

Down the Road

by Patch Blakey

“How much longer, Daddy?”

I remember as a young boy asking my dad this question when the family was traveling on a long road trip. A generation later, I can easily remember my own children in our car when they were young asking this question of me and their mom. Children grow impatient, frustrated, and discouraged when they can't see down the road to the final destination, and have little sense of where they are on the journey.

Sometimes we are prone to get impatient or frustrated or discouraged with our labors in classical Christian education. We may find ourselves, like the saints of old, asking, “How long, O Lord?”

When Jesus Christ was resurrected following His violent crucifixion two thousand years ago, He could have easily spoken a word and made everything right from that moment on. But He didn't. It's been two millennia since then and the twelve disciples have now become perhaps a couple billion believers, still struggling to live faithfully day to day in the hope of seeing righteousness exalted and wickedness destroyed. The struggle to persevere can be long, tiring, frustrating at times, and yes, even discouraging. The strong temptation, to put this in a sports analogy, is to step off the playing field and watch the game from the sidelines.

It's not easy resurrecting an educational approach that has been lost for several generations. To state it another way, it's a lot of hard work. But we don't pursue this labor out of a fruitless sense of asceticism. There is a real

objective, and we desire to see it fulfilled, if maybe only in part, in our lifetimes. Isaiah described the distant future in these terms, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,

for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9). At the time Isaiah was divinely inspired to write this prophecy, the invasion of Judah by the Babylonians and the subsequent 70-year exile of the Jews was still a generation or two away.

Again, looking to the then-distant future, the prophet Malachi wrote, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse” (Malachi 4:5-6). Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of this prophecy and we are still seeing the results of it being worked out in our own day with the hearts of the fathers being turned to their children as more and more parents recognize their God-given responsibility to educate their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. These parents understand that their children need a Christian education—and not only a Christian education—but the best possible Christian education, which ACCS believes is a classical Christian education. As children see their parents making sacrifices so that they can have such a rich educational experience, their hearts are turning towards their parents for all the love that their parents have

bestowed on them in providing such a wonderful opportunity.

Lord willing, this vision will not end with the next generation, but will be carried on and enhanced by them for their children, and so on for generations to come until the prophecy of Isaiah mentioned above is practically realized. This is what we are looking for down the road. This is our vision of the future. It begins with our children and carries on for a thousand generations.

But there is a cost. We, as the saints of old, have to act in faith, and that can be a painful journey. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). We must use our eyes of faith to see what God sees when, as yet, it just isn't visible. We must persevere despite our frail sinfulness, our temptation to quit, despite our impatience, frustrations, and discouragement. We need to remember the lesson that Jesus taught His disciples when he fed the 5,000. We are responsible, but incapable. He will use what little we bring Him to get the job done, and done in such a way that there is an excess of abundance in the end (Luke 9:10-16). As Peter wrote, “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13).

I am thankful to the authors who have contributed to this issue of *Classis* and am confident that they will encourage you to persevere with hope on this difficult journey. Thank you for your faithful labors!

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