

THE SAFETYNET PLAN



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HOLY BIBLE

DEVELOPING A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW
THROUGH FAMILY DEVOTIONS

TOM PARENT AND DR. PAUL D. LINDSTROM

SAFETYNET

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BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| <i>Chapter</i> | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| <i>Introduction</i> | <i>v</i> |
| <i>1 The Problem of Humanistic Education</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>2 The SafetyNet Plan</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>3 A Biblical View of Reading and Literature</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>4 A Biblical View of Mathematics</i> | <i>13</i> |
| <i>5 A Biblical View of Science</i> | <i>16</i> |
| <i>6 A Biblical View of History</i> | <i>19</i> |
| <i>7 A Biblical View of Geography</i> | <i>22</i> |
| <i>8 A Biblical View of Political Science</i> | <i>26</i> |
| <i>9 A Biblical View of Economics</i> | <i>30</i> |
| <i>10 A Biblical View of Art and Music</i> | <i>33</i> |
| <i>11 A Biblical View of Physical Education</i> | <i>37</i> |
| <i>Closing Thoughts</i> | <i>40</i> |

INTRODUCTION

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thy 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 command given by God in Deuteronomy 6:6-7 is to be our goal. As parents we want our children to be well trained. Morning, noon, and night . . . we want them exposed to the truth. Our desire is that throughout all the waking hours of the day, “whatever is right, whatever is lovely (and) whatever is praiseworthy” (Phil 4:8) will be impressed upon their minds and hearts. In every area of their studies—literature, science, government, philosophy, history, etc.—we want every thought to be brought into obedience to Jesus Christ (2 Cor 10:5).

This goal, however, is not easily achieved. Such an education is possible only in the consistently Christian school or when children are instructed in a consistently Christian home. For a variety of reasons, Christian school is often beyond the reach of a majority of Christian parents. For some, these schools are few and far between, or too expensive. For others, work and other necessary commitments make home-schooling an impossibility, at least for the immediate future. And in some countries, Christian schools simply do not exist, and home-schooling is forbidden by law. What, therefore, are concerned Christian parents to do? Is there an answer?

Today in many nations around the world, government controlled education openly promotes the religion of Secular Humanism in the classroom. In these schools, a selfish, hedonistic, anti-God religion has become the semi-official religion taught to the students. Jesus Christ is ridiculed, moral values taught by parents and church are divided, and sexual promiscuity, adultery, fornication, abortion, divorce, and euthanasia are presented as both healthy and fashionable. In addition, the acceptance of homosexuality is promoted as an exercise in personal freedom, with much time spent in amoral sex

education instruction. And it is not unusual for young people to be indoctrinated at school with the idea that their fathers and mothers are old-fashioned, ignorant, and out of touch with modern society. What is a parent to do? Is there an answer?

Apart from the consistent Christian day school and home school, there are no easy answers. However, what we are attempting to do, beginning with chapter two, is to offer a solution that we believe will be helpful. Having tested this plan with public school students and their parents, we know it has merit. If used faithfully, it does provide a “safety net” or “ark” of protection.

The best answer, of course, is a daily Christian education. However, as a stop-gap measure, or simply to augment your present Christian day school or home school instruction, we offer *The SafetyNet Plan*.

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1

THE PROBLEM OF HUMANISTIC EDUCATION

Before we begin to outline *The SafetyNet Plan* in chapter two, we must first take another look at the problem. The book of Proverbs speaks of clearly seeing the evil and then taking the corrective action. Where there is no vision, the solution is sure to fail. We must, therefore, be firmly convinced of the problem.

Most dictionaries define humanism as some sort of contemporary cult which substitutes faith in man for faith in God. And it is exactly this faith—the religion of man—that we claim the government schools are promoting.

In 1985 U.S. Secretary of Education, William Bennett, was asked a question at his first press conference: “The claim has been made that Secular Humanism is taught in the schools. By your definition, what is it?” Bennett responded, “... there is something called Secular Humanism—it’s not mysterious, it’s not something that one has to wonder about its meaning ... read the Humanist Manifesto...”

John Dewey, known as the father of progressive education, signed the Manifesto. So did C.F. Potter, who is the author of *Humanism: A New Religion*. In his book, Potter writes: “Education is thus a most powerful ally of humanism, and every American public school is a school of humanism. What can the theistic Sunday schools, meeting for an hour once a week, and teaching only a fraction of the children, do to stem the tide of a five-day program of humanistic teaching?”

For the humanist, the purpose of education is to train up the child to be a servant of man and answerable to man. However, for the Christian, the purpose of education is to train up the child to be a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ and answerable to God.

Therefore, what we have today are two competing powers. There is a gigantic battle taking place for the souls, the minds, and the bodies of our sons and daughters. It is a battle for the spiritual development and scholastic well-being of our precious children. And in this warfare there can be no substitute for victory.

In Jeremiah 10:2 we read, “Learn not the way of the heathen.” The apostle Paul also tells us, “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit.” Sad to say, many of our Christian young people are learning and copying the ways of the pagans. They have become rebellious. Parents are no longer honored. Interest in church and spiritual things has declined. Humanistic philosophy has spoiled their hearts.

Leading secular humanist Paul Blanchard, writing in *The Humanist*, pronounced: “I think the most important factor leading us to a secular society has been the educational factor. Our schools may not teach Johnny to read properly, but the fact that Johnny is in school until he is 16 tends to lead toward the elimination of religious superstition. The average child now acquires a high school education, and this militates against Adam and Eve and all other myths of alleged history.”

Yes, we know that our youngsters and teenagers must some day face the real world out there with all of its humanistic perversion, sin, and debauchery. Such are the very things that people encounter in the adult world every day. However, godly discernment makes crystal clear the fact that adults are far better equipped to handle these situations emotionally and otherwise. They are also, generally speaking, more solidly grounded in biblical morality and Christian ethics. But children are vulnerable. Teenagers are very impressionable. They must be protected. Help must be given. God’s Word demands it.

THE SOLUTION

The practical solution to today’s educational problem is a Bible-based system of education in which all subjects are studied from a biblical worldview. When children are taught to interpret all that they learn through the eyes of Scripture, and are trained biblically how to apply what they learn, they acquire true knowledge and wisdom and develop a strong godly character.

This, then, is the purpose of this book. Whether your children are in a Christian day school or home school, or whether they are in a government school, this book has been designed to provide Christian parents with a basic biblical understanding of the key areas of learning. Armed with this understanding, parents should be able

to approach their children's school subjects with discernment that can be used to reach and to train their sons and daughters in the correct interpretation and application of what they learn.

Beginning with chapter three, each chapter concentrates on a particular school subject (nine in all) and is divided into two sections: The **Purpose** and the **Points of Emphasis**. The **Purpose** section defines the use of each subject in the plan of God. The **Points of Emphasis** demonstrate either a practical approach to each subject through the use of key questions or a practical application of God's Word to each area of learning. The **Purpose** and **Points of Emphasis** sections have been designed to work hand-in-hand.

If your children are in a Christian day school or home school, this book will help you not only to reinforce what they're already learning, but to add even greater dimension to their studies. On the other hand, if your children are in a government school, this book will help you to compare what they're learning with the Holy Scriptures, which will enable you to more easily identify any errors they are being taught and to contrast these errors with biblical truth. Using the biblical system of comparison and contrast is a powerful teaching tool.

Over and over we hear the words "the decline of the American family." As parents, we must remedy the situation. It is our God-given responsibility.

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2

THE SAFETYNET PLAN

The SafetyNet Plan we have devised, and already tested, involves family worship or devotions. What we mean by this is simply spending time together as a family to read the Bible, to pray, and for discussion. We are talking, however, about a specialized form of devotions. These devotions will be geared to offsetting the humanism to which many children are exposed in their studies. They are designed to present a Christian world and life view. And we know they work.

If the plan is to be successful there must first be a commitment to family devotions. This is the starting point. A faithful commitment to a daily time of family worship is of critical importance. Let's begin, therefore, with that commitment.

“... God is to be worshiped everywhere in spirit and in truth; as in private families daily, and in secret each one by himself; so more solemnly in the public assemblies....” —*Westminster Confession of Faith*

Family worship or devotions is a meeting of the entire household in the name of the Lord. The father, who is the God-appointed head of the house, stands in his place as the spiritual head of his family. We see many examples of this in the Bible: Acts 10:2, Eph. 5:23, 6:4. Note also:

- Gen. 7:1,7; 8:20—Noah and his family
- Gen. 17:5; 18:19—Abraham's home
- Gen. 35:1-3—Jacob's home
- Joshua 24:15—Joshua's home
- Acts 10:24; 11:14—Cornelius's home
- Acts 16:33-34—the jailer's home
- Acts 18:7—Justus's home
- 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:15-16—Timothy's home

As noted by Byron Snapp, “Assuming you attend church once a week, over a fifteen year period you have attended church 780 times. If you have daily devotions over the same period you will have been able to lead your family in the study of Scripture and the worship of God 5,478 times.”

Family worship, then, is of critical importance. The spiritual success of the home demands effort on a consistent basis. God expects fathers (or mothers if there is no father living in the home, or if father is an unbeliever) to plan, to be responsible, and to provide for the spiritual development of each member of the household. In the Scriptures we are commanded to train children in the way they should go (Prov 22:6). Such training, we are promised, will last. Are you taking time for family devotions? If not, we believe the likelihood of your experiencing family difficulties is very great! And these are difficulties that could be avoided.

The Christian writer and biblical scholar A.W. Pink has noted, “The advantages and blessings of family worship are incalculable. First, family worship will prevent much sin. It awes the soul, conveys a sense of God’s majesty and authority, sets solemn truths before the mind and brings down benefits from God on the home.”

It was J. Edgar Hoover who wrote, “The home is the citadel of American life. If the home is lost, all is lost.” We believe that the battle for God’s kingdom begins at home. What will it profit a father if he gains the whole world and yet loses his children and family? Worship as a family in the home is a must!

Money will never bring happiness to your home. Compact disc players, home computers, VCRs and giant screen TVs are not the answer to solving family problems. There is no substitute for a well run home. Father must be the guardian of the family covenant. God will hold him responsible.

We have all heard the statement: “As goes the home, so goes the church. As goes the church, so goes the nation.” According to Dr. James Dobson, “If America is going to survive the incredible stresses and dangers it now faces, it will be because ... fathers once again place their families at the highest level of their system of priorities.” “By the year 2000,” wrote the radical feminist Gloria Steinem in *Ms. Magazine*, “we will, I hope, raise our children to believe in human potential, not God.” By God’s grace, we must not allow this to happen. We must fight the good fight. We must war a good warfare.

The family worship materials we have designed, as previously noted, consist of two parts: The **Purpose** and **Points of Emphasis**. All of the major curriculum divisions of a student’s daily school schedule

(reading, history, science, math, etc.), are presented in this twofold fashion: What is the purpose for such studies, and what are the areas of emphasis that parents should discuss?

It is important, first of all, that students understand the biblical importance of studying a particular subject at school. “Why must I take science?” a student asks. The **Purpose** section will clearly answer that question. The **Points of Emphasis**, secondly, enable a parent to briefly review those studies and to present a truly Christian world and life view in relationship to them. As this is consistently done, a little at a time, and day after day, much will be accomplished. The Lord will bless children’s minds; they will be protected and renewed.

In addition to the reading of a Psalm, or a portion thereof (or a passage from Proverbs or any other book of the Bible, perhaps in conjunction with a devotional book or booklet), we would suggest that parents discuss their children’s school lessons on a rotating basis, perhaps a different subject each night (Monday—history; Tuesday—science; etc.). Some nights more than one subject could be covered, such as physical education as well as art and music.

First of all, discuss with your children the purpose of the subject to be reviewed. Unless your children understand the importance of each subject, the follow-up review will be diminished in value. The **Purpose** section can be read and briefly discussed each time the particular subject is on schedule for family worship. Sometimes the children can do the reading. As they become more and more familiar with the content, simply ask them the purpose. “Why, Susan, is it of biblical importance to study geography?” Parents, use your ingenuity. Have a quiz. Ask questions. Make the **Purpose** section as interesting as possible.

As you move along into the **Points of Emphasis** section, just ask your children to briefly tell the family what they learned that day, for example, in history. If possible, look at their history textbooks. Expose any obvious errors. Following that, ask your children how the **Points of Emphasis** (note only several at each discussion), relate to their history lessons. Ask questions. Make observations from the materials and responses provided.

If your children are young you will need to make most of the applications. However, encourage as much child participation as pos-

sible. The more they talk and get involved, the better. Try to think of Bible stories that would in some way correspond with what they have studied. Ask them what lessons can be learned from their history studies (or whatever the subject) that would be of value to them, their family, their nation. What sins should be avoided, good examples followed, and so on. Add questions of your own. And ask only those questions, or make only those observations that clearly apply. Depending on the lesson, many of ours will not. Maybe only one or two each day.

The nature of the discussions will vary, of course, with the subject being reviewed. Science will be considerably different (and probably more difficult) from history and literature. However, try to relate several **Points of Emphasis** to their studies at every family worship session.

As you first fully acquaint yourself with the materials, and then begin to use them day after day and week after week, familiarity will greatly add to the pleasure. Remember, however, that you are seeking to train up your child in the way he should go. Take, therefore, the time that is necessary (although these family worship sessions should not go on forever—perhaps no more than thirty minutes a night). Obviously the more children, the longer it will take.

To effectively teach, it is essential that you keep the lines of communication open between you and your children. When they say something you don't agree with, don't jump all over them verbally. Children will not discuss things openly if it becomes a painful and embarrassing experience. Learn to listen carefully and to calmly ask questions. You need to have a clear understanding of how they perceive the subject matter before you can respond intelligently.

When discussing a particular point, if you see that you are not properly prepared to defend the biblical position, don't argue or try to fake your way through things. Rather, ask questions if you need to clarify anything, close the discussion as soon as you are able, and quietly do the necessary research. You can always reopen the discussion at a later date when you are ready.

If a son or a daughter asks you a question that you can't answer, be honest and say, "I don't know, but let me see if I can find the

answer.” And then do your research, getting back to them as quickly as possible.

In teaching and applying the Scriptures to school subjects, be aware that the routine for every family is different. Therefore, there is no set formula that will work for every household. For most families the dinner hour seems to work best for reviewing the school day and discussing the various things learned that day. For others, it will be Sunday afternoons at home, or whenever time permits, working one-on-one with a son or daughter.

In each home, only the parents will be able to decide which approach or combination of approaches will work—often by means of trial and error. However, let us not be tempted to say that a time of family devotions, even if it is only one verse of Scripture and a one-minute prayer, cannot somehow be scheduled on a daily basis.

We need to remember the words spoken by Jesus in Luke 10:41-42 “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; But one thing is needful and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.” We must, of course, do more in life than just read the Bible. We have kingdom building responsibilities. We must put first things first, however. Family worship must not be neglected.

Above all, do not become discouraged. Remember that the greatest difficulty with something new always occurs at the beginning. Realize that becoming skilled in applying the Bible to your children’s school subjects is something you acquire gradually. Pray for guidance, persevere, and God will bless your efforts with success.

Wherever possible, find other Christian parents in your church or neighborhood who are also involved with or concerned about their children’s education. In working together, pool your knowledge by sharing both your discoveries and techniques as well as your successes and failures—all the while encouraging one another in the faith and the work to be done.

The world we are living in is changing rapidly before our eyes. Although the humanists occupy many important positions of power, the foundations of their power are beginning to crumble. Even though this presents us with a world in upheaval, we should rejoice

because it also presents us with a world full of God-ordained opportunities for the future.

As the humanist Tower of Babel begins to fall, the way is being opened for the advancement of the Christian faith. And one of the most important tools for this advancement is Christian education. By learning to apply the Word of God universally to *all* areas of study, the rule of Jesus Christ on earth through His Church is developed for *all* areas of life.

This is the key to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Through the preaching of the Gospel, the lost are brought to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. Then the newborn Christian is to be taught and trained in the practical application of the Christian faith to all of life. This is the job of Christian education.

Therefore, in each and every generation, this makes the Christian home the starting place for the fulfillment of the Great Commission. And what we are witnessing today, worldwide, is a conscious reawakening of Christian parents to this sacred task. Once again, Christian education is on the rise, and with it a reclaiming of the crown rights of Jesus Christ.

All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.
—*Matt 28:18–20*

And once again let us remind you, don't give up. Don't quit because it's difficult. Practice makes perfect. Patience and perseverance will pay off. As the old hymn goes, "It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!" Your efforts will be rewarded. God will bless your family.

When it comes to family worship, being faithful every day will be your biggest problem. One hundred and one things will try and get in the way. Unless you are diligent, other things will surely crowd it out. Because of this, we suggest that you determine the best time for your household. You should, of course, be flexible. But try, as much as possible, to keep right on schedule. And if father cannot be present, mother can do it. And if you don't have time on any particular day to review your students' studies, at least take time for Bible reading and prayer.

We would suggest that you both open and close each family worship session with prayers. Take requests, and take turns praying. Let the young children pray, if not daily, at least several times each week. That's how they learn. Pray for God's blessings upon what you have discussed. Beseech Him to protect your children's minds and hearts from the humanists. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened" (Matt 7:7). It was John Newton, the author of the hymn "Amazing Grace," who wrote:

Happy is that family where the worship of God is constantly and conscientiously maintained. Such houses are temples, in which the Lord dwells, and castles garrisoned by a divine power. I do not say, that by honoring God in your house, you will wholly escape a share in the trials incident to the present uncertain state of things. A measure of such trials will be necessary for the exercise and manifestation of your graces, to give you a more convincing proof of the truth and sweetness of the promises made to a time of affliction, to mortify the body of sin, and to wean you more effectually from the world. But this I will confidently say, that the Lord will both honor and comfort those who thus honor him. Seasons will occur in which you shall know, and probably your neighbors shall be constrained to take notice, that he has not bid you seek him in vain. If you meet with troubles, they shall be accompanied by supports, and followed be deliverance; and you shall upon many occasions experience that he is your protector, preserving you and yours from the evils by which you will see others suffering around you.

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3

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF READING AND LITERATURE

By the Word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host...For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. —Psalm 33:6, 9

THE PURPOSE

Reading is the most important single skill a child can learn at school. Upon the ability to read depends the development of all other subjects. The teaching of phonics, therefore, is so important. The most comprehensive literacy study ever done by the U.S. Department of Education (1993) reveals that 90 million American adults can barely read or write. As George Orwell stated, “If people cannot write well” (or read well) “they cannot think well. If they cannot think well, others will do their thinking for them.”

To truly learn from other subjects, a student must not only be able to read, but he must also have the key to understanding. Therefore, one of the very first books a child should learn to read is the Holy Bible. The Bible is the mind of God revealed to man. From it we learn about the creation, the fall of our race into sin, God’s wonderful plan of salvation, and His righteous system of government for all areas of life. It is this knowledge which gives us the key to correct understanding. And it is this understanding which we need to correctly interpret all other writings.

Language is thought expressed. But thoughts are never neutral. They are either good or evil. To know good and evil, we need to study the Bible. For it is only from the Bible that we come to know truth and error. Therefore as we learn to read all literature through the “eyes” of Scripture, we will interpret all that we read by the mind of God. In so doing, we will grow, like Jesus, in true wisdom and grace, advancing God’s kingdom on earth for His honor and glory.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

It is important to remember that all thoughts and ideas have a religious point of view. Therefore, when reading *any* kind of literature, we should ask ourselves:

1. Is the author Christian or non-Christian?
2. If non-Christian, what religious point of view is he writing from?
3. Is there any information available about the author that could tell us something about his education, background, and personal beliefs?
4. Is the author known for a particular cause or type of thinking?
5. Does the message of the author compare or differ with what the Bible teaches?

When reading stories or novels, we should ask ourselves:

1. What kind of people are the main characters?
2. How do they compare with God's people or God's enemies in the Bible?
3. How do they respond to the challenges and situations they are faced with?
4. Do they use God's Law in facing their problems or do they use sinful methods?
5. Does the story line glorify God or man?
6. What sins do we see in the story?
7. What good examples should be followed?

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4

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF MATHEMATICS

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made ... —Romans 1:20

THE PURPOSE

The Bible teaches us that our Creator is eternal and infinite. Being eternal, He is unchanging; being infinite, He is absolute. As we study the created universe we can see these same qualities. All of creation is governed by unchanging absolutes which reflect the character of the One who made it. As we look further, we can see the marvelous precision in nature and the utter vastness of space, demonstrating the magnificence of God's government over all of creation.

But these truths would be impossible for us to know or to understand without God's gift of mathematics. For without this gift we would not have the means of measuring and computing the world around us.

Mathematics is limitless and unchanging. Its numbers know no boundaries and its principles never vary. Its formulas and equations are always in perfect balance and exhibit flawless consistency. Consequently, it is the perfect tool for studying the creative handiwork of the eternal and infinite God. It reveals the omnipotence of the Lord. The study of mathematics is also an exercise in perseverance. It teaches us to keep on keeping on when we encounter a difficult task.

In addition, mathematics is also a perfect tool for man's rulership under God. All callings in life demand planning, doing, and evaluating in order to carry out our God-given responsibilities. Mathematics plays an important part whether it be in business, medicine, engineering, science, etc. Therefore, as God's people, we are to use this wonderful gift to advance His kingdom on earth for His honor and glory.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. **Numbers.** All numbers originate from God Himself and are not created. Numbers are the very expression of God's infinite orderliness which we see reflected in the whole of His creation.
2. **Ten as a Basic Means of Counting.** The Arabic decimal system (a 10-based system) is a numeric system that is reflected in the Bible. This system did not result from some evolutionary construct (i.e., a cave-man) who one day noticed that he had 10 fingers and 10 toes, and then started to count accordingly. Rather, the number 10 is found in many places throughout Scripture as a basic means of counting.

For example, in the book of Genesis we see 10 patriarchs (Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah [10 witnesses]) raised up by God before He judged that world with the Great Flood (Gen 5). With Sodom and Gomorrah, God promised Abraham that He would spare those two cities if just 10 righteous people could be found there (Gen 18:32). Uncle Laban changed Jacob's wages 10 times before God told Jacob to return home and prevented Laban from forcing Jacob back into his service again (Gen 31:7). And the tithe is a tenth of a person's income, which means that God looks upon a person's income as being composed of and measured in parts of 10 (Gen 14:20; 28:20–22).

Moreover, in the book of Exodus we see that God brought 10 plagues upon Egypt before the nation of Israel was set free (Exod 7–12). On the way from Egypt to the land of Canaan, the Israelites challenged God in unbelief 10 times before the Lord condemned them to wander in the wilderness for forty years (Num 14:22). And at Mount Sinai God gave Moses the 10 Commandments which are the basis of the moral law (Exod 20:1–17).

The number 10 is a basic means of counting and the basis for our number system (10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, to infinity).

3. **Arithmetic.** Likewise, the number three is reflected in God's three-in-one nature—Father, Son, Holy Spirit—and consists of a unified body of numbers which represents one essential reality. The creation itself reflects this tri-unity; for example, the universe consists of time, space, and matter; furthermore, water exists in three forms—solid, liquid, and gas.
4. **Algebra.** Like numbers, the principles of mathematics are not created. They have always existed in the nature and character of God. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is a good example of this.

The Holy Bible teaches that there are three divine Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—equally eternal (no beginning and no ending) and equally infinite (no limitations and no boundaries), and yet only one God who is eternal and infinite.

At first this doctrine appears to defy all logic. After all, simple reasoning would dictate that $1+1+1=3$. In other words, three divine Persons, equally eternal and equally infinite, equal three Gods. Nevertheless, the Bible tells us that in the case of the Holy Trinity:

$$1+1+1=1$$

How is this possible? The answer lies in the fact that God—and only God—is infinite! Therefore:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \text{INFINITY} & + & \text{INFINITY} & + & \text{INFINITY} & = & \text{INFINITY} \\ (\text{FATHER}) & & (\text{SON}) & & (\text{HOLY SPIRIT}) & & (\text{ONE GOD}) \end{array}$$

This is true because nothing can be added to infinity. Therefore when infinity is “added” to infinity, the answer will always be infinity.

Thus we learn from mathematics that the God of the Holy Bible must be seen, not in terms of time and space, but in his eternity and infinity.

5. *Mathematics*. Applied to nature, the study of mathematics is really the study of God’s divine order revealed in His created universe. Consequently, as we learn about mathematics, we are learning about God. Every time the children do mathematics, therefore, it should serve as a reminder of their sovereign God. Even as He is perfect, so also we should strive for perfection. As mathematical principles are exact, so also our lives are to be lived by a careful adherence to His principles for our daily lives (the ten commandments, etc.). Not to follow the correct mathematical formula or solution is to fail. To neglect God’s spiritual formulas for life produces the same result.

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5

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF SCIENCE

Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'—Genesis 1:26

THE PURPOSE

When God created man, He created him in His own image and likeness and made him to rule over the animals, the plants, and the earth. Under God's direction, man was to develop each of these areas to its fullest potential. As he did this, he would develop a marvelous civilization for the benefit of all mankind, but most importantly for the honor and glory of his Creator.

Thus it was in the Garden of Eden that science was born. It was there that Adam first learned to cultivate the soil, to plant and to dress the trees and vegetation. It was there also that he first studied the animals, giving each a special name that described its species, and classifying them biologically. Science teaches us to be careful and precise in all things.

For us to rule over creation as God has commanded, we must have an organized and systematic knowledge of the areas we are to rule. This is the purpose of science. In science we are to study God's physical laws in operation over each area of creation and to learn to apply this knowledge in accordance with His holy will.

To do this, we must approach the study of science using the Word of God as our key to correct interpretation. For only as we learn to see creation through the eyes of the Creator can we learn to know it as it really is. In so doing we are protected from evolutionism and "science falsely so called" (1 Tim 6:20). We are also instructed in His awesome power and the beauty of His handiwork.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

Many people think that the Bible has to do primarily with personal morality and not much more. In the area of science, however, there is much that the Word of God has to say. The following are just a few of the many scientific facts contained in the Scriptures.

1. ***Blood and Life.*** The fact that the blood sustains life is a relatively modern scientific discovery. Science has found that through the blood, water and nourishment are carried to each cell, the temperature of the body is maintained, and waste material is removed from the cells. However, this fact was revealed by God through the prophet Moses over 3,000 years ago: “For the life of the flesh is in the blood” (Lev 17:11).
2. ***Genetics.*** The science of genetics reveals the “kinds” of distinct species spoken of in Genesis 1:11–12, 21, 24–25. The discovery of the DNA molecule and the extreme complexity of its information coding system in the living cell has provided strong evidence in support of life created by God rather than through evolution.
3. ***The Conservation of Energy.*** The First Law of Thermodynamics is commonly referred to as the Law of the Conservation of Energy. This basic law of science states that energy can be transferred from one place to another, or transferred from one form to another, but cannot be created or destroyed. This is in keeping with the biblical teaching that God rested on the seventh day from His work of creation (and, therefore, no more energy will be created) and that He actively works to *personally* preserve His created order throughout the universe (energy cannot be destroyed). The following passages of Scripture demonstrate that this law is actually God Himself at work preserving the universe: Neh 9:6; Col 1:17; Heb 1:3; 2 Pet 3:7.
4. ***The Law of Entropy.*** The Second Law of Thermodynamics is known as the Law of Entropy, that is, the tendency of an energy system to run down toward disorder. Under this law the energy in the entire universe is gradually moving toward a state of total and complete disorder. The Bible tells us that this condition is directly a result of God’s curse upon man and creation due to man’s fall into sin. We see this condition referred to in several places in Scripture: Ps 102:25–27; Isa 51:6; Matt 24:35; Heb 1:10–12; 2 Pet 3:10. (See also Isa 65:17–18; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1–9, for God’s creation of the new heavens and earth.)
5. ***Global Water Cycle System.*** Modern science has discovered that there are major wind currents above the earth responsible for bringing evaporated water from the oceans back over the continents in the form of rain. This oceanic rain is the main source of water for wells, springs, lakes, and rivers (which flow into the oceans), and goes to make up a global water cycle system, without which there could be no life on earth. Again, we see this important phenomenon recorded in the Bible almost 3,000 years ago:

Blowing toward the south, then turning toward the north, the wind continues swirling along; and on its circular course the wind returns. All the rivers flow into the sea, yet the sea is not full. To the place where the rivers flow, there they flow again.—Eccl. 1:6–7

6. **Electricity and Rain.** There is strong scientific evidence to indicate that an electrical field must be generated in a cloud before its water droplets will unite together to form drops large enough to fall as rain. An electrical field is also necessary to cause a lightning discharge between two clouds or a cloud and the earth. In the book of Psalms, God has revealed this very same phenomenon:

He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; who makes lightnings for the rain, who brings forth the wind from His treasures.”—Psalm 135:7

Notice that this verse mentions the four phases of the water cycle: evaporation, wind, electricity, and rain.

7. **Atmospheric Pressure.** It is only in recent times that science has learned that atmospheric pressure is caused by the weight of the air on the surface of the earth. With the use of a barometer the atmospheric pressure can be read accurately, which makes it possible to predict the weather. In ancient times this knowledge was unknown except in the Bible:

When He imparted weight to the wind.—Job 28:25

8. **God Is the Creator.** The Bible teaches that God made all things out of nothing, by the word of His power, in the space of six days. Man was God’s greatest work of creation. He did not evolve. And everything that God made was good. True science confirms creation, not evolution.

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6

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF HISTORY

It is He who is enthroned above the vault of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. He it is who reduces rulers to nothing, who makes the judges of the earth meaningless. Scarcely have they been planted, scarcely have they been sown, scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth, but He merely blows on them, and they wither, and the storm carries them away like stubble.—Isaiah 40:22–24

THE PURPOSE

True history begins with the creation, man's fall into sin, and God's plan of salvation. Because God has a plan, history has a goal. Since history has a goal, its meaning and purpose must be seen in terms of the One who guides and directs it toward that goal.

Consequently, history is more than just names, dates, places, and events. Unlike science, where we study God's *physical* laws in His government over creation, history is the study of God's *moral* laws in His government over men and nations. The study of history must therefore begin in the Holy Bible with the Law of God. For it is by means of His Law that God rules the nations, holding men accountable for their actions. And it is according to their obedience or disobedience to His Law that God brings His blessings or judgments upon them.

However, it pleases, and has pleased, the Lord to rule with mercy towards acts of sin. If it were not for this, there would be no hope for mankind, for all are fallen under sin and therefore subject to the wrath to come. Because of the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, God rules with mercy as well as justice.

History shows that many of God's judgments upon the wickedness of men and nations came only after He provided more than ample time and opportunity for their repentance. And history shows that through the preaching of the Holy Gospel, both men and nations

have been brought to repentance and saving faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

For this reason all history—ancient, medieval, and modern—must be seen as the sovereign rule of God over the affairs of men. All men are accountable to Him. All events must be viewed as the hand of God directing history toward the final victory of Christ and His Church. Truth will eventually triumph; ungodliness will be destroyed. We learn, therefore, to patiently wait upon the Lord for the fulfillment of His perfect will. And the lessons of history are to be used by the people of God to diligently work and “occupy,” as we advance His kingdom on earth for His honor and glory.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

In our study of history we should be sure to ask ourselves the following questions and to make the following observations:

1. What is the religion of each nation that we study? This is important for our understanding because the religion forms the customs, the laws, and the culture of the people.
2. When studying each nation in history, how do its customs, laws, and culture compare with the teachings of the Holy Bible?
3. With nations that were prosperous, were they prosperous because God was blessing the obedience of the people, or was He being patient with their disobedience, giving them time to repent?
4. When God’s judgment fell upon a nation, in what way were the people and their ruler disobedient to His law? (Oftentimes God blesses a nation in the areas where the people are obedient and, at the same time, brings judgments upon the people in the areas where they are disobedient. His judgments are used to bring them to repentance so that He will not have to pour out His full wrath and destroy them.)
5. In Bible history, God raised up two great conquering kings, Sennacherib of Assyria and Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and used them to punish the disobedience of the surrounding nations. In modern times, what conquering national leaders did God raise up to punish twentieth-century nations for their disobedience?
6. In analyzing the behavior of each great national leader, how did the policies and the actions of these men compare with the teachings of the Holy Bible? Were they righteous or unrighteous? Did they use their high office for selfish ambition or did they genuinely care about the good of their nation, or was it a combination of both?

7. In studying each major event of history, what were its primary causes and how do these causes compare with the moral teachings of the Holy Bible?
8. Also, what were the effects of each major event and can we see something of God's government and His purposes in what happened?
9. God not only created the universe, but He directs it as well. Ordinary as well as unique events are all under His control. This includes our own lives.
10. God's works of providence are always holy, wise, and powerful as He preserves and governs all His creatures and their actions.
11. Truth and righteousness will eventually prevail, whereas unrighteousness will be destroyed.
12. The godly sometimes suffer, but the Lord is always with His Christian people to comfort and help them.
13. We ought to pray for those who rule over the nations, asking God to either bring them to repentance or to rebuke them in His anger.
14. When God's laws conflict with men's teachings, we must obey God rather than men.
15. Keep in mind that not all history books are truthful or completely accurate in relating all the important facts. Therefore, wherever possible, we should study several histories instead of just one.

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A BIBLICAL VIEW OF GEOGRAPHY

And He made from one blood, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation.—Acts 17:26

THE PURPOSE

For man to rule over the earth as God has commanded, he must have a practical knowledge of science (God's physical laws over creation) and history (God's moral laws over men and nations). In both science and history, the study of geography plays an important part.

In the area of science, geography must begin with the Book of Genesis in the Holy Bible. With chapter one, God reveals that his creation consists of separate component parts, which when brought together form an interrelated and unified system of nature. In chapters six through eight, God tells us about His worldwide judgment upon mankind with the flood of Noah, which greatly changed the surface and appearance of the earth.

With this important key knowledge as our guide, we then proceed to study the great continents and oceans (which God has made), their particular characteristics, their many natural resources, the variety of climates and weather patterns, and God's ingenious ecological balance over all the earth.

Next, we take this important information to our study of history where we, again, go directly to the book of Genesis in the Holy Bible. In chapter ten we find the table of nations, which shows us the original divisions of mankind. In chapter eleven we learn that these divisions came about as a result of man's rebellion against God at the Tower of Babel. It was here that God confused the language into languages, causing the human race to separate, to move out, and to form into nations.

With this key knowledge, we are now ready to study the various nations, both ancient and modern. First, we note their locations, their natural resources, physical environments, and general climates (as all

of this has been planned by God). Then we see how these physical traits affect their individual economies, their position in world trade, their ability for military defense, and their independence of or dependence upon other nations.

Geography is thus a very important tool in the study of science and history. Like all other subjects, however, it must be firmly grounded in the Word of God if it is to be truly effective. And, like all other subjects, it is to be used by the people of God for His honor and glory, and for the advancement of His kingdom on earth.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

At the present time there are approximately 5 billion people on this earth, composed of distinct and separate races living in over 140 nations, on 6 different continents, under a variety of climate conditions, with varied natural resources, differing religions, economies, and governments, and speaking 5,000 different languages! When we stop to think about this, it boggles the mind. And we are forced to ask ourselves, “How has all this happened?”

1. *From One Language to Many Languages.* The Bible tells us that after the Great Flood, God commanded Noah and his descendants to “be fruitful and multiply” and to “populate the earth abundantly” (Gen 9:7). We are further told that “the whole earth used the same language” and that the family of mankind “journeyed east” and settled “in the land of Shinar” (Gen 11:1-2). However, instead of moving out and populating the earth as God had commanded, mankind rebelled against its Creator by building a city with a high tower (the Tower of Babel) with the intention of remaining in that one place only. Seeing the rebellion of the people, and acting for their own good, God confused their one language by changing it into many languages, and “scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth” (Gen 11:9).
2. *From One Race to Many “Races.”* Because of the confusion of the one language into many, the people were divided from one large family into many smaller families or nations. Consequently, when they married they would want to marry someone who spoke the same language. But by restricting themselves to only those who spoke the same language, they also restricted themselves genetically. In other words, instead of intermarriage in one large family/nation where the genetic characteristics remained widespread and very general, marriage was now restricted within much smaller family/nations where the individual and narrower genetic characteristics would predominate. As a result, each family/nation developed noticeable differences in skin color, hair texture, bone structure, facial appearances, height, and other physical characteristics.

This is why there are the so-called different “races.” In reality, however, all of us have descended from one common set of parents, namely, Adam and Eve. Therefore, all of us are of one race, the human race. We did not evolve from monkeys; God created man in His own image.

3. *From One Nation to Many Nations.* The Bible not only tells us about the divisions of mankind into many nations, it describes these divisions in detail. In chapter ten of the book of Genesis, God has given us what is known as the “table of nations.” This chapter begins with the three sons of Noah (Japheth, Ham, and Shem) and then proceeds to name their sons and grandsons in the order of their descent. As we study these names, we will recognize some of them from our study of ancient history, but many of them we will not. However, thanks to the patient work of church scholars in using the Bible, ancient history, modern archaeology, and linguistics, many of these original names have been traced to and identified with the names of nations with which we are more familiar.

The following is a partial list of nations from the descendants of Noah’s three sons—Japheth, Ham and Shem:

| Japheth | Ham | Shem |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Greece | Egypt | Persia |
| Carthage | Crete | Chaldea |
| Macedonia | Philistia | Assyria |
| Thrace | Phoenicia | Lydia |
| Media | Hittites | Syria |
| Germany | Canaan | Edom |
| Russia | Mari | Arabia |
| Denmark | Babylonia | Midian |
| Armenia | Ethiopia | Yemen |
| Spain | China | Israel |
| Cyprus | Mongolia | |
| India | Libya | |

By no means is this a complete list of all the nations named in the table of nations, but it does help to give us a general idea of how they were grouped.

4. *The Earth’s Climate and Topography.* Because of the great worldwide Flood (Genesis 7 and 8), both the earth’s climate and topography were greatly changed. Fossil remains (almost tropical-like vegetation) found everywhere throughout the world today (including the north and south

poles) testify that before the Flood, the earth had a universally warm climate, probably due to a water vapor canopy over the whole earth (the “waters above the firmament” mentioned in Genesis 1:6–7). After forty days and forty nights of rain (Gen 7:12), this global vapor insulation was permanently removed and the earth’s climate and weather conditions drastically altered.

In Genesis 8:1 we are told that God caused a tremendous “wind to pass over the earth” and that “the water subsided.” With the receding water undoubtedly great quantities of minerals were deposited all over the earth, from one location to another. Huge amounts of plant remains, under tremendous pressure and heat, formed our present-day coal beds. At the same time, Psalm 104:5–9 tells us that “the mountains rose” and “the valleys sank down,” which had to add further to the erosion and deposit of sediments already taking place. Thus the Great Flood provides an important key to our study and understanding of the earth’s climate and topography. It helps us to understand, for example, the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

Summary. The modern science of linguistics has traced the 5,000 languages spoken today back to 17 basic languages which cannot be further reduced. Along with this, the modern science of genetics is gathering increasing evidence that the whole human race has come from one common set of parents. The problem is that without the Holy Bible these facts make no sense. Only within the biblical framework of creation and the Tower of Babel do the pieces fit. The same is true also of the many nations and their various climates and natural resources. When seen within the framework of Scripture, the study of geography makes sense.

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A BIBLICAL VIEW OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.—1 Peter 2:13–14

THE PURPOSE

Because civil government enacts laws, it is concerned with deciding right and wrong. Right and wrong, however, have to do with morality, and morality is religious. This means that civil government, by its very nature, is a religious institution.

The truth of this can be seen in the Holy Bible. In Genesis 9:5-6, God places in the hands of man the judicial power to punish murder by death. Thus it was by God, and not man, that civil government was established and the power of the sword placed in its hand.

At Mount Sinai, through the prophet Moses, God gave to Israel an entire system of civil law and government. In the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, we see a complete system of law with due process, a federal system of government with three branches at each level, and a separation of powers with a system of checks and balances. (The *original* American system of government was patterned similarly after Israel.)

In Romans 13:1-7, the apostle Paul reminds us that civil government is a minister of God. Being a minister of God makes it directly accountable to Him for its administration of justice. Consequently, its proper role is to protect the good and to punish the evildoer, with good and evil always defined by God. We can see, therefore, that the study of political science must be grounded in the Word of God. To study civil law and civil government we need God's infallible standards in order to recognize truth from error, and justice from injustice.

As Christians we are to use this knowledge to become involved intelligently in the political process. As salt and light, we are to know

and to exercise our rights—to vote, and, as some of us are called, to occupy the positions of trust in the political realm. In so doing we are to be working to advance the kingdom of God on earth for His honor and glory.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

In our modern era, there is a great deal of confusion about the proper role of civil government. Because of this confusion, civil governments in many nations have assumed several of the duties that rightfully belong to the church. As a result, many nations today are experiencing serious difficulties because their systems of government are not in harmony with the Law of God. Therefore, to understand the proper roles of church government and civil government (church and state), we need to compare and contrast their main duties in relation to each other before God.

1. *The Relationship of Church and State.* Even though the functions of Church and State contrast one another, they have been designed by God to complement and to balance each other. This balance is essential if society is to enjoy the benefits of a godly order.

| THE CHURCH | THE STATE |
|--|---|
| 1. The Church is to be God's minister of <i>grace</i> . | 1. The State is to be God's minister of <i>justice</i> . |
| 2. The Church is to <i>expose evil</i> and encourage good; it is to be both salt and light. | 2. The State is to <i>restrain evil</i> and punish the evildoer; to defend those who do good. |
| 3. The Church is to carry out the work of Christ's Great Commission; <i>to preach</i> the Gospel of Salvation and <i>to teach</i> all that He has commanded (the whole Word of God). | 3. The State is <i>to preserve</i> the peace and <i>to protect</i> individual liberty, making it possible for the Church to carry out the work of the Great Commission. |
| 4. The Church has the task of <i>teaching</i> God's Law-Word. | 4. The State has the task of <i>enforcing</i> God's Law-Word. |
| 5. The Church is to be financed <i>by tithing</i> . | 5. The State is to be financed <i>by biblical taxing</i> . |
| 6. The Church is to administer the <i>ecclesiastical courts</i> to handle its internal legal affairs. | 6. The State is to operate the <i>civil courts</i> and administer civil and criminal proceedings. |

| | |
|---|--|
| 7. The Church is to handle <i>welfare</i> (the works of compassion in Christ's name and for His sake; a task in which all members of the church family—and various private and volunteer organizations—are to participate). | 7. The State is to handle <i>warfare</i> (to wield the sword to protect those who do good from those who do evil and, when necessary, to provide for the common defense against external enemies). |
| 8. The Church exercises the right of <i>excommunication</i> for those who are guilty of serious sins and remain unrepentant. | 8. The State exercises the right of <i>execution</i> for those who are guilty of capital crimes. |
| 9. The Church's work is <i>international</i> because of her responsibility to fulfill Christ's Great Commission throughout the world. | 9. The State's work is <i>national</i> because its police powers need to be checked and balanced through a worldwide system of independent nations. |

2. **Rights and Privileges.** All rights come from God and are based upon our responsibilities to God, and only God can take them away. However, any "rights" we receive from civil government are actually *privileges*! This is true because the laws that give us these "rights" can be repealed and the "rights" taken away.
3. **Law.** All true law originates from God and is revealed to us in the Holy Bible. Therefore, all of man's laws are to be patterned after God's Law.
4. **Responsibility.** It is the people who are ultimately responsible before God. If they do nothing when their rulers are breaking God's Law, then God punishes the whole nation because the people, by their silence, have become accomplices to the evil actions of their rulers.
5. **Taxation.** Civil government taxes the people in order to collect the money it needs to govern. This makes taxation the key instrument of its power and control. Therefore, to limit the power of civil government, the people must limit its power to tax.
6. **The Right to Self-Defense.** Due to man's sinful nature, each individual has the God-given right to self-defense. The individual right to self-defense is essential because without it the people are not able to protect and to secure all of their other God-given rights. Therefore, it is important to remember that in a dictatorship only the police and the military are permitted to have firearms.
7. **Education.** Whoever trains children in the basic rules, values, and goals of a society controls the future. This is why God has placed the responsibility for educating children in the hands of their parents—not the Church, and not the State.

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A BIBLICAL VIEW OF ECONOMICS

When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? Yet Thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and dost crown him with glory and majesty! Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet.—Psalm 8:3–6

For man to rule over the earth as God has commanded, he must be free to develop its natural resources. To do this, God has given him the right to private property, the right to choose his own occupation, the right to make a profit, and the right to decide how his earnings should be spent.

To exercise these God-given rights, however, man needs an economic system that is designed to serve the needs of everyone. Such an economic system must be based upon competition and the risks of the marketplace. Both competition and the element of risk force sellers to use their skills and economic resources more carefully, which produces a higher quality of goods and services at very reasonable prices to their customers.

But material abundance is possible only through productive harmony in the marketplace. And productive harmony is possible only through the grace of God and His Law working in the hearts and minds of men. To the extent that men understand and obey God's Law in the economic realm, they will respect each other's property, not steal from or cheat one another, abide by contracts, and, when elected to public office, not use the power they have been granted for their own selfish purposes.

Contrary to much modern belief, it is not the duty of civil government to regulate the economy. God's laws over men and nature already do that. The proper role of civil government is to serve as a neutral referee, praising good and punishing infractions of God's Law in the marketplace.

Therefore, it is the duty of all Christians to study economics using the Word of God. We are then to apply the lessons learned not only in our own homes but in all areas of the economy. In so doing we will be working to advance the kingdom of God on earth for His honor and glory.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

The following are examples of how God's Word applies to the study of economics.

1. ***The Right to Private Property.*** Because God is the Creator, all property rightfully belongs to Him. When God created man, however, He delegated to each person the responsibility of acting as a steward of His property. Therefore, since each person is responsible to God for his own stewardship, each has the right to govern his own area of responsibility. This makes individual stewardship the basis for the right to private property.
2. ***The Family and Private Property.*** When God commanded man to "be fruitful and multiply, and to fill the earth and subdue it," He instituted marriage and the family as the means of fulfilling this command. In so doing, God made the family the primary institution of man's stewardship. Thus the right to private property is not limited to individual stewardship but extends to the family as well.
3. ***Private Property Protected by God's Law.*** In the Ten Commandments, private property is protected by the eighth and tenth commandments: "You shall not steal," and "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."
4. ***The Free Enterprise System.*** Because man is responsible to God for his stewardship, he has a right to be free to make his own decisions. Therefore he must be free in the marketplace to buy and sell, with all exchanges being completely voluntary. This makes the God-given right to voluntary exchange the basis for the free enterprise system.
5. ***Free Enterprise Capitalism.*** In a Bible-based free enterprise system, each family and business carefully manages its God-given financial resources, avoiding debt whenever possible, and, through honest, hard work and savings, labors together to produce a growing economy with a high standard of living. From honest, hard work and savings comes capital accumulation, which makes possible capital investment, which in turn, builds a strong and relatively debt-free economy.
6. ***Covetousness and Debt.*** When a nation has a high level of personal and public debt, this shows that the people are very covetous. Being covetous, they are not content to work for prosperity using God's economic program (free enterprise capitalism), but are willing to sell them-

selves and their children into debt, mortgaging their future for today. Eventually, such a nation falls under God's righteous judgment and suffers economic hardship.

7. **God's Law for Limiting Debt.** Since each man's life belongs to God, he cannot forfeit control of his life to other men through debt. Because debt is potentially a form of slavery, and because man is to remain free in order to serve God, debt is to be regulated according to God's Sabbath Law (Deut 15:1–4). Under this law, all debt must be limited to no more than six years, with the seventh year a Sabbath year of release. If men and nations were obedient to this law, we would not have the worldwide debt and economic confusion that we face today.
8. **God's Law for Business.** The basis of God's law for business is God's law for honest weights and measures (Lev 19:35–36; Deut 25:13–16). This law commands us to be honest about the quality of our products and services. Whether we are buying, selling, or advertising, as stewards of God's resources, we are to be honest and trustworthy in our dealings with others.
9. **God's Law for Money and Banking.** God's Law for honest weights and measures (Lev. 19:35–36; Deut. 25: 13–16) also pertains to money and banking. A nation's money supply should not consist of debt paper (bills of credit) or unbacked currency issued by the civil government or by the banks. This is fraud. Instead, money should be based upon substance (gold, silver, etc.) according to a consistent weight and fineness. Therefore, when paper money is used in circulation, it should always be backed by substance (gold, silver, etc.) and fully redeemable upon demand.

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10

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF ART AND MUSIC

As for the house which King Solomon built for the Lord ... he carved all the walls of the house...with carved engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers.—1 Kings 6:2, 29

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.—Colossians 3:16

THE PURPOSE

Of the five senses that God has given us, the two that influence our minds and hearts the most are the eyes and the ears. Through our eyes we view the world around us and through our ears we hear its sounds. The information we receive through these two senses makes a direct impression upon our thinking and our feelings.

This is especially true of art and music. For with art we see and with music we hear, and both make impressions upon our minds and hearts. Consequently, art and music are channels of expression. They express the thoughts and emotions of an author, which, in turn, are shared with his audience. This makes art and music forms of religious fellowship. Religious because thoughts and emotions are always moral, and fellowship because of the sharing between author and audience.

For the Christian this imposes a serious responsibility. It means we are to avoid art and music that promote thoughts and emotions contrary to the Word of God. For the Scripture says, “What fellowship has light with darkness?” (2 Cor 6:14) Instead we are to enjoy art that reflects the glory of God’s creation and music that truly lifts the spirits of its listeners. And we are to use our talents in these art forms in harmony with God’s truth and morality.

Furthermore, since art and music are channels of expression, Christians should use them, either directly or indirectly, to promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Law of God. In so doing, we will be working to advance the kingdom of God on earth for His honor and glory.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

Art and music are exclusively the creations of God and not man. Therefore, when an artist paints a picture or a musician composes a song, each is using his God-given talent to reveal what God has already created. For example, when a musician composes a new song, he does not create something that never existed before; rather, he discovers a musical combination that has existed since the beginning of time and then develops it into a song. Every time he performs his musical composition, he is actually revealing to his audience the genius of the Original Composer, namely, God.

Because art and music express thoughts and emotions, they exert a moral influence on our behavior. Because of this, we need to understand their basic mechanics and how to use them in harmony with God's Word.

ART

Art is composed of three basic elements: subject, color, and form. To understand how paintings affect us, we need to know how the elements of subject, color, and form relate to us.

1. **Subject.** The subject corresponds to the mind because it is used by the artist to express an idea. Therefore, to be constructive, the subject should always be rational and recognizable. For example, a painting that pictures a herd of sheep in a meadow or a young boy playing with his dog is both rational and recognizable. This is important because if a painting is not recognizable, communication between the artist and the viewer is either non-existent or subliminal, that is, it is meant to manipulate the thinking of the viewer without his knowledge. Also, if a painting is not rational, the subject is not in harmony with the reality of God's world. This too is important because irrationalism is a form of insanity which leads the viewer away from God's reality.
2. **Color.** Color corresponds to the emotions. It creates the mood and influences the state of mind expressed in the subject. Therefore, color has a psychological dimension; for example, red, orange, and yellow communicate warmth, while blue, green, and purple communicate coolness. Generally the warm colors seem to advance and the cool colors to

recede, thus giving the appearance of dimension. Color also affects our emotions; the warm colors tend to stimulate and excite, whereas the cool colors tend to make calm and tranquil.

3. **Form.** Form corresponds to proportion, and proportion is the beauty of a painting that results from the symmetrical balance and consistency of the various parts in size, shape, and position. For example, a picture of a man who has a small head, a large trunk, one arm bigger than the other, and one leg shorter than the other would be a picture out of proportion. This is true because we live in a created world where God has already determined what proper proportion is. Due to the effects of sin, however, we do see certain things in nature that are not in their proper proportion, but this condition is not normal to God's creation.

MUSIC

Music is composed of three basic elements: melody, harmony, and rhythm. To properly understand music and how it affects us, we need to know how melody, harmony, and rhythm relate to us.

1. **Melody.** Melody corresponds to the mind because it consists of a series of related tones that express a musical idea. For this reason, when a composer writes lyrics to a song, he does not write them to the harmony or the rhythm, but to the melody. Because lyrics are expressions of thought, they help to express the musical idea (an expression of the mind), which is contained in the melody.
2. **Harmony.** Harmony corresponds to the emotions. It creates the mood and colors the state of mind expressed in the melody. Harmony consists primarily of major and minor chords. The major chords are more positive and give a feeling of certainty, happiness, or joy, whereas the minor chords are more negative and give a feeling of uncertainty, sadness, or even depression. There are mixtures in between, of course, but this is the primary structure.
3. **Rhythm.** Rhythm corresponds to the senses. For example, when people dance, they do not dance to the melody or the harmony, but to the rhythm. Also rhythm affects the delivery of the melody and harmony. When music is written, the melody and harmony follow the order of movement which is determined by the number of beats per measure. Then certain beats are accented, which furthers the impact of the melody and harmony on the listener. And finally, the tempo determines how fast or how slow a piece is performed, which can affect a person's pulse rate and adrenaline. (Example: a person who listens to the lyrics of a song performed at 72 beats per minute [the human pulse rate] will be more susceptible to its message than otherwise.)

Conclusion. Although the study of art and music goes way beyond the three basic elements, the above descriptions do provide us with enough information to appreciate the power and influence of these

two art forms for good or evil. As Christians we should study the mechanics of art and music with the goal of learning how to use them in accordance with the Word of God. We should then work to develop our God-given potential in these arts for the purpose of bringing a Christian influence upon our culture.

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11

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

For Thou didst form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.—Psalm 139:13–14

THE PURPOSE

The purpose of physical education is not to produce great athletes, but to cultivate well-rounded Christian men and women. To do this, training and discipline are required in four major areas.

First, it is important to remember that the body is the vehicle of the soul. A healthy body greatly facilitates the work of the soul in its responsibilities before God. Therefore, a proper diet (Gen 1:29; 9:3–4), exercise, and rest are essential to maintaining good health.

Second, due to sin we are all naturally inclined toward laziness. Consequently, sports competition plays an important part in developing self-discipline. Through competition we learn from others, are challenged by others, and thereby are compelled to develop our God-given potential.

Third, through sports competition we are to learn the importance of playing by the rules, accepting direction from those in authority, using our skills in harmony with our teammates, and being gracious in victory as well as in defeat. In short, we are to learn to compete aggressively but lawfully, with respect for others (our opponents and teammates), whether we win or lose.

And finally, physical education helps to prepare us for responsible leadership. As we learn to overcome pride, envy, hostility, contempt, and selfish ambition with godly love, patience, humility, kindness, and perseverance, we will be laying an indispensable foundation for true Christian leadership.

We are then to use the self-control we have gained to be leaders for Christ in our chosen callings. And as servants of God in the

service of others, we are to exercise our leadership to advance God's kingdom on earth for his honor and glory.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

The training received in the area of physical education can hold unique advantages for the Christian student with regard to both physical and spiritual growth. Under the proper guidance, the lessons learned can produce a Christian discipline which can be applied in many other areas and that will last a lifetime.

The following are expansions on key ideas mentioned above with some suggestions for their practical application.

1. **Competition.** Students need to learn that the desire to compete is not wrong. Rather, it is a natural desire implanted by God to bring about personal growth in our youth and success in later life. Competition helps the young to discover what they are good at and causes them to measure their progress by the setting of goals. It reveals to the individual his strengths and weaknesses, both physical and moral, and enables him to learn what kind of person he is. Moreover, his behavior in competition should demonstrate to his teacher what his needs are for proper growth and correction.

Example: In competition, if a student is easily provoked, impatient, arrogant, deceptive, or unprincipled, these are expressions of self-centeredness and moral immaturity. The student must learn to grow in self-control and fair play under stress and pressure. Self-control and fair play are Christian disciplines that are needed in all areas of life.

2. **Teamwork.** The Christian is to learn to see himself as an *individual/member* of the team. As an *individual*, he sees that he has certain talents and abilities to contribute to the team. However, as a *member*, he must learn to use his talents and abilities in harmony with those of his teammates. Therefore, he learns that he is not to be self-serving, but to be supportive of the success of the team. This lesson is essential, not only for success in other areas of life, but especially for those who rise to positions of leadership.
3. **Winning.** During Jesus' ministry on earth, His heavenly Father twice said of Him: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased" (Matt 3:17; 17:5). Since Jesus was God's Messiah sent to the people of God, one might think that God was pleased with how well the nation of Israel was responding to the ministry of His Son. But this was not the case. In the eyes of the world Jesus was a great failure. Not only did Israel reject His message and His ministry; they condemned Him to death on a cross.

With what, then, was His heavenly Father pleased? The answer is given in the words of Jesus Himself: "For I have come down from heaven, not

to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me” (John 6:38). In other words, victory was to be achieved by following His Father’s will and not His own—a victory over sin, Satan, and death. And with this victory would come His ascension into heaven to be seated at the right hand of God with *complete authority* in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18).

Because of this authority, each Christian can have confidence in his own victory. This means that day-to-day living takes on a new dimension. As we face various life challenges, we learn how to face them God’s way and not our own way. In so doing, we develop life skills in harmony with God’s Word, to His honor and glory.

In the area of sports this has special significance. For example, in ancient Rome competitive sports were often gruesome and bloody, and carried on to satisfy the blood lust of the crowd. But as the Christian religion gained increasing acceptance, competitive sports became more humane with the emphasis upon skill demonstrated in a sportsmanlike way.

Today this is the job of the Christian. As both salt and light, we are to hold up God’s rules of righteousness and His standards of excellence as the model for all of sports. For the message of the Christian should always be that, although winning is very important, *how* you win is even more important!

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Bob Jones University Press, *The Christian Teaching of Physical Education*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1983.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

As mentioned in a previous chapter, begin your family worship time with prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. Instruct your children to include the basic elements of prayer when they pray. They are fourfold in nature:

1. Adoration—praise to God
2. Confession—repentance of sin
3. Petition—specific requests
4. Gratitude—thanksgiving to God

Rev. Morris McDonald, in his excellent booklet *Christ For America*, suggests variety in prayer:

1. Let each one pray for a request.
2. Let each one pray for the one seated on his right.
3. Let each pray for a particular part of the work of the Church.
4. On some days, pray only prayers of thanks without requests.
5. Occasionally let everyone pray a one-line prayer.
6. Have each person pray for a missionary by name.
7. Use a time of silent prayer.

Reading aloud from the Bible as a family (everyone reading together) is also recommended. This was a custom in the early church, and was once the tradition in most American homes. Begin with the Psalms and Proverbs, or the gospels and the apostolic letters.

Another good idea is to incorporate a short time of music. Singing a hymn or listening to sacred music on tape, record, or CD helps stimulate interest. Also, if you have pre-school or kindergarten children, you might tell a short Bible story from a children's Bible story book several times each week. Bible and catechism memorization are important as well.

On an occasional basis, have a Bible quiz (available at Christian bookstores), or draw a picture of something you have read in the Scriptures. Some families even like to act out a story, and it is good training in both drama and writing. An offering might be taken once a week to help someone who is needy. A short review of the Sunday school lesson or the pastor's sermon is also of value.

How much time will all of this take? Well, that all depends on your planning, and how much time you set aside for this purpose. The more time, the better. Fifteen minutes would seem to be a minimum, and thirty minutes (as already noted) is ideal. As parents make things interesting, the time will pass very quickly.

“A good family life is never an accident,” someone wrote. “It is an achievement.” And so it is with family worship. In order to keep interest and expectations high, fathers must be enthusiastic. The important thing is planning—planning, planning, planning! Everything should be coordinated in advance. Goals should be set even as in every other area of life. Ask God for His help.

Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it—*Proverbs 22:6*

MAY GOD BLESS YOU IN THIS HIGH AND HOLY CALLING!

*Happy the home when God is there,
And love fills every breast;
When one their wish, and one their prayer
And one their heavenly rest.*

*Happy the home where prayer is heard,
And praise is wont to rise,
Where parents love the sacred Word,
That makes us truly wise.*

Henry Ware, Jr. 1794–1843

THE SAFETYNET PLAN—HELP FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY!

As Christian parents we want our children to be exposed to Christian truth. In every area of their studies—literature, science, government, history, etc.—we want them to understand God’s perspective. We want them to develop a truly Christian worldview of life. Whether your children are in a public, private, or home school, this book will help you. The SafetyNet Plan, incorporated into your family devotions, will help transform your children’s thinking. Over and over we hear the words, “the decline of the American family.” As parents, we must remedy the situation. It is our God-given responsibility.

Dr. Paul D. Lindstrom—Recognized as one of the pioneers of the home school movement, Dr. Lindstrom (1939–2002) served for a number of years as Superintendent of Schools of the Christian Liberty Academy School System—the *CLASS* home school program. Many have known him as the former National Chairman of the Remember The Pueblo Committee and for his international efforts to secure the release of missionaries, POWs, and MIAs in southeast Asia. Dr. Lindstrom also helped to establish the nationally acclaimed Christian Liberty Academy (K–12th grades) in 1968 and began to organize the home school movement in 1969. He helped in starting Christian schools around the world, served as a spokesman at government hearings, gave expert testimony in court cases, and was widely interviewed by all major news organizations. After graduation from the University of Illinois and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, “Pastor Paul” taught in the Chicago public schools. Continuing with his own studies, Dr. Lindstrom received his Doctor of Education degree in 1995. Having traveled extensively in the Middle East, he authored the book, *Armageddon: The Middle East Muddle*. His book entitled *4 Days in May* deals with the anti-abortion protest of Operation Rescue. In September 1988, he began a national radio program, “There’s No Place Like Home.” He is survived by his wife Florie, four children, and twenty grandchildren.

Tom Parent—With an educational background in music, Tom Parent worked in the record business for fourteen years in the area of artist development, and for over twenty years was associated with Christian Liberty Academy School System where he served as Director of Advertising and Administrator of Customer Service. With special interest in the areas of law and government, Mr. Parent authored *The Constitutional Militia and the Second Amendment* and *Our Christian Heritage of Local Self-Government*. He is married and has four children and thirteen grandchildren.



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