Musical

a. Instrumental - Ps. 33:2-3

- The mention in scripture of praising God with multiple instruments assumes that people will be able to play them. What a shame it is that the only thing so many Christians can play is the radio.
- We've been given different gifts, but surely more of our children could learn to play reasonably well.

b. Vocal – Col.3:16 (Eph.5:19)

- We need to know how to sing.
- If we are called to praise God with a loud voice we ought to help our children learn to sing with at least a modicum of ability so that they are not tempted to truncate the praise of God because they are self-conscious and feel awkward singing with vigor.

3. Performing

a. Drama – It is nothing more than telling a story...and what's wrong with that? There are such great stories that are written to be performed...
HENRY V – Does this story sound familiar?...

b. Dance — Dance cannot be evil in and of itself (Ps.149:2-3), every culture in history has dance (Ecc.3:4), should we not learn to do it in a way that honors God? Just a thought.

c. Film / Video - I have included film on this list because of the culturally relevant nature of the medium. We will all watch film/video, and our society is entertained, informed, and influenced by it. We ought to teach at least some of the basic elements unique to that form of art.

We must teach our kids to think about those things that are lovely, noble, praiseworthy, etc.

4. Technical / Industrial / Domestic

IV. The Context: A Christian View of Schooling (Pros/Cons of Options)

A. Local Christian School

- 1. Curriculum (formal and informal)**
- 2. Cost**
- 3. Socialization**

B. Local Government Schools

- 1. Curriculum (formal and informal)**
- 2. Cost**
- 3. Socialization**

C. Home School

- 1. Curriculum (formal and informal)**
- 2. Cost**
- 3. Socialization**

V. The Challenges: Sin and the World

A. Culture of Fools

- 1. Despise God**
 - a. Secular/Sacred Dichotomy**
 - b. Hyper independence / Pride / Humanism**
- 2. Despise Wisdom**
- 3. Despise Hard work**

B. Educational Climate

- 1. Addicted to novelty**
- 2. Addicted to drugs**

Summary of A.N. Martin’s lectures on education, comparing a consistent secular education with a consistent Christian education.

	SECULAR EDUCATION	CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Controlling influence / framework	STATIST / HUMANISTIC	BIBLICAL / THEISTIC
What prevents each from being consistent with its philosophy?	Common Grace Leavening influence of Christians	Remaining SIN Pressure of this world’s system
AUTHORITY?	MAN -collective or consensus of experts	GOD -revealed in Christ through the scriptures (Prov. 1:7 & Col.2:3)
GOAL?	PRODUCE A GOOD CITIZEN - innocuous, “tolerant”, collective	To see the child converted and molded into an obedient disciple of Christ, and then take his place in God’s world fulfilling the purpose for which he was made.
NATURE of the CHILD?	1. AN ANIMAL -high in the evolutionary scheme 2. FUNDAMENTALLY GOOD -his evil came from somewhere else 3. AUTONOMOUS -can discover truth himself	1. A CREATED IMAGE BEARER of the LIVING GOD -therefore has the highest dignity and value (Gen. 1:27, 9:6) 2. FALLEN and DEPRAVED (Ps. 51:6 and Rm. 8:7) 3. DEPENDENT -upon divine revelation to know and divine grace to become that which he should know and become
QUALIFICATION of EDUCATOR	STATE CERTIFICATION	FIRST... The teacher must embody the goals of education (Mt. 10:24) SECOND... proven competence in and communication of the required material
CURRICULUM?	1. EXPEDIENCY and PRESENT OPINION of the “experts” 2. CONSTITUTED and delivered with NO reference to GOD 3. DELIBERATELY SELECTIVE	1. BEGINS and BIULDS on Pr. 1:7 & Rm. 11:37 2. THEOCENTRIC 3. INTELLECTUALLY HONEST
CLIMATE?	NON-AUTHORITARIAN NON-DIRECTIVE(on moral issues) PERMISSIVE EXPRESSIVE	AUTHORITARIAN -rooted in the 5 th commandment -not harsh or insensitive POSITIVE and DIRECTIVE on moral issues CONSCIOUS effort to hone the child’s conscience STRUCTURED and CATYLITIC
ASSOCIATIONS	NONSELECTIVE EQUAL INTERACTION	SELECTIVE (Prov. 1 and I Cor 15)