

HIGHER CALLING

TO A CHRIST-CENTERED
EDUCATION



HENRY MORRIS

**HIGHER CALLING:
TO A CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION**

First printing: 1977

Fifth printing: 2002

Revised Edition, First printing: March 2025

Copyright © 1977 by Dr. Henry Morris. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, copied, broadcast, stored, or shared in any form whatsoever without written permission from the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations in articles and reviews. For information write:

Master Books, P.O. Box 726, Green Forest, AR 72638

Master Books® is a division of the New Leaf Publishing Group, LLC.

ISBN: 978-1-68344-422-0

ISBN: 978-1-61458-907-5 (digital)

Library of Congress Catalog Number: 77-78017

Previously published as *Christian Education for the Real World*.

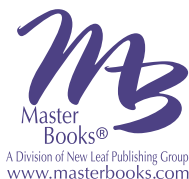
Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible.

Please consider requesting that a copy of this volume be purchased by your local library system.

Printed in the United States of America

For information regarding promotional opportunities, please contact the publicity department at pr@nlpg.com.

Please visit our website for other great titles: www.masterbooks.com



Contents

Publisher's Note.....	5
Introduction.....	7
1. Biblical Principles of Education.....	11
The Spectrum of Education.....	13
Fallacious Concepts of Education	14
The True Foundation of Education	19
The Dominion Mandate.....	23
The Transmission of Truth (The Ministry of Teaching).....	27
The Goals of True Education.....	34
2. The Creationist Framework of True Education	39
The Two Cosmogonies.....	40
Evolutionism in Modern Education.....	41
History of the Evolutionary Worldview.....	45
The Origin of Evolutionary Philosophy	50
The Evidence for Creation	55
Importance of Creation Emphasis in Teaching	62
3. Humanistic and Super-Humanistic Education	67
Humanistic Emphases in Modern Education.....	68
Revival of Occultism Among Students.....	71
Spiritual Implications of Occult Revival.....	74
Naturalism, Occultism, and Human Nature	79
Biblical Evaluation of Human Reasoning.....	80
The Folly of Human Wisdom	86
4. Christ-Centered Education	91
The Edenic Mandate and Its Implications	92
The Bondage of Corruption	96
The Noahic Covenant.....	99
Present Status of the Noahic Covenant.....	101
Christian Research and Writing	108
Christ the True Knowledge and Wisdom.....	109
Spiritual Standards in the Curriculum	117
5. The Need for Biblical Certitude Education and the Evidences of Christianity.....	121
What Is the Gospel?	122
The Defense of the Gospel	123
Why Teach Apologetics?	124

Is Apologetics Effective in Evangelism?	126
The Content of Apologetics.....	128
The Search for Truth.....	129
God's Mandate and Education.....	135
The Glory of the Word.....	137
6. True Education.....	141
7. The Teaching and the Teacher.....	145
Principles of Curriculum Construction	146
Limitations on Course Content	149
Qualifications of Teachers	151
8. The Implementation of Christian Education.....	163
Teaching and Indoctrination.....	163
Scriptural Guidance on Teaching Methods	164
The Problem of Textbooks.....	174
Size of Classes	175
Bonus Content.....	179
9. Christian Rules for Christian Schools.....	181
Biblical Considerations in Formulating Standards of Conduct.....	183
Biblical Moral Character: God's Eternal Law	187
Christian Choices: Basic Commitments	191
Administrative Arrangements and Requirements	198
Principles and Rules of Enforcement	199
Indices	
Subject Index	205
Name Index	207
Scripture Index	209

Publisher's Note

Higher Calling: To a Christ-Centered Education

This book was originally published in 1977 under the title *Christian Education for the Real World*. At that time, public schools were the primary educational choice for most families. However, the seeds of change were being planted as secularization in the school system prompted a growing interest in alternative approaches, such as homeschooling and the Christian school movement. Dr. Morris' work captured this pivotal moment in history, reflecting the rising desire among Christians to view education as a vital means of raising up godly generations.

Since its first publication, public education has increasingly drifted from biblical values, leaving many parents searching for alternatives that uphold their faith. Thankfully, a diverse range of Christian education models—from homeschooling and private schools to co-ops and online programs—now offer families meaningful choices. While pursuing these paths often involves challenges, such as financial strain and societal pressure, the eternal value of Christ-centered education cannot be overstated. This revised edition provides timeless principles and practical encouragement for parents seeking to guide their children's education in today's complex world, equipping them to stand firm and nurture the next generation in God's truth.

Dr. Henry Morris (1918 – 2006) was an influential American young earth creationist, Christian apologist, and engineer, often referred to as the “father of modern creation science.” He co-authored *The Genesis Flood* with John C. Whitcomb in 1961, a pivotal work that revitalized the creationist movement. Following this, he co-founded the Creation Research Society in 1963 and the Institute for Creation Research (ICR) in 1972. He was also influential in founding Master Books in 1975. Over the course of his lifetime, Dr. Morris authored over 60 books, most notably *The Defender's Bible*, which includes his scientific and theological notes accompanying the King James Version.

Introduction

by Dr. Henry Morris

As a long-time teacher, I have had the privilege of spending most of my life in the field of education. Although my original intent had been to make a career in the engineering profession, the Lord clearly led me, several years after graduation, into the ministry of teaching, and I have been there ever since.

Twenty-four years were spent teaching many different scientific subjects in secular universities, and then for eight years I taught mostly biblical subjects in a Christian college. I have also taught regular Bible classes in various churches for over 27 years, some to junior high and senior high classes, but mostly to college-adult classes. Although an intensive travel schedule in more recent years has kept me from serving as a regular Sunday school teacher in this recent period, I have had the privilege of serving as guest teacher in many scores of church and college classrooms all over the country. In addition, I have combined the teaching with educational administrative responsibilities for over 40 years.

Many people, of course, have had even more experience in varied types of teaching. The above testimony is not meant to impress anyone but to express a long commitment to education and a sincere concern for its ministry to people of all ages.

The many years I spent in secular teaching, at five different universities, were marked by almost continual interaction with the evolutionary humanism being promoted in these schools, not only by faculty members and textbooks in the natural sciences, but probably even more so by those in the social sciences and humanities. A similar situation prevails at practically every secular college and university in the world today. Furthermore, as I began to have more and more opportunities for contact with various Christian colleges, it became evident that most church colleges, and even the interdenominational evangelical colleges, had been infected by this same malady. Evolutionary cosmogonies and humanistic philosophies were often coated with a veneer of biblical theology and Christian sentiment, but the inroads of such paganism were deep.

Although it is important to witness personally to the students on such campuses concerning their individual need of salvation (and I have had the joy of praying with many of them and seeing many accept Christ through these years), it soon became evident that this was essentially a strategy of retreat, salvaging a few here and there in the battle but watching ungodly teachings and practices become stronger year by year, carrying greater numbers of students every year into complete unbelief.

Even the ministries of such campus Christian organizations as the Baptist Student Union, the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, the Navigators, and Campus Crusade for Christ (and I have served actively as faculty advisor at one time or another for each of these) have been little more than voices in the wilderness. In spite of the many conversions that resulted from the work of these organizations, the number of unsaved students increased even more rapidly, and the entrenchment of evolutionary humanism seemed to become deeper and stronger as time went on.

The real problem is that Christians have, for a century (since the Scopes trial in particular), been concentrating on evangelism and “personal” Christianity, almost completely abandoning science and education to the evolutionary humanists. It is not enough merely to try to win individual students and teachers to Christ, important as that may be; we must win **education** to Christ! Wonderful though it is when a scientist comes to Christ, it would be still greater if we could see **science** turn to Christ.

Even though the return of the Lord Jesus may take place at any time, He did tell His followers: “*Occupy till I come*” (Luke 19:13). As pointed out in some detail later on, mankind is responsible for exercising dominion over the earth, and this commandment has not in any way been withdrawn. The enterprises of science and technology, and especially of education, are man’s stewardship under God, to bring honor to Him. These commandments are more meaningful to the Christian than to the non-Christian, and he is under greater responsibility (because of greater knowledge) to see that they accomplish what God intended for them.

The real world is not the world of sin and warfare, hatred and conflict, in which we live now. This present age is only a temporary intrusion

in the perfect world that God created in the beginning and which He will soon reestablish to endure forever. True education, therefore, must be education that will equip people for fruitful lives in both time and eternity.

The Christian school movement has been a partial answer to the secularization of the public schools. Even Christian schools and colleges, however, have found it almost impossible to return to a truly biblical system of education. In spite of their good intentions, the almost universal evolutionary bias in textbooks and the humanistic graduate schools where their faculty members obtain their training have prevented them from attaining or maintaining this standard.

Neither these reasons nor any others, however, can really justify any longer the common practice in Christian schools of compromising with evolution and humanism. There has been a serious revival of scientific creationism in the past thirty years, and this development has eliminated any legitimate excuse for further compromise. Humanism and all other anti-Christian philosophies are based squarely on the assumption of evolution, and it has been clearly shown by creationist scientists that special creation is a much better scientific explanation for the world than evolution.¹

There is thus bright hope and real opportunity in the days just ahead to reestablish a system of true education, based on the biblical doctrine of education in all its fullness. God has raised up in recent years thousands of scientists, as well as many scholars in other fields, who are committed to faith in Christ and the Scriptures, and in particular to a worldview founded on biblical creationism. Such people could, if properly informed and motivated, do the necessary research, write the necessary books, and establish the necessary schools to accomplish the great ministry of bringing education and science back to God or at least we ought to try! The hour is late; evolutionary humanism came full flower in communism and other anti-God systems which have deceived most of the world. If the Lord Jesus

1 See, for example, *Scientific Creationism*, ed. by Henry M. Morris (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 1985). This book is essentially a documented comparison of the relative effectiveness of the creation and evolution models in correlating all the scientific data relating to origins and earth history. In addition, it contains an extensive bibliography of creationist literature. A more recent book of the same is *What Is Creation Science?* by Henry M. Morris and Gary Parker (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 1987).

Christ does return soon, Christians will rejoice in His presence, but their joy may be muted as they contemplate the billions of young people who are **not** there. And the reason they will not be there is largely because Christians have allowed those schools of an earlier day, where the youth were taught to respect God and His Word, to be replaced by schools where they are taught to reject them.

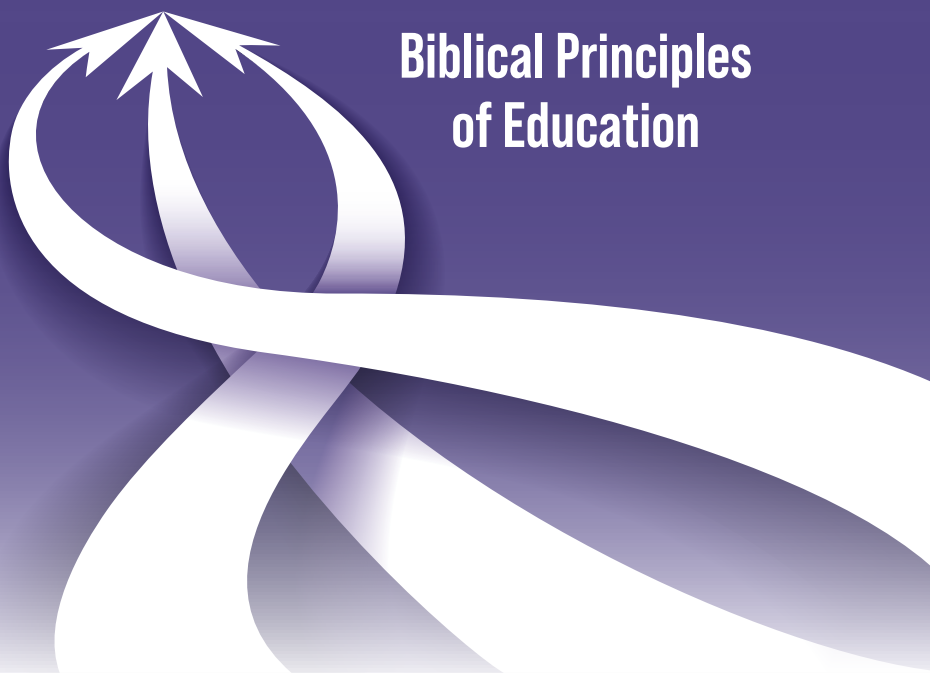
Until Christ **does** return, therefore, we must do all we can to establish sound Christian education environments where every teacher is God-called and properly prepared, and where all courses and textbooks completely conform to the principles of Scripture. Although the illustrative examples in this book (reflecting my own experience) may emphasize college education, essentially the same principles and problems apply to Christian elementary and secondary schools, and, indeed, to all aspects of the overall ministry of true education at any level.

The purpose of this book is to try to place education in its true biblical perspective, as best we can establish that perspective through sound biblical exegesis. I believe it will be obvious that even our Christian educational enterprises have come far short of God's criteria, and we all have much work to do, as God enables, to build a true biblical system of education. Furthermore, it will quickly become apparent that the opposition is strong and deeply entrenched, and a great battle must be fought and won before this goal can be reached.

Nevertheless, what God has commanded, He will enable to be accomplished. *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought [same word in the original as ‘mind’] to the obedience of Christ”* (2 Corinthians 10:3–5).

CHAPTER 1

Biblical Principles of Education



Publisher's Note: As the home is the first place of learning, where children are given by God to the family, we seek to help equip and encourage parents in their God-given role to instruct, disciple, and nurture their children's hearts and minds. Homeschooling provides an environment to cultivate a love for truth, wisdom, and faith within the home. It is our privilege to support parents in this vital mission by providing this resource to inspire biblical learning, character development, and a lifelong pursuit of knowledge for God's glory.

Parents who choose Christian education methods for their children are often criticized as being too idealistic—as not preparing their students for real life. “It’s a jungle out there—a world of lust and politics, of struggle and survival—and young people need to be equipped to meet it. Public school has to prepare them for the real world!”

Well, that’s exactly the point. They do need to be ready to live in the real world, but the real world is not this present dying world. *“The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever”* (1 John 2:17). Christ *“gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world”* (Galatians 1:4).

No, the real world is the world as God created it. “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). That perfect created world will one day be restored and “we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13).

If education is preparation for life, and life is preparation for eternity, then the schools must equip Christian young people for a life that will in turn equip them for their eternal ministries in the new earth, where “his servants shall serve him” (Revelation 22:3), and the will of God will “be done on earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). Education in time must be education for eternity, if it is to be true education!

And true education must be grounded and governed by the Word of God, since there is nothing else in this present world which will survive in the real world. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35). “Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89). We must, therefore, go to the Holy Scriptures—and only to the Scriptures—for our basic principles of real education for the real world.

The purpose of this book is to outline the biblical doctrine of education. Modern educators seem largely oblivious of the divine standards on this vital subject and, as a result, our present-day secular schools and colleges have become almost entirely humanistic in both curriculum and methodology. This situation has even come to characterize many religious schools, although these do attempt to ameliorate their humanistic orientation by providing a religious environment and fostering religious “experiences” for their students.

It is more than coincidental that over a century of this type of education has yielded a society which is indifferent to moral and spiritual values, and even to the discipline of education itself.

“A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit” (Matthew 7:18).

The Bible has a great deal to say about education, a fact which is hardly surprising in light of its great importance. The transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next, the preparation of the

young to assume their responsibilities in God’s ongoing plan—such things must occupy a vital place in the divine purpose, and it is quite realistic to speak of education as an actual biblical **doctrine**. This doctrine is as important as any other doctrine of Scripture but has been largely ignored by modern churches and even by most Christian schools, not to mention the public schools. It is high time to search the Scriptures for their teaching on this subject, to formulate them into a coherent and complete doctrine of education, and then to apply the doctrine in all of our educational systems.

The Spectrum of Education

The importance of education in the spectrum of human affairs is indicated merely by listing a representative sampling of educational activities.

I. Home

Parental instruction in behavior and general living

Formal parental instruction—either directly or through employed tutors—in specific skills (reading, sewing, music, etc.)

Spiritual and biblical training, both by precept and example

2. Church

Pulpit ministry (assuming faithful teaching pastor)

Formal Bible classes (Sunday school, home study classes, etc.)

Camps, retreats, summer conferences, etc.

Vacation Bible Schools, youth groups, etc.

3. Elementary and Secondary Schools

Public schools

Vocational, technical, and military academies

Private non-religious schools

Parochial and denominational schools (especially Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Episcopalian, and Adventist)

Private interdenominational or independent Christian schools

4. Personalized Instruction

Correspondence courses, television courses, etc.

Programmed-learning systems

Reading and personal research

5. Higher Education

Public colleges and universities

Private non-religious colleges and universities

Professional and vocational institutions

Denominational and sectarian colleges

Bible colleges and Bible institutes

Christian liberal arts colleges (a spectrum of institutions ranging from schools offering a predominantly secular curriculum supplemented by Bible courses and a spiritual atmosphere on the one hand, to schools attempting to structure all courses and curricula within a framework constrained by biblical criteria on the other)

Another obvious commentary on the importance of education is the fact that every person has been a student in one way or another in the past, and most people continue to be students, at least intermittently, throughout their lives (through Sunday school classes, personal reading, etc., if nothing else). Likewise, almost everyone is a teacher of sorts—at least as a church worker or parent, if never in a more formal sense. In fact, the education industry is so big today that a tremendous number of people actually make their living by teaching. Educational associations and teachers' unions now exert at least as much influence on our national life as does any other organized segment of society. Furthermore, it is well known that communists place great stress on teaching the young, both in their own countries and in free societies. In the latter, a major communist strategy is to infiltrate and subvert the educational system.

The potential for good or evil in the educational enterprise, depending on whether or not biblical principles are followed in it, is obviously greater than almost any other activity of mankind. We, therefore, want to make a systematic study of the Word of God to discover and understand these biblical principles. First, however, it is necessary to take a brief look at the historical background of some of the false concepts of education that have been widely influential in modern-day school systems.

Fallacious Concepts of Education

There have been many different philosophies and methodologies of education, and it is not our purpose to expound and critique all of

these. There are three such concepts, however, which are of critical importance and are directly opposed to the biblical doctrine. We shall call these systems (1) statism, (2) rationalism, and (3) American progressivism, respectively.

1. **Statism.** By this term we mean the system that regards the State as the ultimate authority and reality, so that all its youth should be educated by State-trained teachers with the primary goal of advancing the good of the State. Originating in antiquity, the statist philosophy of education was especially formalized and promoted by the Greek philosophers, notably Plato and Aristotle. This system was developed and followed to the extreme degree in Nazi Germany and in the various communist nations.

Not a few American educators have also advocated this philosophy, which implicitly ignores the fact of a transcendent Creator, and assumes that authority rests in corporate man and his society. As far as the Bible is concerned, God has established the world's nations (Deuteronomy 32:8; Acts 17:26), and patriotism is a noble attitude if one's country and its leaders are seeking to follow God's will. However, when such national patriotism is exploited to the point that the State—especially as personified in its leaders (whether inherent, appointed, elected, or by conquest)—seeks to usurp the place or prerogatives of God, then it becomes idolatrous and blasphemous. Nations and their governments have indeed been “ordained of God” (Romans 13:1), and their future citizens should be taught to submit “to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake” (1 Peter 2:13), but when a choice between God's law and human ordinances confronts them, they must be taught to “obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

As we shall see, there is no biblical authorization for government-controlled schools or teachers. Though governmental units are indeed biblical institutions, it is the other biblical institutions (home and church) to which God has given responsibility for teaching its citizens the truths of God's Word and the nature of God's world. While it may be argued that government schools could be appropriate if controlled locally by representatives of parents and if their teaching is in accordance with God's truth, it is assuredly **not** right when schools become a creature and tool of the State itself.

2. **Rationalism.** The idea that human reason is autonomous and, when properly trained and utilized, is the ultimate source of truth has been strong in western civilization, especially since the Renaissance and the arrival of the “age of reason.” With its roots also in Greek philosophy, it has become extremely influential since the industrial revolution and the rise of modern science, especially when combined with the powerful “scientific method.” The concept that men’s unfettered intellect (exercised in “academic freedom” through a “community of scholars”) is potentially unlimited in its capacity for discovering and applying “truth” has been zealously advocated by many intellectuals in institutions of higher learning. Such scholars have argued vigorously that they should be commissioned to search for truth as the ultimate good, without constraint or restraint from either home or church—or, for that matter, even from the State—and that they should likewise be free to teach the young whatever they think they have discovered in this search.

Such self-appointed independent seekers after truth are described by the Apostle Paul in his commentary on men of the last days—*“ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”* (2 Timothy 3:7). Man’s reasoning abilities and his capacity for learning the facts of God’s truth (both as revealed in Scripture and as implicit in nature) are inestimably great—after all, he was created in God’s image!—but they are by no means autonomous. The marvelous structure of man’s brain (according to Isaac Asimov, “the most complex aggregation of matter in the universe”¹) was created by God Himself, and it is purest arrogance for anyone to suppose his or her intellect is independent of the mind of God. Real truth can be only God’s truth, and the reason so many never come to the knowledge of the truth is because they *“resist the truth”* and *“turn away their ears from the truth”* (2 Timothy 3:8; 4:4). *“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”* (Romans 1:22).

Especially to be both pitied and censured in this connection are those professing to be Christian scholars who claim to have been born again and to believe the Bible but who nevertheless feel it so important to maintain their acceptability to the intellectuals’

1 *Smithsonian Journal* (June 1970): p. 10.

“community of scholars” that they willingly yield to philosophy and scientism whenever there is apparent conflict with Scripture.

As far as the Scriptures are concerned, the idea of a community of scholars seeking and teaching truth in an atmosphere of academic freedom is presumptuous, to say the least. True teachers are divinely called and gifted, and their commission is to **transmit** the truth, as revealed in Scripture and as ascertained under the cultural mandate within the constraints of Scripture.

3. **American Progressivism.** The peculiar combination of statism and rationalism, supplemented by certain distinctively American innovations which have been developed in the United States in the past 200 years, is here called American progressivism. The U.S. public school system has been the pride and joy of American educators ever since its beginning and has contributed significantly to American industrial leadership in the world. Nevertheless, it has also contributed to the secularization of America.

The biblical foundations of America have been effectively summarized by Dr. Tim LaHaye.² Originally its schools were Christian both in sponsorship and curriculum. To some degree, the founding and later influence of the public school may be regarded as a divine judgment on the Church because of its failure to provide Christian education for **all** Americans. In any case, the public school system has become perhaps the greatest of all influences **away** from God and His truth in America. To a large degree, both the form and the anti-Christian influence of the schools have been due to two remarkable men: Horace Mann and John Dewey. Mann has been called the “father of the American public school” and Dewey the “father of American progressive education.” Though many other educators have had profound impact on the schools, Mann and Dewey are unquestionably the most important.

It is significant, therefore, that neither Mann nor Dewey were Christians in the biblical sense (Dewey not in any sense!). Horace Mann (1796–1858) emphasized religion and morality, but he was Unitarian in church and theology. Although in those days Unitarians were not atheistic or pantheistic (as is largely true today), they did not believe

2 Tim LaHaye, *Faith of Our Founding Fathers* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 1987).

in the Trinity or in the deity of Christ. Mann believed also in the unscriptural doctrine of the natural goodness of man, so that universal state-compelled education would, in his view, ultimately develop a perfect society. He stressed that every man had a basic right to full education, to enable him to reach the highest potential of his innate abilities, and that since the Christian schools were not meeting this need, the state should do it. The state should, furthermore, prepare its teachers—through its “normal” schools—so that they in turn could prepare each new generation for optimum service to society.

John Dewey (1859–1952) was born the year after Mann’s death and, significantly, in the same year Charles Darwin published his history-changing book *The Origin of Species*. Dewey was an early convert to Darwinism and attempted to make systematic application of evolutionary concepts to the curriculum and methodology of education. His religion was that of evolutionary pantheism. He believed that the cosmic process of evolution had finally reached a state of consciousness in man, who could, therefore, control future evolution. As head of the department of philosophy, psychology, and education at the University of Chicago from 1894 to 1904, and then professor of philosophy and head of Teacher’s College at Columbia University from 1904 to 1930, he has profoundly influenced all other colleges of education and every generation of American teachers since his time.

Dewey was one of the founders of the American Humanist Association, the beliefs and teachings of which, for all practical purposes, constitute the state religion now fostered in his school system. His belief in the evolutionary ascendancy of man and the right of the State to guide future evolution through the training of its young is primarily responsible for modern secularism and experimentalism in the schools.

Though there is much that has been accomplished through the American educational system, it is a far cry from the type of education implied in Scripture. Even modern Christian schools have been influenced, in most cases, as much by modern secular educational philosophies as they have by biblical principles. It is the purpose of this particular study, however, to determine and follow the latter exclusively, insofar as possible.

The True Foundation of Education

In contrast to these false foundations of education, true education must be based on the world as it really is—not as the product of an evolutionary process, but as God’s creation. Furthermore, it must be recognized that there is no dichotomy between physical truth and religious truth, as many people believe. There is one God and one universe. He is the Author of *all* truth, and His Word is His inerant revelation of truth. The real foundation of education must be threefold: (1) God as Creator of all things; (2) Christ as Redeemer of all things; (3) The Holy Spirit, through the Scriptures which He inspired, as Revealer of all things. The “ontological Trinity,” as it has been called, is necessarily the basis of all reality, as discussed briefly below.

1. **God as Creator of All Truth.** If one acknowledges that God is the ultimate Creator of all things, then he should recognize that everything created was, in the beginning, **truth**. “God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). All reality—whether physical things, living organisms or spiritual and moral concepts—comes under the broad category of created truth and is proper material for inclusion in the educational enterprise. **Knowledge** of the true world God created and **wisdom** in the comprehension and application of that knowledge must comprise the goals of true education. Note the testimony of Scripture concerning the foundational truth of God as the Creator of truth.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”
(Genesis 1:1).

“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3).

“By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth” (Colossians 1:16).

“He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? ... he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?” (Psalm 94:9–10).

“Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11).

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge”
(Proverbs 1:7).

“For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light”
(Psalm 36:9).

God is the Creator of all that is real and true and good, whether physical, biological, or spiritual. On the other hand, any distortion or dilution of the real and true and good is not good. It becomes untruth, and, in the ideal and ultimate sense, unreal. It seems obvious that anything which is bad, false, and, finally, not real, has no proper place in education—except solely to point out to students its **true** character as **untruth**.

“God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5).

“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (Habakkuk 1:13).

“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation” (1 Peter 1:15).

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

2. **Christ as Sustainer and Redeemer of All Truth.** The fact that God is the Creator should not be interpreted to mean that this present age is not, indeed, largely characterized by evil. Physical evils (storms, earthquakes, disintegration), biological evils (disease, suffering, death), and spiritual evils (lying, stealing, hatred) are all surely with us, and such things are **not good!** Since God is completely good, however, and since He adjudged His completed Creation to be “very good” (Genesis 1:31), sin and suffering can only represent temporary intruders into His creation, which He has allowed for a time for two reasons. First, for man to be a responsible being in God’s image, he must be able to **choose** fellowship with his Creator. Second, for man to

know God in His fullness, he must know Him both as Creator and Redeemer.

The testimony of all human history is that man has chosen wrongly. He desired evil rather than good and falsehood rather than truth. Nevertheless, rather than abandoning or destroying His Creation, God is sustaining and reconciling it. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has become man in order to redeem both man and the entire creation. Because of man's sin, God's judgment has necessarily fallen on man and all his dominion. The redemption price is nothing less than the substitutionary death of Christ.

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven”
(Colossians 1:20).

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him” (Ephesians 1:10).

“Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God”
(Romans 8:21).

Even before Christ paid the price to redeem the world, He was “saving” it. That is, He was sustaining and energizing its systems and processes; otherwise, it would have collapsed into chaos under the great Curse that was on it.

“The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (2 Peter 3:7).

“... upholding all things by the word of his power”
(Hebrews 1:3).

“For in him we live, and move, and have our being ... ”
(Acts 17:28).

There are therefore three universal principles within which we now must understand and teach all truth:

1. All things as originally created were good and were ideally and completely organized for their intended purpose, in perfect harmony with all the rest of God's creation.
2. All things are now under the divine Curse because of man's sin, so that there is a universal law of decay and death operating in all systems and processes.
3. All things, nevertheless, are the objects of Christ's redemptive love, and are potentially reconcilable to God on the basis of His substitutionary death and victorious Resurrection.

The biblical doctrine of education must be focused on these great themes. Whether in chemistry or sociology, history or biology, music or literature, or whatever the course of study, everything must be understood and taught in the framework of God's perfect creation, the universal effects of sin and the curse, and the saving work of Christ. If any one or more of these are denied or ignored, the subject is not being taught in truth.

3. **The Holy Spirit and His Revelation of All Truth.** A legitimate question arises at this point. Since we ourselves are sinners, our students and their parents are sinners, and the researchers and textbook writers also are sinners, how are we to discern the truth in order to teach it? Exactly **how** should we teach a course in geology or psychology (or even religion) so that the students learn and obey the truth rather than a lie?

The answer is by the Holy Spirit, through the Scriptures inspired by Him. As God is the Creator of truth, and Christ the Sustainer of truth, so the Spirit is the Revealer of all truth.

"When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; ... he shall glorify me"
(John 16:13–14).

"The Spirit of truth ... shall testify of me" (John 15:26).

"Thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

There is no claim, of course, that the Bible records every individual item of truth. Nevertheless, such claims as in the foregoing passages do warrant the following inferences: (a) every statement of Scripture, taken in context and, properly applied, is infallibly true and

authoritative; (b) the Scriptures provide the basic framework and guiding principles within which **all** truth, wherever found, must be interpreted and utilized; (c) it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to guide men into all truth so that, wherever truth is discovered, its Author and Revelator must ultimately be none other than the Spirit of God; (d) since His purpose in revealing truth is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, all real truth must and does accomplish this purpose.

To summarize the above discussion on the foundation of education, it should be emphasized that there is no boundary or dichotomy between spiritual truth and secular truth; all things were created by God and are being sustained by Him. Therefore, we can learn any aspect of truth only in accordance with His will to reveal it. His written Word, as now completed (note Revelation 22:18–19), is comprehensive and definitive truth in all areas of life and study. Those aspects of truth which appear superficially to be “non-religious” are, in reality, fully under the authority of biblical revelation, and must be consciously and clearly taught as such in true Christian education.

The Dominion Mandate

At this point, however, we must consider a very important question. Granted that all truth is one and is under God, then to what extent can the natural man—one who, perhaps, does not believe the Bible or even believe in God—discover and apply truth? Is it valid for Christians to believe and teach data and ideas emanating from the research and reasonings of unregenerate men and, if so, to what extent is this legitimate?

The answer lies in the proper analysis and exposition of God’s commandments and dispensations that were intended to be applicable to all men, not merely to a chosen segment of mankind. The first and most significant of these is God’s very first commandment—a commandment that has come to be known as the **dominion mandate**.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [literally, ‘fill’] the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and

over every living thing that moveth upon the earth”
(Genesis 1:27–28).

In order to subdue the earth and have dominion over it, it would be necessary for mankind to occupy every region of it so that an extensive multiplication was required, starting from the first man and woman. It is obvious also that, since man’s dominion was given to him by God, it was **under** God. Man was not independent of God but was His steward. He was to **keep** the earth (Genesis 2:15), not exploit and waste its resources. The command to “subdue” does not imply that the earth was an enemy but rather that it was a complex and wonderful world to be ordered and controlled for man’s benefit and God’s glory.

The dominion mandate in this original form applied solely to the physical and biological components of the creation. The **earth** which was to be subdued was the physical globe with all its elements and components and appurtenances, possibly including the entire solar system, and, conceivably, the entire physical cosmos, all of which had been “made” from the elements of the “earth” as originally created in Genesis 1:1.

The second part of the mandate had to do with the biological division of the creation, the *nephesh*, the “every living soul” of Genesis 1:21, the animals inhabiting the earth’s hydrosphere and atmosphere and lithosphere.

Now, to perform the function of subduing and exercising dominion over the physical and biological creations necessarily implies the development of physical and biological sciences (physics, chemistry, hydrology, etc., as well as biology, physiology, ecology, etc.) and the concordant development of physical and biological technologies (engineering, agriculture, medicine, etc.). These assigned activities of mankind under the dominion mandate thus imply the dichotomous, yet complementary, enterprises known by the modern combinatory terms of science and technology, research and development, theory and practice, etc.

The first term in each of these pairs (science, research, theory) suggests the study and understanding of the created world or, as Newton and Kepler and other great scientists have put it, “thinking God’s

thoughts after Him.” Such study, of course, should **now** be carried out entirely within the framework of truth as revealed in the Scriptures.

The second term (technology, development, practice) suggests the application and utilization of the physical and biological processes and systems, as learned from their scientific study, for the benefit of mankind and the glory of God.

But there were **three** great creative acts of God. Only two of them (the physical creation of Genesis 1:1 and the biological creation of Genesis 1:21) were included in the terms of the dominion mandate. The third was the spiritual creation—the creation of man and woman in God’s image (Genesis 1:27). No command to subdue or to have dominion was appropriate in this case since, as originally created, man was sinless and in perfect fellowship with God. Had he remained so, there would never have been occasion for those activities of mankind now known as the social sciences. There was no need for men to study other men and their behavior (psychology, economics, etc.) or to control other men (government, criminology, etc.), for all men should have been in perfect communion with the will of God and in fellowship with one another. Those aspects of human life which were primarily physical or biological could properly have been included in the mandated physical and biological sciences, but there would have been no need for the study or dominion over man’s moral or social relationships at all. Those disciplines now known as the humanities (literature, art, music, etc.) would have been devoted to glorifying God and His works, with nothing speaking of conflict or ugliness at all. All such ideal conditions, however, have been destroyed by the entrance of sin into the world.

When sin entered into the world, profound changes took place in all three of God’s created domains—physical, biological, and spiritual—in response to God’s curse on the creation. The “ground” itself was cursed (Genesis 3:17), as were the living creatures (Genesis 3:14), but the curse fell most heavily upon mankind (Genesis 3:19). The principle of decay and disintegration began to operate in physical systems; mutations, disease, and death began to function in biological systems (including man’s body); and, most importantly, separation and alienation from God became man’s tragic experience in the spiritual realm from then on. Alienation from God, of course,

immediately produced alienation between man and man, soon leading to fratricide (Genesis 4:8), and eventually to universal violence and anarchy (Genesis 6:5–13).

After the great Flood, there was a new start for the world and mankind, but it is still under the Curse and will be so until the establishment of the new earth (Revelation 22:3). According to the Apostle Paul, “*We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now*” (Romans 8:22).

In spite of the universal Curse, however, God has not destroyed the world. To the contrary, He has undertaken to redeem it and to reconcile it once again to His will and fellowship. Even the physical and biological aspects of the Curse were “*for man’s sake*” (Genesis 3:17), and God promised a coming Redeemer at the same time that He pronounced the Curse (Genesis 3:15).

Furthermore, the dominion mandate is still in effect, as is evident from its restatement to Noah after the Flood (Genesis 9:1–2). In fact, it was now broadened to include human inter-relationships; man was now given the responsibility to govern mankind as well as the animals (Genesis 9:6). This broadened mandate is now incorporated in the Noahic covenant (Genesis 9:12), which was established with all men and is still in effect to this very day. Therefore, the physical and biological sciences, both pure and applied, are still needed and warranted. In addition, in this present world, there has now arisen a great need for the social sciences (psychology, sociology, etc.) and their technologies for implementation in organized human societies (economics, government, politics, etc.), so that these fields now also come within the terms of the dominion mandate and thus are proper disciplines for inclusion in education.

Furthermore, the mandate by implication establishes the entire ministry of education (to transmit both divinely revealed and humanly discovered truth to successive generations), the various fields of business and commerce (for distributing it to the present generation), and the humanities and fine arts (for utilizing it to glorify God and enrich human life).

There is a problem however—a very serious problem. Man’s sin has so corrupted his moral and spiritual nature that he is said to be “*dead*”

in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). He is not capable of reasoning correctly in the realm of intrinsic meanings, moral choices, spiritual relationships, or anything related to his unique creation in God’s image, until he is “born again” (John 3:3). Therefore, all educational activities—textbooks, schools, courses, research studies, etc.—must be examined very critically in light of God’s Word to discern whether they are true or false and whether their use will be good or bad. This subject will be examined in greater depth in Chapter 7. In general, we can merely point out here that factual and quantitative data in all areas of study are accessible to all men and thus are appropriate to incorporate in courses and curricula. The interpretive and philosophical treatments that may be applied to such data, however, strongly depend on one’s spiritual condition, and may be false and dangerous if not carefully constrained by Scripture. Such dangers are especially present in the social sciences (and even more in the so-called humanities and fine arts), because these fields are more closely related to man’s spiritual nature, which is dominated completely by sin (Romans 3:10–19) until he receives the new birth. These important implications of the Adamic mandate, the Edenic curse, and the Noahic covenant will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

The Transmission of Truth (The Ministry of Teaching)

It is important that true knowledge and wisdom, once known, not be either lost or corrupted. It is, therefore, the responsibility of each generation to transmit its knowledge of truth, undiluted and undistorted, to the succeeding generation. This is the ministry of teaching. Formal educational programs may be conducted either in the home, the church, or the school, and we shall discuss these institutions in that order.

1. **Primary Responsibility in the Home.** The home is the first and most fundamental of all human institutions. It was established directly by God when He made the first man and woman (Genesis 2:18, 24). In the original creation—indeed, up until the time of the Noahic Flood—there was apparently no other institution at all for either governmental or educational purposes. It was evidently the responsibility of the parents, especially the father, to maintain order in the household and to teach the children.

After the Flood, God established the institution of human government, but there is no intimation of any formal, divinely established educational institution. In fact, the first mention of teaching in any form is found in Genesis 18:19. Speaking of Abraham, God said: “For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD to do justice and judgment.” It is significant that this first mention of teaching in the Bible not only speaks of a father teaching his children but also suggests that the primary purpose of that teaching was moral and spiritual rather than vocational or cultural.

The same themes are stressed in the Mosaic laws:

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Deuteronomy 6:6–7).

The first priority in education, therefore, is clearly the revealed Word of God. The importance of teaching the Scriptures to children is further confirmed in the New Testament.

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

It is clear that, in God’s economy, the primary responsibility for educating the young lies in the home. The foundation of this education is in recognition of God and His purposes, as revealed in the Scriptures. For most of the world’s history and in most of its cultures, all other education has likewise been centered in the home. Formal schools are characteristic only of more complex societies.

2. **The Church and the Great Commission.** Sadly, the parents in most of the homes throughout history have not measured up to their teaching responsibilities, especially in transmitting the true

knowledge of God and His Word. In any case, in this present age, one of the primary ministries of the church is that of teaching.

The Great Commission was given by Christ to all His disciples, especially as organized in the church. His command was not only to make disciples and baptize them, but also to teach “*them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*” (Matthew 28:20). In view of the tremendous breadth and depth of Jesus’ life and teachings (John says, “[I]f they should be written every one ... even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written” [John 21:25]), this commandment is exceedingly comprehensive. Since Jesus taught that all the Old Testament was inspired and authoritative, everything contained therein is certainly also included in His commandment. Furthermore, all the implications in Scripture, relative to the physical universe in all its aspects, are a legitimate extension of the command.

It becomes obvious that education in *all* truth is the responsibility of Christians—both individually in their homes and corporately in the church. Individual fathers no doubt found it impossible to assimilate and transmit the entire body of truth to their children, especially as more and more divine revelation was given to men through the ages and as more and more knowledge of the creation was accumulated. In the church, on the other hand, God is able to call and equip teachers as needed for all aspects of its educational ministries. The teaching function of the church would in no way replace or usurp that of the home but would complement and extend it.

The church, with the Holy Scriptures to guide it, and the Holy Spirit to empower it, is therefore established by God to guard and transmit the full truth of God’s written revelation and natural revelation, “... *the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth*” (1 Timothy 3:15). It should be stressed that the term “church” in this connection refers to what is known as the “local church” as an institution. Each local church is responsible for guarding and teaching God’s truth to its own members and community.

3. **The School as an Extension of the Home and Church.** It is significant that there is no reference in the Scriptures to the school as a separate institution established by God. In spite of the great importance of the teaching ministry, God has not seen

fit to ordain schools as such. Even the implications of the dominion mandate and the Noahic covenant, with the establishment of the institution of human government, do not suggest the parallel establishment of schools as instruments of such human governments. As far as the Bible is concerned, the function of transmitting truth and educating the young belongs to the home and church.

This fact does not necessarily mean that parents and pastors have to do all the actual work of teaching. It is certainly appropriate for them to employ qualified tutors and trainers, but the control of the educational process should remain primarily with the home and secondarily with the church.

As with so many other divine ordinances, however, man has sadly corrupted God's plan, especially in these latter days, until finally the educational activities of mankind—as formalized in vast systems of public education—have become a chief instrument for turning men **away** from the truth insofar as God's purposes are concerned.

The methods and institutions for teaching and child training have varied from nation to nation and century to century. Archaeology has revealed that even the most ancient civilizations had high technologies, and that literacy may have been the rule rather than the exception. In Egypt and Mesopotamia, there were schools associated both with the temples and the government. Advanced training for scholars and scientists was probably a function of religious priest-hoods in most cases.

This seems to have been true also in Greece and Rome, especially after the advent of the great philosophers. With the latter, formal schools began to be developed, organized especially around training in grammar and rhetoric, training in music and poetry, and training in gymnastics, respectively. Such schools were designed to perpetuate the Greek and Roman cultures and tended to glorify the State.

Regardless of the methods of education employed in various times and places, our real concern is to determine what the Bible says on the subject. As already shown, the Scriptures indicate that teaching was originally the province primarily of the home. As time went on,

some teaching functions seem also to have been assumed by the religious leaders of Israel.

For example, what was tantamount to a “school for prophets” seems to have been established in Israel in the days of Samuel and again under Elijah and Elisha. This is evident from several references to an organized group called “the sons of the prophets” (1 Samuel 10:5, 10; 2 Kings 2:3, 5, 7, 15). Likewise, there are incidental references to the teaching of scholars in the tabernacle. (1 Chronicles 25:8 mentions *“the teacher as the scholar,”* as does Malachi 2:12.) One of the functions of the priests and Levites was to teach God’s law to the people (Leviticus 10:11; Deuteronomy 33:10; 2 Chronicles 17:7, 9; Ezra 7:10). 2 Chronicles 15:3 mentions the ministry of the “teaching priest.”

More formal schools developed with the rise of the synagogue and other post-exile institutions. According to the Talmud and Hebrew tradition, boys were trained in regular classes at the local synagogue school. (The title “rabbi” meant, essentially, “teacher.”) Emphasis was on teaching the Scriptures, but in the process, the students were also taught reading, writing, and mathematics. The teaching of foreign languages and physical education was specifically prohibited because of their close associations with pagan philosophy and culture.

The early Christians were able to utilize to a limited extent the Jewish synagogues (Matthew 13:52; Acts 13:5; etc.) as opportunities for evangelistic teaching but soon had to develop in their churches means for more formal instruction of their own members. Although all Christians were exhorted to be *“teaching and admonishing one another”* (Colossians 3:16), the Holy Spirit also prepared and called special teachers for the Church (1 Corinthians 12:28). This ministry of teaching continues to this present day and is vital for understanding the biblical doctrine of education.

- 4. The Gift and Calling of Teaching.** There are three main New Testament passages dealing with the different “gifts” possessed by individual Christians for use in the service of Christ and the church (Romans 12:1–8; 1 Corinthians 12:1–31; and Ephesians 4:7–16). Each of these utilizes the analogy of the various members of a human body, applying it to the role of individual believers in serving the entire Christian community

(Romans 12:4–5; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Ephesians 4:12, 15–16). In one case, the gifts are said to be from God (Romans 12:3); in another, from the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7–11); and in the other, from Christ (Ephesians 4:7).

All three lists are different, which indicates that no complete specific enumeration is possible or necessary. Some gifts, including that of the Apostle and probably others as well, were to apply only until their purpose had been served. No doubt, other gifts not specifically included in any one of the three lists would be added as needed in the future, so that all necessary provisions for carrying out the Great Commission in all ages would be available.

In view of this variable nature of the gifts, it is significant that the gifts of teaching and prophecy are the only ones included in all three lists (Romans 12:6–7; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11). Since the gift of prophecy (the supernatural conveyance of divine revelation to man—note 2 Peter 1:21) would cease (1 Corinthians 13:8) when there was no further need for it (evidently when God’s revelation had been completed—note Revelation 22:18), it is evident that the gift of teaching is the one gift absolutely essential in every church in every age!

The gift and ministry of teaching focuses primarily on the teaching of the Scriptures. It must not be forgotten, however, that the Scriptures provide the framework for **all** teaching. All truth—physical, biological, and spiritual—is created and sustained by God in Christ and revealed by the Spirit. Furthermore, the ministry of teaching is the responsibility of the home and the church—not the state. Consequently, this vital gift of teaching applies to all true God-called teachers—teachers of science and grammar as well as teachers of the Bible and theology.

Having the gift of teaching is not simply equivalent to having a talent for teaching. There are many ungodly men and women who are excellent teachers as far as natural abilities are concerned. As a matter of fact, the more effective such a person is in the art of teaching, the more dangerous he is. This is true not only for those in secular schools but also for those in Christian schools and even in Sunday schools. The Apostle Peter gave sober warning against false teachers, no matter how winsome and eloquent they might be.

“... there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies ... And many shall follow their pernicious ways ... they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh ...”

(2 Peter 2:1–2, 18).

All teaching—no matter how profound, attractive, or eloquent—must be tested by its fidelity to the Word of God (Isaiah 8:20; Acts 17:11). Those who are teachers or who desire to be teachers should continually examine themselves on this basis, to be sure they are teaching by virtue of God’s calling them to such a ministry, and for no other reason. There is, in fact, a serious warning to all who aspire to the teaching profession.

“My brethren, be not many masters [literally, ‘don’t many of you become teachers’], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation” (James 3:1).

That is, a teacher’s influence for good or bad is so great that failure to exercise it for good will result in greater punishment than would failure in other ministries. On the other hand, a good teacher receives great rewards.

“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine”

(1 Timothy 5:17).

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (3 John 4).

“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven”

(Matthew 5:19).

It is obvious that adequate training is necessary before one can effectively teach mathematics or biology, but too often people attempt to teach the Bible with only a minimum of background study. The following admonitions are salutary in this connection.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

“My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God” (Proverbs 2:1–5).

“O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. ... I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation” (Psalm 119:97, 99).

The Goals of True Education

True Christian education, as set forth in the Bible, embraces all truth, whether “secular” or “spiritual.” It is not narrow and restricted education, as some might assume, but extremely comprehensive—in fact universal—in its scope. Nothing is to be excluded except false knowledge and harmful philosophy, but, unfortunately, these constitute a large component of modern educational curricula. They must be removed from a Christian curriculum, but there is far more than enough genuine and valuable truth to incorporate in their stead.

The main goals of such an education are threefold: the transmission of the truth, the training of individual students for productive lives in the will of God, and the development of corporate completeness in Christ. Each of these goals is discussed briefly below:

1. **Indoctrination in the Truth.** All of God’s revelation is “for ever ... settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89). However, through the ages, He has been gradually transmitting it into the minds and hearts of men. “God ... at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets” (Hebrews 1:1). Although these prophetic revelations have now ceased (1 Corinthians 13:8; Revelation 22:18) and the written Word is complete, in one sense God is still transmitting His truth to men. That is,

God-called teachers continue to expound the written Word, and new truth is continually being discovered therein.

“... every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old” (Matthew 13:52).

Also, under the dominion mandate, researchers continually are discovering truth concerning God’s creation and then applying it in many technologies.

All of this is truth which must be transmitted from each generation to the next. Though it is desirable that none should be lost or corrupted at all, it is absolutely necessary that God’s written Word especially be maintained and transmitted uncorrupted. This, of course, is a main reason for Bible-centered education.

“One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts” (Psalm 145:4).

“A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to [of] the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this” (Psalm 22:30–31).

“Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me [from me] among [attested by] many witnesses the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:1–2).

The teacher, of course, must both know and believe the truth if he is going to transmit it effectively.

The actual process of transmission is nothing less than **indoctrination**. It is significant that, in the New Testament, the word “doctrine” is the same noun as “teaching” (Greek, *didaskalia*). That is, the process of true teaching is nothing more nor less than indoctrinating. Teaching is not the discovery of truth, nor sharing the truth; it is indoctrinating the truth!

Such indoctrination, with no distortion or dilution, is absolutely vital in true education. Otherwise, the truth will be either corrupted or lost altogether.

“I ... write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. ... If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed” (2 John 9–10).

The “doctrine of Christ” in this passage is, literally, “Christ’s teachings.” The command is, in effect, not to allow anyone who does not abide in His teachings—that is, teach them all, without addition or deletion—to teach in your house or church. In fact, such a false teacher is not even to be pleasantly sent on his way. Rather, he must be exposed and opposed as “a deceiver and an antichrist” (2 John 7) because he is effectively rejecting either the deity or humanity of Christ.

Such Scriptures point up the extreme importance of this aspect of the teaching ministry. No doubt the above warning applies specifically to those false teachers who willfully and knowingly distort the teachings of Christ. At the same time, those who take on the ministry of teaching without proper preparation and understanding on their own part may innocently distort those teachings, and the effect on their students and in the preservation of the faith may well be as bad as though they did it deliberately.

2. **Training of Students.** A second major goal of education is that of preparing students for productive, Christ-honoring lives. Every believer has been saved “and called ... with an holy calling” (2 Timothy 1:9), and it is the privilege of the teacher to help that student find God’s will for his life and to help prepare him for a fruitful ministry in his field of service.

The familiar proverb is relevant here. “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). The original language does not refer primarily to moral behavior. Rather, the phrase “the way he should go” should

be understood in the sense of *“the way he was ordained to go.”* God has called each Christian and provided basic talents for that child or young person to enable him to fill a very specific role in the Kingdom of God. The teacher needs to help him find and follow God’s will in this calling. Then, his life will not be squandered in an occupation or activities which are **not** “the way he should go.”

The teacher (or the parent—remember that the primary teaching responsibility is still in the home) may well, by virtue of his own experience and knowledge of the Word, be better able to recognize God’s will for that student than the student himself. Hence the command—“Train up ...” This word actually means “dedicate,” the same word as is used in connection with the dedication of the holy temple. It is important to note that the command to dedicate the child in the way God had planned for him was not given to the child but to his teacher. What an important ministry, and what a sober responsibility! The teacher is not only to teach the truth but also to teach the child!

3. **Completeness in Christ.** Traditionally, there has been a division among teachers in the public schools as to whether their responsibility was to teach history (or algebra or art or whatever their subject was), or to teach and develop the child into a good citizen. In the one case, they felt no responsibility for discipline or extra-curricular duties; in the other, they felt that specific course content was relatively unimportant if the child was becoming “well-adjusted.” As we have pointed out, however, the biblical doctrine of education stresses that both are vitally important. Solid truth, complete and unmixed with error, must be taught, but parents and teachers must also do all in their power to help all their students find and follow God’s will for their individual lives.

Now, all of this is ultimately directed toward a third and even greater goal, the glory of God through Jesus Christ. This is beautifully expressed by Paul to the Ephesians in his discussion of the “gifts.”

“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.... For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son

of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:7, 12–13).

The eventual goal of education—as well as that of evangelism, the pastoral ministry, and all the other callings of God—is that all His creation shall be in harmony with Him and shall honor His name (see the testimony of universal praise in Psalm 148:1–14; 150:1–6; Ephesians 3:21; Revelation 4:9–11; 5:8–14; etc.). The educator must help his students fulfill God’s will in their lives because they are to *“grow up into him in all things,”* with each member of the body functioning in its own necessary contribution to the whole, *“the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part”* (Ephesians 4:15–16).

The educator must likewise be careful to teach the truth, as it really is in Christ, to his students. The body can only be effectively unified in *“the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God”* (Ephesians 4:13). The educator, in other words, must manifest both love and truth in his teaching, *“speaking the truth in love”* (Ephesians 4:15).

Thus, the wonderful three-fold goal of teaching must be to transmit the truth in fullness and purity, to train the student with love and wisdom, and to glorify Christ, in whom perfect love and absolute. Thus, the wonderful three-fold goal of teaching must be to transmit the truth in fullness and purity, to train the student with love and wisdom, and to glorify Christ, in whom perfect love and absolute truth will be united forever.