

Faith and works are the two oars that must be used to urge the bark against the current of worldliness, pride, and vanity.

UPSTREAM

THE Education OF JESUS

Memory Verse | Psalm 119:99, 100

I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts.

SECTION I

God considers our education to be very important. He made Eden a school, and holy angels were Adam and Eve's teachers. With such an education, Adam and Eve were well qualified to homeschool their children, Cain and Abel.

Over the following centuries, however, many of the truths taught in Eden were forgotten, and each generation of parents became less able to provide their children with the necessary education.

God chose Abraham to revive long-lost truths and provide proper home instruction.

Genesis 18:19 I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is just and right.
(JPS)

Unfortunately, many even among the Israelites lost Abraham's vision of true home training; and by the time of Eli, few parents were giving their

children godly training. A new system of education was essential, and God raised up the prophet Samuel to introduce and establish the schools of the prophets.

The schools Samuel founded molded the nation and were the prime reason for the peace and prosperity of the reigns of David and Solomon.

After the kingdom of Israel divided, these schools fell into decay. They flourished again for a time when Elijah re-established them. After Elijah's translation, Elisha further strengthened them. Following the death of Elisha, however, the schools again languished and finally closed.

“ To obtain an education worthy of the name, we must receive a knowledge of God, the Creator, and of Christ, the Redeemer, as they are revealed in the sacred word. ”

—*Education*, p. 17

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After the Babylonian captivity, Ezra restored the schools of the prophets; but over the subsequent centuries, the unique purpose of these schools was forgotten as the instruction became more and more formal. Tradition was emphasized, the words of men were exalted, and what passed as biblical instruction actually robbed the students of the Word of God. Often the students graduated with less knowledge of God than when they enrolled.

In the days of Jesus, most local synagogues had an elementary school, and university training was at Jerusalem. One famous professor was Gamaliel.

Acts 5:34 One in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people.

Paul was educated by this noted rabbi.

Acts 22:3 I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law.

Although the voices of the rabbis were heard in the Jewish schools, the voice of God was not.

The students in these schools found no quiet hours in which to commune with God and hear His voice speaking to their hearts. That which the rabbis regarded as superior education was in reality the greatest hindrance to true education.

SECTION II

God has a great interest in our education. Satan, our great enemy, does, too. And while God has provided a system of true education, Satan has a counterfeit—false education.

True education gives us the two-fold benefit of the knowledge of God's word and the experience of His power. False education fails to provide this knowledge and experience and makes the students susceptible to error.

Jesus told the rabbis who were considered highly educated in His day,

Matthew 22:29 "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.

They were ignorant because they emphasized "the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).

Although Jesus did not attend the rabbinical schools, His brothers and sisters likely did.

The brothers and sisters of Jesus were taught the multitudinous traditions and

It was opposed to all real development. Under their training, the powers of the youth were repressed, and their minds were cramped and narrowed. —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 438, 439

The biblical record is clear: Jesus did not attend any of the Jewish schools. He had no degree.

John 7:15 The Jews then were astonished, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" (NASB)

Jesus was taught, not by narrow rabbis, but by God Himself. His example encourages all of us, whether we have had the advantage of advanced education or not. Whatever your situation, you can be taught like Jesus was. There is no better teacher!

Psalms 119:97-102 Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.... I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me. (NIV)

(See Thought Questions, Section I.)

ceremonies of the rabbis. —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 439

While Jesus obeyed what the law and the prophets said in every particular, He ignored man-made rules. These traditions and ceremonies had no value. They could not take away a love of sin from the heart. They could not remove the pride of opinion from the mind. They provided no love for others. They could not make the hearers merciful. Only God's Word can make these necessary changes in our lives.

The traditions that the Jews developed were supposed to help the Jews keep the law, but by adding to the law, the Pharisees were actually breaking it, since God had said,

Deuteronomy 4:2 You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor

“The Holy Scriptures are the perfect standard of truth, and as such should be given the highest place in education.” —*Education*, p. 17

take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.

While the law was designed to bring men freedom, tradition brought men into bondage. (See Galatians 2:4.) The law gave rest; its burden was light. (See Matthew 11:29, 30.) Tradition placed men under “heavy burdens, hard to bear” (Matthew 23:4).

No wonder Jesus paid no attention to tradition since it collided with the Word of God! Though Jesus didn’t openly attack the learned professors and rabbis when He was young, He chose “not become a student in their schools.”

Jesus would not follow any custom that would require Him to depart from the will of God, nor would He place Himself under the instruction of those who exalted the words of men above the word of God. He shut out of His mind all the sentiments and formalities that had not God for their foundation.

SECTION III

To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life” (*Education*, p. 15, 16).

It is God’s plan for us to be educated. He tells us, **Proverbs 8:33 Hear instruction and be wise, and do not disdain it.**

Proverbs 19:20 Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days.

Proverbs 19:27 Cease listening to instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge.

But how can we gain this education?

It is easy to get the idea that the only education we get comes from a classroom. However, everything we do is part of our education; whatever we think about educates us. We gain ideas and opinions from

—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 439

Jesus would not give false ideas a chance to affect His own thinking.

He would give no place for these things to influence Him. Thus He taught that it is better to prevent evil than to attempt to correct it after it has gained a foothold in the mind. —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 439

Furthermore, Jesus was always careful of the influence of His example.

Jesus would not by His example lead others to place themselves where they would be corrupted. —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 439

That’s important for us, too. Someone that we win to Jesus, or children who look up to us, or our own friends, may follow our example. How do our choices affect them?

(See Thought Questions, Section II.)

many sources—talking with friends, surfing the web, reading the news, watching a movie, or listening to music. All these are our teachers, and they mold our thinking, even if we think they don’t.

Unfortunately, not all instructors are safe teachers. Not every sales pitch advertises a good product.

2 Peter 2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption.

In the world we are surrounded by a confused mass of ideas—some true and some false. In such a situation, how can anyone maintain a pure life?

Psalms 119:9 How can a young person maintain a pure life? By guarding it

according to your instructions! (NET)

The Word of God protects us from false ideas.

Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Error acts like a contagious disease. In the Garden of Eden under the guise of a serpent, Satan educated Eve in the knowledge of good and evil. Satan then used Eve to educate Adam in the same subject.

It is Satan's continued effort to expand our knowledge of evil and then use us to spread that knowledge to others. Satan uses every possible avenue to advance his educational objectives. He makes it attractive and inviting for us to enroll in his schools of harmful knowledge. Like Jesus we must choose our instructors carefully. As an example, notice one school we should avoid.

Some of the most popular amusements, such as football and boxing, have

become schools of brutality. —Education, p. 210

In this world we cannot avoid all exposure to falsehood. As careful as Christ was, He could not entirely avoid it. Since He would not seek out error, error came to Him.

Though He did not place Himself under the instruction of the rabbis by becoming a student in their schools, yet He was often brought in contact with them. —Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 440

Like Jesus, by careful, daily Bible study, we can avoid many dangerous paths.

Psalm 17:4 Concerning the works of men, by the word of Your lips, I have kept away from the paths of the destroyer.

(See Thought Questions, Section III.)

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

Section I

1. Read *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 592–602. Someday you may need to choose which school to attend. What qualities should you look for in a good school? _____

Section II

2. Define the word "tradition." Look it up in the dictionary. _____
3. When does tradition become a bad thing? Mark 7:1–13 _____

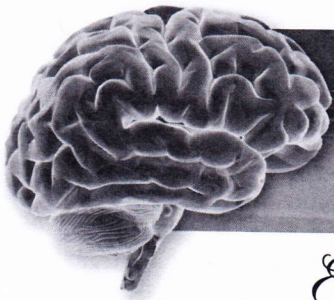
4. Name a few traditions, customs, or cultural practices (family, church, or national) that are...
good. _____
bad. _____

Section III

5. Read *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 460, paragraph 2 (begins "Yet we have...") and answer the following questions:
What are the avenues of the soul? _____
What must we do in order to not fall prey to Satan's temptations? See also Psalm 101:1–3 _____

Satan uses various means to educate us. From which of his schools do you need to withdraw? _____

Further Study: *Education*, pp. 13–44 (The rest of the book is excellent, too.)



Media on the Brain

Escaping the Pleasure Trap

In this series you have probably learned some things about media and entertainment that have challenged some of your previous notions. Have you been surprised by some of what you've learned?

We've seen the demonic nature of the entertainment industry. We've looked at how Hollywood, the music industry, and the game designers are master manipulators, altering our body chemistry and our state of consciousness, even employing hypnotic methods to program us into their mold. We've seen the latest science demonstrating the destructive effects of entertainment media. And we've even seen that electronic communication tools can crowd out the voice of God.

Indeed, media is the most serious and widespread addiction in America today. But this begs the question: What steps can we take to become free?

Why not begin by giving yourself a reality check?

1. Write answers to the most basic of life's questions: What is God like? Who am I? Why am I here, now? This exercise helps solidify and clarify your identity and purpose in God's reality in these last days.

2. Next, list the things you'd like to do and accomplish but haven't had the time. Include talents or interests that you might think God is asking you to pursue.

3. Now the scary part: Making an educated guess, add up all the hours you have spent on media for the past five years. Divide that by eight, the number of hours in a work day. The resulting figure is the number of total work days that you've invested—wasted—on these media instead of those important life pursuits that are about who you really are.

Is it true that not only are these media demonic, brain-washing, and harmful to your mind and character, but they've also robbed you of your life?

Next, ask yourself, "Do I really trust God?" From where the addict stands, God's lifestyle looks torturously boring. In fact, the reward circuitry of the brain is also the source of survival impulses, so to tell an addict to give up his alcohol, music, porn, gaming, or gambling, is like telling the brain that you might die!

But let's go back to the question: "Do you trust God?" Remember when you were a kid, and you couldn't swim, but your mom or dad stood in the pool

and let you jump into their arms? If they fail you, you will drown and die. But you jump anyway. Why? Because you trust them with the faith of a child.

Do you trust God enough to move forward with radical changes? Jesus promised, "You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice...." Following Me will be hard, He says. You'll be different. People will exclude you and make fun of you and say you're extreme, judgmental, and weird. Your friends will be rejoicing in the "fun" of their worldly lifestyle, and you will weep and mourn. Now the end of the verse: "but your sorrow will be turned into joy" (John 16:20).

A student once told me that he really wasn't following Christ. I asked him, "What's stopping you?"

He replied, "What would I do for fun?"

Entertainment was this young man's idol. He couldn't believe that God's reality would truly bring more joy. But Jesus promised it! "Your sorrow will be turned into joy," He said.

So if you're ready, if you're willing to jump into His arms, here are some practical steps to take:

1. Lay it all on the altar. Take a total media fast for 30 days. Drop everything that might be distracting you from Christ. You can't think objectively about it and evaluate it fairly when you're consuming it.

2. Throw away your "alcohol"—whatever gives the devil a foothold in your life.

3. Do something better. Get involved in positive spiritual pursuits and other edifying activities.

4. Be accountable. Do this with somebody else or ask a mentor to walk with you on it.

5. Plan your time. Schedule how you'll spend every spare minute. If you're not intentional, you'll revert to your sinful habits.

6. Pray. Ask God to help you. Tell people about your decision, and ask them to pray for you, too.

7. Claim God's promises: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).



Historic Link

True Education

T rue education is to know and to do the will of God. This education is as lasting as eternity. The Bible is to be our text-book; for true religion is the foundation of all true education. Intellectual training can never safely be disconnected from religion; and with the study of books, manual training is to be combined, that the mind may be correctly balanced, and solidity be given to brain, bone, and muscle.

This world is our preparatory school. The school and the college are necessary for the development of the mind and the formation of the character. But the cultivation of the intellect alone, apart from a moral and religious education, has a baleful influence. The man who neither loves nor fears God may reach dazzling heights in intellectual attainments, and yet use his acquired knowledge to war against his Maker. If men accept the Lord God of heaven as their teacher, will they not gain the best kind of knowledge, for this world as well as for the next? Mental strength comes alone from a knowledge of the laws that God has established in nature and in the human structure. We must be obedient to these laws, or our lives will be a failure.

Under the controlling influence of Christ, the human intellect can achieve wonderful things. The youth should be encouraged to reach the highest standard of intellectual acquirement. If the fear and knowledge of God are made first, there is no danger that the student will soar too high. The knowledge of God, the understanding of his will in his word, as far as human minds may grasp it, incorporated into the thoughts and woven into the character, will make efficient men and women. The study of the word of God will enable us to do his work intelligently and acceptably. The mind will be enriched, enlarged, and broadened. Those who thus constantly study the Word will go upward and forward toward the highest standard, because they are partakers of the divine nature.

Daniel was closely connected with the source of all wisdom, and this was to him more precious than the

gold of Ophir. He kept his religious training on an equality with the advantages that were given him for becoming a wise and learned man. He used his entrusted capital aright. He was aroused by the situation in which he found himself in the king's court. He co-operated with God in the use of every power that had been given him, and we read: "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." Daniel was connected with God, and the secrets of the Most High were opened to him; for God is with those that fear him. "And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Continual growth in religious wisdom and intelligence did not in any way disqualify these youth for the faithful discharge of the important duties assigned them in the kingdom of Babylon. God gave them his wisdom and knowledge for the perfecting of a thorough education.

Let children and youth be given true education. Teach them to give God their entire devotion; for they are wholly dependent on him in this life, and for the future, immortal life. The knowledge of truth

is the nutrition that the soul needs, in order to be prepared to act as wise a part as did Daniel and his associates. Every time the conscience is violated, sin is committed, for which the wrong-doer must suffer the sure result. The

“ True education is to know
and to do the will of God. ”

penalty of sin is death. With persevering effort and patient forbearance, children must be taught that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. When very young, they may be taught the statutes and commands of God. The thoughts and sentiments of his law are to be interwoven with their knowledge of the sciences. A true knowledge of the word of God is the only true scientific education.

We can not afford to separate spiritual from intellectual training. Well may parents dread intellectual greatness for their children unless it is balanced by a knowledge of God and his ways. It is of great importance that the youth take with them from school an intelligent love for God and his truth. This lies at the foundation of all true knowledge. We are in a world subject to disease and death. He who during his lifetime serves God faithfully has the assurance that he will come forth from the grave to a glorious immortality. Of such a one it may indeed be said, "It is well with his soul." In every school in our land the Lord God of Israel should be exalted, revered,

and honored. In the place of unsanctified rivalry for earthly honor, the highest ambition of students should be to go forth strengthened, established missionaries for God, educators who can teach what they have learned.

Goodness alone is true greatness. With persevering faith, teachers are to hold to the infinite One, saying, as did Jacob, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Education is not perfect unless the body, the mind, and the heart are equally educated. Students who go from school with this education will draw to Christ not only men and women, but children and youth. These need to learn to discipline self; to take up the duties nearest them; and then, however unpleasant the work may seem, to advance steadily. When they learn what constitutes them true children of God, a work will be done that Satan himself can not undo nor make of none effect. He who opens his heart to receive true education receives power from God to impart light to others.

— *The Youth's Instructor*, August 31, 1899

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

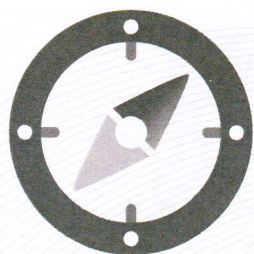
1. What is true education? _____
2. What is to be our textbook and why? _____
3. When only the intellect is cultivated and moral and religious education are lacking, what happens? _____

4. How is Daniel a good example of true and balanced education? _____

5. Did Daniel's religion keep him from doing a good job in serving the king of Babylon? _____
6. Give two reasons that we should give God our entire devotion. _____

7. What is of great importance? And what lies at the foundation of all true knowledge? _____

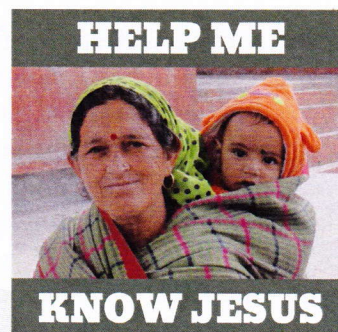
8. What should not be the highest ambition of students? _____
Instead, what should be their highest ambition? _____
9. What is the only way for education to be perfect? _____
10. Describe students with this kind of education. _____



Faith Chapters

Progress—part 2

by John Holbrook, AFM missionary to the Philippines



The Tawbuid man eyed me suspiciously from the darkness of his hut, then nodded his consent. I gratefully dropped my pack full of medicines and squatted in the shade of his house.

Lito gave me a subtle signal. Taking the hint, I started trying to make small talk with the hut's owner in Tawbuid to show that I could speak the language and try to break down some prejudices. I got a few surprised looks, and then silence. The most I could get from him was single-word answers now and then. As I continued to talk with Lito, though, I heard the man in the house commenting to his family, "Wow, he sure is respectful!"

Praise God! Though I wasn't very fluent in Tawbuid yet, I had done my best to learn how to be respectful and polite, and now it was paying off.

Encouraged, Lito and I chatted back and forth in Tawbuid, biding our time to see what would happen. I found out later that Lito was hoping the man was lying to us and that the chief would show up.

Sure enough, as we continued talking, a head suddenly appeared above the brow of the hill we were perched on. The man took one look at me and froze, an expression of utter surprise etched onto his face. After a few seconds, he recovered his composure and cautiously joined the circle.

Lito began talking cheerfully to the man who turned out to be the long-lost chief. After warming up to the conversation for a while, the chief addressed Lito directly, choosing his words carefully. "May I ask what brings you here to our village?"

Lito paused and looked at me. "You tell him," he said simply.

I had passed the test! The fact that Lito trusted me to speak for myself in such a delicate matter meant he had confidence, not just in my language ability, but that I would speak tactfully and appropriately in a sensitive third-culture political negotiation.

Sending up a silent Nehemiah prayer, I started in. "We're here to offer help. I heard from my friends that many people in your village were sick. My bag over there is full of medicines, and I would be glad

to help your village if you would like." It sounds so simple in English, but it was a message composed of carefully chosen words and precisely orchestrated body language.

Apparently I had passed muster with the chief, too. If I had offended him, he would have become angry. It would have been even worse if I had shown no knowledge of how to conduct myself culturally. Instead, he replied with the utmost care and politeness, "If that is the reason you are here, I can tell you that while there were many sick people in the village, they have obtained their own treatment and are now well. We won't be needing your services at this time."

We accepted the chief's decision and didn't push any more. After chatting for a few more minutes, we left and started home. My companions were elated. No, we hadn't been accepted. No, we hadn't treated anyone. But this was the first time the highland people had ever even treated them civilly and hadn't angrily commanded them to never come back. The chief had treated us with great respect, and almost a hint of friendliness. There was even a chance that next time he would allow us to treat people.

This was my first contact with highlanders in their own territory. It had also been my first practical exam in the language and culture. I hadn't been perfect, but by God's grace I had passed.

We are not in yet. In fact, we're probably not even close to being able to move into highland Tawbuid territory. But this visit was a big step in the right direction. I praise God and pray earnestly that He will use us in His time and way to bring salvation to the highland Tawbuid. Please continue to pray for me and for the Tawbuid. We need it. (Concluded)

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