



Principle Approach Education

THE POWER OF PRINCIPLE: *FORMING A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW FROM THE INSIDE OUT*

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Our fathers and grandfathers went to war to make the world safe for democracy. “I must study war . . . so that my sons can study mathematics,” said one of our founding fathers. We’ve been reminded recently, until it hurts, the value of their sacrifices, and that truly every generation must pay the cost. Yet, beyond “united we stand,” there remains the sad truth that *our world is unsafe for our ideals and principles*. The daily news invades our lives with countless reminders of infringements upon our founding liberties, against which a siege, has been laid in the guise of ‘higher’ causes masquerading as tolerance, compassion, or safety. The recent two-hour prime time television interview given to the cause of gay couple adoptions is only the latest example of addressing the secondary and tertiary issues while completely bypassing the central, essential principles upon which policy should be based and problems solved.

The inability to reason Biblically about life issues is epidemic in and out of the church. The PEERS Test program run by the Nehemiah Institute measuring opinions about politics, economics, education, religion, and social issues testing 10,000 Christian students over thirteen years, projects a complete loss of Christian worldview by the year 2018 if the decline continues at the present rate. The alarm has been rung, Christians are alerted, the buzz word of the hour is Biblical worldview. Conferences are being held. Books are being published. Courses are being taught. But are we just putting bandages on an external wound when we really need to be restoring health to the blood within? Have we fallen into the secular mode of problem solving—deal with the external, fix the problem—rather than deal with the internal, the principle, the character, the conscience, and the problem will fix itself?

Jesus taught principles and provoked his hearers to think, reason, reflect, and respond from the heart. What really is a principle? It is defined as the cause source, or origin of any thing. God placed his glorious creation upon the bedrock truth of a set of governing principles. Those principles were given shoe leather in the person of Christ. The Bible expounds recurring basic principles through every book, every story, every precept. Principles are causative, primary, invisible, but foundational. Principles make an effect that is visible and secondary. Every issue of life and learning is understandable when reasoned by principles. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.* (Proverbs 4:23) When we



are ignorant of Biblical principles and cannot relate them to life and learning, we are subject to confusion and easily swayed. The present generation of Christian young people taking the PEERS test shows the effect of faulty education: they have been told what to think without having been taught to reason from the principles that govern the universe, therefore they take up whatever thinking is laid before them. *But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart.* (Matthew 15:18)

Authentic Christian education rests upon teaching students to reason Biblically. To paraphrase Rosalie Slater in *Teaching and Learning America's Christian History: The Principle Approach*[®], the contrast of secular and Christian education can be summed up:

SECULAR METHODS AND GOALS OF TEACHING:

1. Create a causative environment to which the student becomes responsive.
2. Condition the student to look at the external social, economic, religious, and political climate before he determines how he will act.
3. Result in an individual who can 'discern the face of the sky' but cannot 'discern the signs of the times.'

CHRISTIAN METHODS AND GOALS OF TEACHING:

1. Build principles from God's Word into the thinking of the student, empowering him to subdue the environment rather than submit to it.
2. Teach the student to look to the internal demands of conscience as causative of behavior and action and to see the external environment as effect.
3. Result in the student learning to subdue the earth for God's purpose and according to His will.

"The task of the modern educator," says C.S. Lewis in *The Abolition of Man: How Education Develops Man's Sense of Morality*, "is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts. The right defense against false sentiments is to inculcate just sentiments." To inculcate principles is a slow, steady process requiring that principles be taught not in a supplementary lesson, a special class, or a seminar, but through every subject every day. It is the imperative mandate of this moment to educate Christian children in Biblical principles and teach them to reason from them. It is not an add-on in the curriculum. *It must be the curriculum.*

EDUCATING FOR THE KINGDOM

From your childhood you have had a knowledge of and been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you and give you the understanding for salvation which comes through faith in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 3:15, NIV)



The children we have in our homes who will lead their generation towards Christ must ascend to a self-transcending ideal. They must tower above their contemporaries in ability, wisdom, and virtue. They must bear an awesome sense of responsibility to the past, to Christ *His Story*, and possess extraordinary abilities to articulate the highest aims of His kingdom. They must develop in conscience to a commitment to truth that overcomes the superficial, selfish, and utilitarian orientation of the age. They must operate upon a base of real love—love for God, for His Word, for the individual made in His image, for truth, beauty, goodness, and for family and the nations. In other words, they must be people who know, value, and live their lives upon Christian principles.

This kind of education forms a Biblical worldview from the inside out—one that is genuine because it is owned not just suggested.

In addition, the student educated by the Principle Approach® has the advantage of an uncluttered, orderly mind and insight into the connectedness of knowledge. His understanding of providential history gives him a panoramic view from which to relate lessons from the past to present circumstances. His spirit is cultivated with a complete vision of life in God as it ought to be lived in all domains—individual, family, church, state.

Forming a Biblical worldview through the Principle Approach completely changes the nature of education. No longer is the moral marrow—of who we are and what our purposes are—being schooled out of our children, because now we are reclaiming and restoring education’s transcendent and ennobling ends. The Principle Approach teaches us that the end of education is not just thinking or knowing but acting in accord with the truth of God’s Word.

The result: Romans 8 calls it “*the glorious liberty of the children of God.*”

THE BIBLICAL STANDARD OF CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

*And the child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom:
and the grace of God was upon Him. (Luke 2:40, Amplified Version)*