

“SINE DOCTRINA VITA EST QUASI MORTIS IMAGO”

VOLUME XXIV NUMBER III

CLASSIS

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF CLASSICAL & CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

OCTOBER, 2017

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ETERNITY IN A SPAN

by Matt Whitling, Logos School

This is a transcription of Matt's plenary address given June 24, 2017 at the Repairing the Ruins Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Part of my job this morning is to remind you of a few things. When we heard Doug Wilson speak yesterday, a lot of his thrust was: *Remember. Don't forget.* In order to be thankful you need to remember those things which we should be thankful for. And so I want to start with just a little bit of context for who you are, where you fit, and God's plan for [the] education of his children.

The basics are simply this: when God gives children to parents, to a husband and a wife, that little person is a gift from Him; that child is His, and, in a very real sense, He's loaning that little person to those parents for sixty years maybe. The normal course of events is that you die before your kids do—it doesn't always happen that way—but the Lord blesses you with this little person and there are strings attached. "Number One," He says, "This little person is Mine and I'm giving him to you." It's like Christmas and [they are] a present. You bring a present down and think it's been unwrapped [but when] you look at this little person, the Lord says, "Just wait!" You're looking at it and you have no idea the adventures they're going to take you on. The Lord says, "This little person is Mine; the strings are [to] bring him up in the

nurture and admonition of . . . Me."

And it makes all the sense in the world. It's God's child. God wants that child to love and know and fear Him. So this is the beginning of what we could call education—or somebody might say discipleship or evangelism. It's the Great Commission—you are fulfilling the Great Commission with this gift that God has given to you. And as we start to realize what it means—that the nurture and admonition of the Lord, or the *paideia* of God, is what God has commanded parents to give to their children—the more we start to grasp what that means. This is God's child—how high is the bar for the quality of education? You're preparing this little person to reign.

The New Testament says, "Don't you know that you will judge the angels?" (1 Cor. 6:3) And you're raising this little person to do that. This is a prince in the kingdom of God, who will reign with his Father, and the implications are far-reaching. As a father, when I look at my kids and I hear that command from my heavenly Father and I say, "Yes sir," my next response is, "Help. Help me to be . . . fitting." I mean we're trying

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to provide an education that fits their actual position in relation to their heavenly Father, and I know I can't do it on my own. So for Christian parents to raise their kids faithfully they need tools; they need resources. A wise parent, after the panic has subsided, starts looking around and thinking, "I've got the most important job in the world."

People [say things like], "You may be raising a senator or you may be educating the President of the United States" (or whatever the top of the pile is in your mind). It really is different. It's more personal. You are raising *God's child*. *His* kid. And regardless of whether God calls him to run a backhoe or work at McDonalds, whatever vocation he has for the 80 years that he's here on earth, this little person is a prince in the Kingdom of God. So you start to realize that we need resources in order to raise him well.

And that's where you come in. Schools have not been given children directly by God. God doesn't say, "I'm going to give this group of kids to that particular institution so that institution can raise them." That's not the way it works. Individual kids are given to individual families and those parents who need help look for a school to help serve them.

At Logos, we have steps going down from our building to the main parking lot, two rows of steps, and in our little mental image there, I picture all fifty of our teachers standing on those steps dressed up because [we are] preparing to educate God's children this year. So we brush our teeth and we take a shower in the morning and try to get ourselves ready for this. And we're standing on the steps with a little white towel over our arm and when parents come to our school we say, "Can we serve you?" We are servants of parents as they fulfill what I think is the most important calling in the world and possibly the most challenging to do well.

And so I'm trying to paint a picture that shows you the high calling of parenting and the high calling of being a teacher. And I'm starting with the fact you are

servants. You work really hard for parents as they keep covenant with God. Your job is to be their lackey. "Yes, sir. I want you to love this place. I want you to know that I'm working my tail off for you." And I want my teachers to see that when you come to Logos School, our goal is not that you'll come into a place where we tell you your place and say, "We're the educational professionals here, and therefore we're going to dictate to you what your job is." It's a very different perspective that we have. We see God the Father giving parents commands and we see those parents saying, "Yes, sir, we're going to do that," and coming to us and saying, "Help me do that. Help me keep covenant with the Lord my God."

I've seen some young people at Logos School where I think, "They should just be a teacher." There's an eleventh-grade boy who's helped me coach elementary basketball at lunchtime, and I watch him work with the students, and I think, "He should just be a teacher." It's very difficult for a junior in high school, a young man who's in high school, to imagine himself becoming a third grade teacher or a fifth-grade teacher, because the polish doesn't shine as much as it does in other vocations. Imagine a ten-year reunion and you come back and you're talking to someone who is a dentist (and, just to remind you, dentists are people who pick at teeth all day). They're like those birds on the hippopotamus. [Dentistry] is a lawful vocation and the Lord calls people to do it. But in your mind, as you think through the role that you have in Christ as you serve these parents, and you talk to somebody who's a dentist, you should think, and not say, "That's wonderful. What you do is great. [But] I *make* dentists." And somebody says, "I'm an engineer—I design bridges—or I design roads" or whatever it happens to be, and in your mind just think: I design *engineers*. I influence the affections of humans.

If you're a mom at the ten-year reunion, and you've got three kids, and you're talking to the dentist or whoever it happens to be and you say, "I graduated from college and I have three kids" or "I have five kids," . . .

those are *souls* that you have made. By the grace of God you have created humans and you're raising them and you are ordering their affections, you're teaching them what to love and what to hate, how to do those things. And again, when you look at it, you are people-makers. Teachers are people-shapers.

It's funny that oftentimes we think that's not a noble thing to do, [but] it's hard to imagine a higher calling than that—souls that will always be around. I've learned over the past 24 years at Logos [that if] you go to a small town and you stay long enough, you can see the generations go through and pass by. So when you go to work in the morning during the school year you should just think, "Alright, today I'm going to create some board members for Logos School." And we [at Logos] can actually see it because four of our ten board members are alums. They graduated from the school. I had the privilege of coaching all four of them.

So we're going to practice with you. What are we doing today? Well, we're going to make some board members. We're going to make your boss. Or [maybe it's] the next day, and you need a little encouragement and you think, "Today I'm creating and shaping my children's teachers. This coming year seven of our teachers at Logos School are alums. So they were in our classes. They were our students for years. They graduated and they came back. If you're one of those teachers that taught one of those teachers, you were preparing your grandchild's teachers. "Just spend a year with my grandson, spend a year with my granddaughter. Teach them what I taught you." For us, there are seven of those.

Or you go to school and you think, "Today I'm creating more Logos parents." For us, last year, a fifth of our students were alum kids. So if you're in the hallway and you see five students just ask, "Which one of your parents graduated from Logos School?" 1 in 5. This coming year it looks like we'll be closer to a fourth—so approaching 100 students out of 400 kids. The work that we're doing during the day [is] marketing. Look at

your classes—are you advertising to your constituents? They're here! They're third graders right now! Just wait a few years!

One of the exciting things for me is, my son Jed is one [of those seven teachers]. He was hired just recently. He's going to be our AD this year and half-time fourth-grade teacher. And you can't imagine the delight of being able to work with him, to go to work with Jed again. [. . .]

When Jed was in first grade he received his first office visit. And I was not the principal at that time, Larry Stevenson was. Jed was taking a spelling test—and spelling was challenging for him. The teacher says the word, [Jed] gets it right, and he took the spelling test. Gets done, passes it in, teacher grades it at recess, [and] Jed gets his back: 100%.

He was so excited. [He] went to his teacher at lunchtime, dropped the paper, and said, "Did you see?"

And she looked at him and said, "Jed, you got a hundred percent! You must have worked so hard this week!"

"Nope!"

And she said, "What do you mean?"

"Wrote the words down before the test!"

That's kind of quintessential Jed—what you see is what you get. And he was not confessing anything. He had played this game for a number of weeks and he was having a hard time figuring out how everybody else was being so successful. Finally he [had] realized the difference, and solved the problem and was proud not just of the hundred percent; he was proud that he had figured out the system!

He went on to unpack it for his teacher and [she] said, "Oh no, we need to go talk to Mr. Stevenson!" And so they went down—Jed's first office visit. Larry spanked him! Was Larry thinking, "Here's a little staff development right now"? That's really what was taking place! He's thinking, "Okay, we've got a future administrator—Jed—and right now, here's the professional plan!" And that's exactly what it was—

forming the affections.

Jed only had one other office visit, 8th grade. 8th grade, Jed's in class, teacher's talking, turns around to write something on the board, friend of Jed's next to him. [As] soon as the teacher turns around, [Jed's] friend flips the teacher off. Hopefully this can be an encouragement to you. Some of you come to the conference and think, "Logos School—I mean the school culture must just be . . . They don't sin at that place!" We sin *just fine*.

So Jed looks at this kid—he's got his finger up—and he looks back at the teacher, and the teacher turns around—finger goes down. And the teacher talks a bit, turns around and writes something on the board and the kid does it again—flips the teacher off. And it didn't take that long [before] Jed had a plan. [The] teacher turned around, and finger went down, and then Jed was ready. Next time the teacher turned around and the finger went down, [Jed] leaned over his desk and just punched him right in the nose, and pushed his nose into the side of his cheek. And when the teacher turned around, everything had changed.

It sounds like this heroic thing and everything goes right after that, but it wasn't really great for a while, because Jed had an office visit at that point. I abstained because he was my son, so I pushed it to my boss to handle it. Jed's not a man of many words, so in the office not a lot of the details came out; he had to apologize for punching the kid in the face and making him bleed during class which is not a nice thing to do. But then afterward as we debriefed and I heard the details, I just thought, "Silver dollar, Jed." I didn't know what else to do. I just said, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Sometimes when we hear George Grant say—and it's so encouraging and motivating—"Go change the world," we think, "Yes, do that!" And if you're like me you get to Saturday—and I love the ACCS conference—but the part I love best is going home. I'm just ready. And I want to be faithful right now [...] and then we're on the plane, we're going home, we're going to hug our wives and tickle

our kids and just spend time with our families because home is where we belong. [But] sometimes there's a mom and she thinks, "I'm not changing the world, I'm changing diapers," or "I'm changing *laundry* again." It's kind of the monotony. I believe that some of the most effective and profound ways that you change the world are pedestrian. It's the little things. Love your kids well. And sometimes it's hard because we're short-sighted and we just see what's in front of us, we just see the little picture. I was reading this morning in Genesis 22 where God says to Abraham, "I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies." (Gen. 22:17 ESV) It is one grain at a time. And in this passage God says, "Look up, you're at the beach, look at the shore, count them." And we say, "Okay, I see it."

I walked into the conference a couple days ago, and a friend said, "Is it always this big?"

And I said, "Yeah, it's usually something like this." It looks like this: grains. But when you get home, you're looking at one grain at a time. Your job is to be faithful with one grain at a time, with the pedestrian jobs that God has given you. Do the little things well.

Last night I was checking emails and I've been convicted because I told the Leaders Day [session on] Wednesday, "Eleven hours. I've got eleven hours to turn emails around. So I'm checking my email, and had a young lady email [me]. She writes, "Mr. Whitling! This is 'Susie Q' I'm married, and I have kids, and I live in a different town and I found this classical Christian school. Do you know anything about it?" So I read the email and all I can think of is black garbage bags. Because I had this little 8-year-old girl years ago.

My second or third year of teaching third grade, this little girl, big blue eyes, comes in with this large object with two black garbage bags, one on either side. And she brought it in and she said, "Mr. Whitling, you're never going to guess what I've got inside these bags."

Now, I was pretty new to Northern Idaho, and it [the object] was big. I looked at it and said, “I don’t know! What do you have?” And she said, “It’s show and tell! It’s show and tell today, and I’m on! Can I go?” And I said, “Please, go!” So she goes to the front of the class and says, “Guys, you’re never going to believe what I have inside this bag.” And so we’re all sitting up, straight and tall, and she opens up one side of the bag, and all I saw was a bloody stump. And she peeled back the bag—it’s just *hair*. Hair, all brown, and then a big hoof at the end. And the bags kind of fall on the floor and she’s holding this bloody stump with a leg—she’s got an elk leg in her hands. And I’m from Central California, right? And I just thought, “Is this *legal*?”

She brings it in and she says, “Guys, this morning we were driving in and my papa sees forty elk in our front pasture.” And he stopped and shot one before school and hung it up in the barn, and she asked if she could bring the leg to show and tell. And she looks at me and she says, “Can I pass it around?” And I said, “No, don’t, maybe just . . . walk it around.” And she did! She walked it, and we were all petting it, and it was like a “Welcome to Northern Idaho, Mr. Whitling” moment. And there were a few like that.

But it was *that girl*, last night. She’s typing away, “So I’m married, and I’ve got these kids and I want to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and I want a school that’s like Logos.” So she’s asking, “Is this [school] good? Are my kids going to receive something like I received? Is that the sort of thing that we’re looking for?” And you’re just looking at a grain, just one grain. And the Lord says, “Get counting.”

So I just want to encourage you. First, the interruptions in your day. For me, what does an interruption look like? It’s usually an office visit, or a parent that’s not happy, or whatever it happens to be. Those are not things I put on my calendar. [And] I’m pretty tied to Google calendar. I look at it, I think, every 23 seconds. Every time I flinch I check my email, I check my calendar, check my email,

check my calendar. That’s why I have a really hard time thinking in my office. Because when I get in my office I just keep flinching and I just look and I try to think about something for longer than 20 seconds and I can’t. I just look back at the calendar.

You don’t put office visits on. You don’t know when that’s going to happen. You’re just loving your kids at home this summer, and you don’t plan for the sin to take place. It just happens. And then you’re in the moment with that little grain of sand. Just realize that the way you handle those interruptions is staff development, it’s the professional plan, it is shaping culture—it’s changing the world. And as you change those diapers, do it to the glory of God.

When you get home today go and serve. Dads, especially when you get home to your house, you’ve got to kiss and hug everybody. Check the sink—are there dishes that need to be done? Mow your lawn. If you have to, spank somebody that needs a spanking, hug someone that needs a hug. Do those things and just think, “It’s what God’s called me to do. What I’m doing, I’m going to do it as for the Lord.” You are transforming the place where you live.

So how do we do it well? We’re talking about serving parents and being good servants and changing the world. Over the course of years of ACCS conferences we have focused on different things at different times. And one of our focuses has been, years ago maybe, you could sum it up by saying, “Ideas have consequences.” (Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, USA: University of Chicago Press, 1984) Or you could say, “Hey, that’s just 2 Corinthians 10, ‘take every thought captive,’ or Romans 12, ‘renewing our minds’ or ‘thinking God’s thoughts after Him.’ ” Whatever the passage or book title is, the focus has been, “Thinking the right thoughts is important.” Other years you could say our focus for these years has been, “Worship has consequences.” And if you needed a book title, [there’s] G.K. Beale’s, *We Become What We Worship*. And we agree with that and

we see it in Psalm 115: “those who make them become like them” or Isaiah 6, “people that have blind eyes and deaf ears.” And the focus has been worshipping God right and how it transforms a person.

And this year is different. This year the focus is, “What you love has consequences. Who you love has consequences.” It’s all about the affections. So it may make you think of *Desiring God* by John Piper or it may make you think of James Smith’s *You Are What You Love*. Or Psalm 37: “Delight yourself in the Lord.” But we’ve been trying to focus on cultivating our affections or loving well. So that’s what I want to turn our attention to for the remainder of our time—simply that.

And so first I want to try to define what I mean by *affections*. C.S. Lewis said there’s your head which is your reason, there is the chest—or your heart—which represents your affections, the things that you think, the things that you love, and then there’s the belly which represents your appetites, so more nerve-ending level issues and things that feel good in the moment right now (Lewis, *Abolition of Man*, “Men Without Chests”). And our focus here is the heart and the affections, what you want most, your greatest desires, what you love, what you value, what you worship, what you long for, what generates the choices that you make. We are not talking about undisciplined emotion or what necessarily feels good or what has been logically proven to you, but we are talking about your trained affections or your trained emotions.

And the next question that I have is, what are they worth? So before you give your whole conference to talking about affections, what is their value? We see [in] Proverbs 4:23, Solomon says, “Above all else, guard your heart. For everything you do flows from it.” Above all else. That means above everything else that you can think of. This is the most important thing, guard your heart. Everything you do comes from it. It’s hard to imagine, something more important than that. We’re talking about shaping people—making and focusing

people in a certain direction and influencing their heart. Their affections, what they love, is in the center of the target. Augustine said, “My weight is my love. Wherever I am carried, my love is carrying me”—what drives him where he goes, what he does, what motivates us (Augustine, *The Confessions*, 13.10.10).

The next thing is *right affections*. What should be the goal? What is our target? We know that we want to order the affections correctly. I just printed out a copy of the Logos School Vision Statement. That’s been on my mind this year because I was reading through the vision statement. I try to do it a couple times a year because I see the vision statement as our marching orders from the Logos School Board to me as a principal [and] to our teachers, and we should know it! If your boss says, “Here’s what I want you to do,” or, for me, as a basketball coach, if I’m in a huddle and we’re at the end of the game and I’m looking at my players, I say, “I want to see us in red [until] we get down to eight seconds, and then you’re going to run Indiana—everybody got it?” And they say, “Yes, sir, we got it,” and then I say, “Good, what are we going to do?” And they [stare blankly]. I say, “C’mon, I just said it to you! We’re in a thirty second time-out, I gave you your marching orders, what are we going to do?” There are times I’ll look at twelve young men in a moment like that and think, “No one is home; no one is with me at all!” I say, “Listen to me! It’s not that hard! We’re in red until eight seconds and then we’re in Indiana, do you got it?”

They say, “Yes.”

“What are we doing?”

“Red, we’re in red until eight seconds and then we’re in Indiana.”

“That’s exactly right, now go and do it!”

“Yes, sir!” And they go and do it.

As a teacher what are your marching orders? You almost don’t even know sometimes. You’re just trying to teach *the thing*! [You say,] “I don’t know that I’m understanding this historical event accurately—they’re

talking about the War Between the States or the Civil War, and I'm just trying to learn the stuff and pass it on." When your school board says, "Look, this is the vision statement of the school—this is what we want to see in our graduates," I think you ought to stop and take it seriously.

So it struck me this year—I just thought we should know it. If your boss says, "Here's what we're running," you should be able to say, "Yes sir, let me tell it back to you; here's what we're running." It [Logos School Vision Statement] was painful. It's more than just a couple sentences. We've memorized our way through it as a staff elementary and secondary and admin, learning it, and it was hard. I had a teacher at the end of the year—I'm so thankful for my teachers, they work hard, they're sacrificing the whole time. I throw something else like that on top of it, and I say, "Now, not only are you going to raise your family faithfully and give yourself away teaching your students, but now I want you to do a bunch of memory work for me at the same time and just cheerfully dive in." A teacher at the end of the year said, "I did not enjoy that assignment. It was really challenging and really hard. Thank you for making me do it. It was on my mind, thinking through: what is our goal? What are we trying to do in the classroom? What are we trying to take these kids to?"

So you could look at ours, or maybe yours is better or different, maybe it's shorter. I wished ours was shorter this year. It was fascinating the number of secondary teachers as they were memorizing the words, their response was, "I wish I could rewrite this; I feel like I could do a better job." Elementary teachers just thought, "I wish this was a little shorter." It was hard! It was a challenging thing to do.

But if you have to boil it all down, the hinge pin in the whole thing is love. It's focused in the same direction, it has to do with your affections. We see this in 1 Corinthians 13. You can take that and apply that to your vision statement at your school.

If you look at our vision statement:

Though I listen carefully with discernment and understanding but have not love, though I reason persuasively and articulate precisely, and have not love, I am nothing. It is worthless.

Your classical Christian education that you're communicating, that you're giving, that you're investing in your children, if it has not love—[and] the name of that love is the Lord Jesus Christ—if your kids, your students graduate loving Jesus, how many concerns do you have for them? If He is their greatest desire, if He is what they most want in the world, everything's good. Academically, we talk about [giving] them the tools of learning, and they will be set to learn for the rest of their lives. We don't have to teach every fact to every student. We teach them how to learn and they will be able to do it, they will be set. And when it comes to the affections, teach them to love the Lord their God, and they will be set to live for the rest of their lives.

So that's what we're all about. If you're like me, you think, "That's really it! Do you mean we could really influence our children and our students to love God more, to lean in that direction so the things they want the most are the things they ought to want most, so that they love what God loves and hate what God hates?" And we say, "Well, that's why we're doing this. That's why we're here, why we have our school. Because that's what God's commanded us to do." He said, "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of Me. I want them to love Me, I want them to know Me, because I'm their Father."

And your Father is telling you this and you say, "Yes, sir! I'm going to do that, I'm going to look for my resources," and you get your resources, your servants, and you say, "Servants, here are your marching orders! Teach my children with me to love their Father, teach them to *know* Him." And we say, "Yes, yes sir, that's exactly what we're all about."

And then we spend [time at] the conference. I've gone to a number of talks [at the conference], I've given some

talks, and you guys have been talking about discipline and school culture, and many of you have been talking about loving poetry and loving history and joy in the class, and that's the direction that we are running right now. And you know it's funny I keep coming back to John Milton's quote on education.

John Milton said, "The end, then, of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents (he's talking about Adam and Eve) by regaining to know God aright and out of that knowledge to love Him, to imitate Him, and to be like Him" (Milton, "Of Education").

And so we're here focused on the cultivation of the affections: how do we do it well? We've been talking about it for a number of days [and] I want to conclude with [this]:

Number one, as an encouragement, *Go and do more and more*. That is the bullseye on the target. But I want to give a few cautions or clarifications as you go and do, as you chase that down. And the first is that, whenever you ask the question, "How do I do that, how do I really change the affections of my son, and focus them in a certain direction?" the answer to the question is found in the character of God. You don't go and do a bunch of scientific experiments to see what changes the thinking of a young person—put him in a laboratory and then do carrots and sticks. [That] is not what drives us as Christians. What drives us as Christians is: What's my dad like? What's my heavenly Father like? And then Ephesians 5 says, "Imitate Him! Copy Him. Follow after Him." How does God influence the affections of His people? That's what we're all about, that's what we want to do. That's what the plumb line is, His character, how He interacts with His people.

In that dynamic, there [are] a few cautions. Number one, that *God is not confused by the governments that He has established*. And what I mean by that is He's established family, He's established the church, and He's established the state. I think there's an element of sphere-sovereignty that we all understand, that's why

we're here, we're a part of this movement. The church has not been given the Sword. You don't take a murderer to your pastor so that he can execute him or to your elders so that they can lay hands on him. That's not what it means! We're not talking about the Sword. In a like manner, we would also say, it is not the state's job to educate my son—to tell me what should be a part of his curriculum, who his teachers should be, what the goal of education is—it's not the state's job to influence his affections. We absolutely agree with that.

I would say in a similar way, *your classroom is not a Sunday morning worship service*. Practically, what does that mean? If you have a fifth grade teacher who wants to serve communion every morning before the first recess—we're going to do the bread and we're going to do the wine—you'd say, or you should say, that's not appropriate, that's not the government that God has put you within.

Or if you have a third-grade teacher who says, "I'm just really into covenant renewal worship. What I'm going to do is organize my lesson plan around covenant renewal worship. So in my math lesson we're going to start with the call to study math, and after that, we're going to do the corporate confession of our math sins," which is, "Please forgive us we're tempted to look at our neighbors paper during a math test, or the teacher gets the stopwatch out and before she says go and after she says stop I'm just tempted to write two more." We don't do corporate confession during math class.

At the end of the lesson if the teacher says, "I just want to do a little benediction," I say, look there is overlap. We're Christians. When we sin against each other we ask each other's forgiveness, but you are not the pastor of your classroom. And you are not preaching a math sermon right now. Teach them how to divide as unto the Lord. Certainly, there should be song and there should be prayer and we understand it is an act of worship—we understand that—but it is not Sunday morning. And so be wary. Especially as we try to influence the affections,

just keep in mind your place. Know where God has put you—what government are you in?

Second caution: *A liberal education does not produce true freedom*. Reading old books does not make you free—even if they’re really good, even if they’re really old. Learning Latin and Greek and Hebrew, as wonderful as those things are, will not set you free. A man’s problem is not that he is uneducated. It is that he is dead. Ephesians 2 says, “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins . . . but God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) . . . for by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. A dead man with a good book in his hand is still dead. A dead student dressed up in all of the virtue that your school can adorn him with still stinks of death. We do value the liberal arts education and we value a classical Christian education—but dead people need good news about God’s kindness and mercy, they don’t just need more coaching or more practice or more habits.

This leads me to the final point which is similar. *God is not muddle-headed about sanctification either*. Romans 6:22–23: “But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Classical Christian education will not save your children. Classical Christian education will not sanctify your children apart from the grace of God. Sanctification is the result of being set free from sin. It is not the means by which we attain our own salvation.

And you can see this paradigm. There are people that try to work on virtues, to instill virtue, or character—public school, charter school, or Christian school. I’ve been a part of public school efforts where the focus has been: today or this week we’re working on integrity, and

then next week we’re working on honesty, and then the following week we’re working on self-control. And so it’s this instillation of virtue apart from Christ.

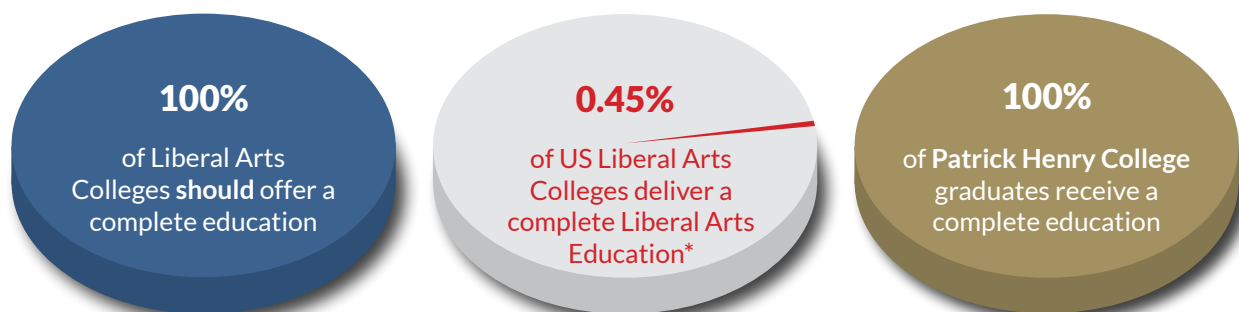
The problem is that one question destroys it all. The elementary age kids never ask that question, but as soon as you get into junior high or high school, as soon as somebody asks, “Why?” it all falls apart. There’s no foundation for it. It’s just like putting perfume on a dead man. Or—something that you may be able to relate to more closely—it’s like putting perfume on a junior high school boy who has not learned he needs to shower *every single day*. You put a little Axe on top of that, it just makes it worse, makes it stronger. That’s the reality that we have when we try to dress up dead people. They need good news.

So we should be concerned about the focus of the right ordering of the affections, how to do it well. If someone says, “Yes, we’re after the heart or the affections of our kids,” here’s what you do. If the first thing out of their mouth is “habit,” “liturgy,” “practice,” [or] “discipline,” you say, “[Those are] not going to get it done. Nothing, nothing, *nothing* but the blood of Jesus can accomplish those things.” And in that context if someone says, “Saved by the Blood of the Lamb,” in that context teach them, train them, work your butt off trying to educate your kids.

Do habits matter? Absolutely. Does liturgy form you? Certainly it does. Get after it. We’re all about working really, really hard in the power of the Holy Spirit by His grace, but our eyes are on Him.

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PARENTING GOD'S WAY

by Alistair Begg, Parkside Church

*Pastor Alistair Begg will be a plenary speaker at the
2018 Repairing the Ruins Conference in Frisco, Texas*

INTRODUCTION

What is the greatest problem facing our nation? Is it the convoluted agenda of a political party, the threat of environmental catastrophe, or gathering storms on the international front? Is it the dire prophecies of Wall Street economists? No. Most people today would agree that the most troubling road on which our country is traveling begins and ends at our own front doors. It's all in the family. For the last three decades, the idea of the traditional family has been under cultural assault. Every movement from the so-called sexual revolution to same-sex parenting has taken its toll on the foundational building blocks of our society. Now the social scientists realize that the damage has been significant. Families are reeling. Single parents struggle in the rubble of broken homes, and children come of age dizzily on the joint-custody merry-go-round. Parents are sending distress signals. How can we save our homes? Does anyone know the answer? Someone does. He has had the answer all along, and He is waiting for us to ask for it. We can find

the redemptive, creative details lovingly recorded in an ancient book and fleshed out in the author's own Son. In God lies the perfect answer to parenting, for God the Father is the perfect parent. Let's explore what He has to say first to fathers, then to mothers.

BEING A FATHER GOD'S WAY

WHERE HAVE ALL THE FATHERS GONE?

Men are masters of the art of delegation. Give them a task, and they can quickly assign just the right person to do it. A simple phone call? Let the office assistant make the connection. Household chore? One of the kids can get it done. Something in men gravitates toward a well-ordered corporate structure.

Yes, delegation is a wonderful thing, but what about abdication? What if we assign away our own responsibilities? Another word for that is abandonment, and that is largely the sad state of Christian fatherhood

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today. Fathers are meant to nurture and admonish their children in the Lord Jesus, but many delegating dads have abdicated that lofty seat of authority. Let mom or the school or the church staff have the job. If all else fails, there is always the television set. Thus, we look up and down the pews and see wives, mothers, and single women in our churches—but few men. To offer a different spin to the Peter, Paul, and Mary song: Where have all the fathers gone?

PAUL ON PARENTING

In Ephesians 6:4, the Apostle Paul tells us where those fathers should be: “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” This exhortation is repeated in Colossians,² so we know it is particularly important. Fathers are to spend plenty of time with their children, training and instructing them. This time with their children simply cannot be delegated.

Just the same, modern men have tried to do so. In an age of career advancement and unprecedented leisure time, the daily task of fathering has struck too many men as unglamorous. They have left their work to others, and with these results: rising rates of suicide among minors, criminal activity and violence, drug abuse, and homosexuality. We have produced a floundering, confused, and self-destructive generation. This is no melodramatic overstatement, but the conclusion of any number of objective studies. There is no substitute for the work of the father in the home.

AUTHORITY: ABUSED VERSUS ABSENT

So Paul, in Holy Scripture, pleads for fathers to rightfully give their children that time, and these words to the Ephesians were written in a context that would provide a striking contrast to the first-century world of Roman culture. The Roman father was an autocrat. He

could order his children around as if they were cattle. The laws backed his ability to sell them as slaves if he so chose. He could even apply the death penalty in cases of extreme discipline. Against that troubling backdrop, Paul presents a strikingly different parental perspective. He offers a radical suggestion that would cause first-century fathers to shine in a dark time, and it does the same in the twenty-first century. In our own world, the problem is not so much the abuse of authority as the absence of it. Some throw up their hands in surrender. How can anyone know how to be a father without good models? “I can’t be a good father, because, you see, I never had one myself.” Or, “I need guidance to be a father in this modern world, but who has time to take a course or read a book?” Paul puts the lie to these excuses. The beauty of this principle is that no earthly model is necessary, whether from experience or curriculum. We could be surrounded with the most derelict of fathering role models, and we could still excel. For our model is God the Father Himself, as Paul established earlier, in Ephesians 3:14. Everyone shares a perfect heavenly Father, so everyone can be a good earthly one. Let’s discover how we are to set out doing that . . .

BEING A MOTHER GOD’S WAY

THE SACRED DUTY OF MOTHERHOOD

We have seen that God ordains fathers to train and instruct their children in the Lord and to avoid exasperating them. We have noted that too many fathers abdicate this task, when it is their duty alone, and we have reflected on some of the dreadful implications of that abdication.

Where does this leave mothers? Are they relegated to a position of assistant parent, summoned occasionally from the family bullpen for relief work whenever the father is tired or indisposed? Does the Bible somehow

marginalize the place of motherhood in bringing up a child?

Not in the least! We will find that motherhood is, in every sense, the sacred institution established specially by God that fatherhood is. The role may be different, but it is never inferior.

Ask any American. In our country, Mother's Day is a far more profitable day in the greeting card industry than Father's Day. More than one hundred years ago, just before the outbreak of World War I, Congress passed a resolution to honor mothers on the second Sunday in May. President Woodrow Wilson also called on the public to display their flags as an expression of "our love and reverence for the mothers of our country," and so it has been ever since.

Yet today, after one hundred years of reverence for the unique and sacred institution that is motherhood, the U.S. Congress is now busy with resolutions that would just as uniquely damage the position of [...] mothers in America.

A rabid political agenda is determined to legally establish that anyone can be a mother, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or biological relationship. The real mothers, those who have borne the load since creation, are being challenged. Thus it is all the more crucial, in the present political climate, that we come to understand what God says about motherhood. We must hear the message clearly.

We will discover that the Bible clearly affirms the family as the foundational unit of society, that parents are worthy of the highest honor on earth, and that mothers are entrusted by God with a sacred duty, which is theirs and theirs alone.

CAN ANYONE BE A MOTHER?

These new "experts" bring the message that anyone is qualified to be a mother, but the position of Scripture on that issue is quite different indeed. God has a very



special place for mothers in His created order. They are among His most sacred and beautiful gifts to humanity.

However, mothers do not always feel like sacred and beautiful gifts to humanity. Their daily work does not always carry a glorious sheen about it. On any given day, there are lunches and laundry, maid service and taxi service—all of it taken for granted by the permanent guests of the Mom Hotel. As those bright blurs, better known as her children, whiz past occasionally with open hands, and she follows behind with the vacuum cleaner, wearing a deep path in the carpet between here and the washing machine, Mother feels significantly less than special.

"Sacred privilege" is not the phrase which comes first to mind when she pulls herself from her bed early on an overcast Monday morning. No, "privilege" would mean being able to wake up in her own way, rather than opening her heavy eyelids to the sight of the children lined up by the side of the bed with frozen stares and a list of requests. There is Christmas tinsel growing from the carpet, the arms of the sofa are worn through, the refrigerator is empty, there are no clean diapers, and some unidentified finger has scrawled "Go Bulls" in the dust on the coffee table.

And they want us to believe anyone can be a mother? Those lobbyists may have spent plenty of time in Washington, but they have obviously spent little in a home.

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CLASS SIZE REDUCTION

by William J. Mathis, University of Colorado Boulder

Ask a parent if they want their child in a class of 15 or a class of 25. The answer is predictable. Intuitively, they know that smaller classes will provide more personalized attention, a better climate, and result in more learning. Ask teachers, and they will wax eloquent on the importance of small classes in providing individual support to their students. But ask a school board or district administrator, contending with a tight budget. They ask if the average class size can be a bit bigger.

Teacher pay and benefits are the largest single school expenditure, representing 80% of the nation's school budgets.¹ Thus, small class size is a costly, important, contentious and perennial issue.

THE RESEARCH ON CLASS SIZE

There are many studies of the impact of smaller classes and they vary widely in quality.² As a result, proponents from all perspectives can cherry-pick studies that support their point of view.

But let's look closer. There is, in fact, an independent consensus on what we know:

One of the earliest influential meta-studies was by Glass and Smith in 1979.³ They statistically analyzed

300 reports involving almost 900,000 students. Once the class size fell below about 15, learning increased progressively as class size became smaller.

The most prominent study supporting smaller class sizes was the Tennessee STAR (Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio) experiment. The STAR experiment was a four-year statewide random-assignment experiment. Students in kindergarten in the same schools were randomly assigned to classes of 13–15, to classes of 22–25 with a teacher's aide, or to classes of 25 without a teacher's aide. In the early studies, these students were followed through grade 3. In practice, the small classes ranged in size from 13–18 and the large classes from 22–28. It is worth noting that even the larger classes were smaller than most classes in those grades in Tennessee at the time. The smaller classes performed substantially better by the end of second grade in test scores, grades, and fewer disciplinary referrals.⁴

The gains lasted. The students that had been assigned to smaller classes were more likely to graduate in four years, more likely to go to college, and more likely to get a degree in a STEM field. The positive effect was twice as large for poor and minority students, and thus narrowed the achievement gap. The original STAR study

This is a section of Research-Based Options for Education Policymaking, a multipart brief that takes up a number of important policy issues and identifies policies supported by research. Each section focuses on a different issue, and its recommendations to policymakers are based on the latest scholarship. Research-Based Options for Education Policymaking is published by The National Education Policy Center and is made possible in part by funding from the Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice.

BENEFIT & COST

“Schools should look at ways to produce the class size effect by lowering class size specifically for certain periods of instruction in numeracy and literacy classes. If class size could be reduced just for these lessons, using a combination of redeployment of existing staff and addition of special literacy and numeracy teachers, it would be theoretically possible to have small classes (average of 15 pupils) with a much lower additional cost.”

—David Zyngier, Senior Lecturer in Curriculum and Pedagogy, Monash University

and follow-up reports, called the *Lasting Benefits Studies*, and subsequent *Project Challenge*⁵ had an impact in the political arena. President Bill Clinton proposed a \$12 billion class size reduction program in his 1998 State of the Union address that was subsequently adopted by Congress.

Molnar et al. (1996–2001), in a well-designed series of five annual evaluations of the Wisconsin SAGE (Student Achievement Guarantee in Education) class size reduction program utilizing a quasi-experimental design, reproduced the STAR results.⁶ With class sizes of 15, they found significant and substantial effect sizes of 0.2 standard deviations, indicating that class size was a very effective school improvement strategy. Gains were greatest for African-American students, and teachers reported better classroom climates and fewer discipline problems. The continuation of small class sizes into the higher grades increased its impact. But cost considerations resulted in class size reduction activities being concentrated in the lower grades, mostly among economically deprived and children of color.⁷

Over the years, Erik Hanushek of the Hoover Institute has taken a more skeptical look. He performed a “meta-analysis” of 277 studies in 1997, claiming that

class size reduction was not an effective school reform strategy. He argued that class sizes have dropped over the last half of the twentieth century with no corresponding increase in achievement scores.⁸ In summary,

Surely class size reductions are beneficial in specific circumstances—for specific groups of students, subject matters, and teachers. Second, class size reductions necessarily involve hiring more teachers, and teacher quality is much more important than class size in affecting student outcomes. Third, class size reduction is very expensive, and little or no consideration is given to alternative and more productive uses of those resources.⁹

Hanushek’s analysis was criticized on methodological grounds in that he gave more weight to studies that showed no impact from lowering class size, while also treating weak studies as equivalent to those that were experimental and/or of much higher quality. He was also questioned about his claim that teacher quality was more important than class size in affecting student outcomes. Moreover, in re-analyzing the Tennessee STAR data, Alan Krueger not only concluded that class size reduction had economic benefits that outweighed the costs, and even within the large cohort of 22 to 25 students, the smaller the class, the better the student outcomes.¹⁰ Mosteller also reported sustained effects and “the effect size for minorities was about double that for majorities.”¹¹

Krueger noted, as have many others, that class size reduction most benefits minority and disadvantaged students, and would be expected to narrow the racial achievement gap by about one-third. He also estimated that the economic gains of smaller classes in the early grades outweighed the costs two to one.¹² While experimental studies have not been done for the middle and upper grades, there are many controlled studies, including longitudinal studies, showing gains in student outcomes for smaller classes at these grade levels.¹³ Many of these studies also show improvements

in student engagement, lower drop-out rates and better non-cognitive skills. One longitudinal study revealed that smaller classes in eighth grade led to improvements in persistence and self-esteem, and that for urban schools, the economic benefits from investing in smaller classes would likely save nearly twice the cost. A study done for the U.S. Department of Education analyzed the achievement levels of students in 2,561 schools, as measured by performance on the NAEP (national) exams. After controlling for student background, the only objective factor found to be positively correlated with student performance was class size. Student achievement was even more strongly linked to smaller classes in the upper grades.¹⁴

In recent work (2015), Jackson, Johnson, and Persico investigated the effects of school finance reform in 28 states. They followed the infusion of new money between 1970 and 2010, and found, “. . . a 10% increase in per-pupil spending each year for all 12 years of public school leads to 0.27 more completed years of education, 7.25 percent higher wages, and a 3.67 percentage-point reduction in the annual incidence of adult poverty.” They concluded that the gains were achieved primarily by lower student-to-teacher ratios, increases in teacher salaries, and longer school years. Gains were strongest for economically disadvantaged children and were sufficient to eliminate from two-thirds to one hundred percent of the adult outcome gaps (i.e., wages, education level, percent in poverty) between those raised in poor and non-poor families.¹⁵

Overall, the literature on class size reduction is clear and positive. The “overwhelming majority” of peer-reviewed papers find it an effective strategy.¹⁶

FURTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

SUPPLY OF TEACHERS

An oft-heard reservation about class-size reduction is that there are not enough well-qualified teachers to make the system work. However, in California’s billion dollar Class Size Reduction Initiative, achievement increased for all groups, but there was little or no evidence that the need to hire more teachers led to lower quality teachers in the long run. When the Los Angeles Unified School District needed to triple its hiring of elementary teachers following the state’s class-size reduction initiative, there was no reduction in mean teacher effectiveness.¹⁷ In addition, some studies point to lower teacher attrition rates when class sizes are reduced, which would likely lead to a more experienced and effective teaching force overall.¹⁸

WASH-OUT EFFECTS

Most of the research has been conducted in the early grades (K–3). This led some to questioning whether the effects are lasting or are cost-effective.¹⁹ Though Harris contended the effects wash out by seventh grade,²⁰ Krueger and Schanzenbach found gains in college entrance exams and especially among minority students. In fact, they concluded that small classes through eighth grade cut the achievement gap by 54%.²¹ Dynarski, et al. found gains in college attendance, graduation rate, and a higher likelihood of graduating with a STEM degree.²² Jackson, Johnson, and Persico found sustained long-term social and economic effects in their 28-state work. Chetty, et al. found that students from smaller classes in kindergarten had a greater likelihood of attending college, owning a home and holding a 401K more than 20 years later.²³

NON-COGNITIVE EFFECTS

In addition to the gains listed above, college attendance, graduation rate, student engagement, persistence, and self-esteem is reported as higher.²⁴ The gains in test scores are attributed to the greater individualization of instruction, better classroom control and, thus, better climate. Teachers have more time for individual interactions with children, consulting with parents, and giving greater attention to grading papers.²⁵

AS COMPARED TO OTHER REFORMS

There is little evidence indicating that other reforms would be more effective at a lower cost.²⁶ While teacher quality is undoubtedly important, those who argue that improving teacher quality would be more cost-effective present no comparative data from experimental or controlled studies.

RECOMMENDATIONS²⁷

- Class size is an important determinant of student outcomes, and one that can be directly determined by policy. All else being equal, lowering class sizes will improve student outcomes.
- The payoff from class-size reduction is greater for low-income and minority children. Conversely, increases in class size are likely to be especially harmful to these populations—who are already more likely to be subjected to large classes.
- While lowering class size has a demonstrable cost, it may prove the more cost-effective policy overall particularly for disadvantaged students. Money saved today by increasing class sizes will likely result in additional substantial social and educational costs in the future.²⁸

- Generally, class sizes of between 15 and 18 are recommended but variations are indicated. For example, band and physical education may require large classes while special education and some laboratory classes may require less.

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This is a section of Research-Based Options for Education Policymaking, a multipart brief that takes up a number of important policy issues and identifies policies supported by research. Each section focuses on a different issue, and its recommendations to policymakers are based on the latest scholarship. Research-Based Options for Education Policymaking is published by the National Education Policy Center and is made possible in part by funding from the Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice.

The National Education Policy Center (NEPC), housed at the University of Colorado Boulder School of Education, produces and disseminates high-quality, peer-reviewed research to inform education policy discussions. Visit us at: <http://nepc.colorado.edu>

DOCUMENT RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION POLICY

National Council of Nonprofit Associations (www.ncna.org)

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act addresses the destruction of business records and documents and turns intentional document destruction into a process which must be carefully monitored.

Nonprofit organizations should have a written, mandatory document retention and periodic destruction policy. Policies such as this will eliminate accidental or innocent destruction. In addition, it is important for administrative personnel to know the length of time records should be retained to be in compliance.

The following table provides the minimum requirements.

Type of Document	Minimum Requirement
Accounts payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Audit reports	Permanently
Bank Reconciliations	2 years
Bank statements	3 years
Checks (for important payments and purchases)	Permanently
Contracts, mortgages, notes and leases (expired)	7 years
Contracts (still in effect)	Permanently
Correspondence (general)	2 years
Correspondence (legal and important matters)	Permanently
Correspondence (with customers and vendors)	2 years
Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale	Permanently
Depreciation Schedules	Permanently
Duplicate deposit slips	2 years
Employment applications	3 years
Expense Analyses/expense distribution schedules	7 years
Year End Financial Statements	Permanently
Insurance Policies (expired)	3 years
Insurance records, current accident reports, claims, policies, etc.	Permanently
Internal audit reports	3 years
Inventories of products, materials, and supplies	7 years
Invoices (to customers, from vendors)	7 years
Minute books, bylaws and charter	Permanently
Patents and related Papers	Permanently
Payroll records and summaries	7 years
Personnel files (terminated employees)	7 years
Retirement and pension records	Permanently
Tax returns and worksheets	Permanently
Timesheets	7 years
Trademark registrations and copyrights	Permanently
Withholding tax statements	7 years

THE SCHOOL'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE STATE

Policy 2.7, Bayshore Christian School

Date: Adopted October, 2013. Amended August, 2014

Objective: to define the relationship of the School to governmental entities which may establish requirements or guidelines for the education of minors.

Scope: all faculty, staff, and board members of the school as well as the Bayshore Christian School Foundation, and the officers of ESPC.

Definitions:

- *Governmental entities* include federal, state, county, and local governments.
- A *minor* is a person who has not reached the legal age of adulthood.

Policy: Bayshore Christian School is under the authority of Eastern Shore Presbyterian Church as a church school and is therefore protected by current Alabama law against regulation set forth by governmental entities in regards to student education.

If federal, state, or local legislation or regulations are enacted and enforced that infringe on the School's ability to operate free from civil entanglement, the Board shall consider steps necessary to protect its mission and purpose.

The School shall avoid any type of aide or assistance such as tax-favored status, vouchers, scholarships, etc. that depend upon state or federal regulation and that could result in unwanted governmental entanglement or regulation.

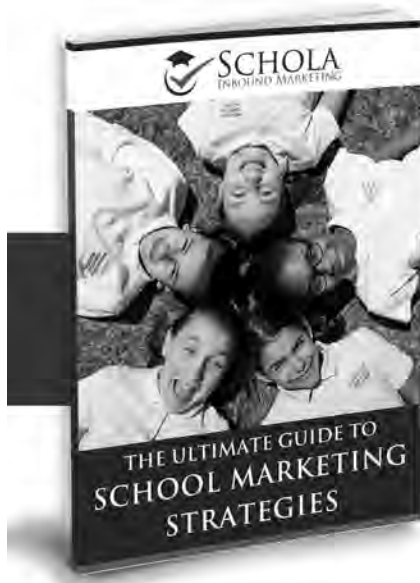
We affirm the following:

1. Parents are responsible for the intellectual, moral, spiritual, and physical education of their children, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Dt. 6:6–9, 11:19–21).
2. The prevailing modern culture seeks to remove God from education and thus ignores Him in relation to the intellectual, moral, spiritual, and physical development of students.
3. We are to submit to governing authorities so far as they do not command us to do what is contrary to God's Word (Rom. 13:1–7, Acts 5:29), therefore Bayshore Christian School, as a classical Christian school which exists to educate students in God's truth, will voluntarily comply with governmental requirements insofar as doing so will not compromise the school's mission and core values.

Bayshore Christian School is an ACCS-accredited school in Fairhope, Alabama. Pam McKee is the head of school at Bayshore and an ACCS board member.

4. We will reject any governmental regulation that affects the ability of the school to effectively and biblically fulfill its mission or to stray from its core values. These include but are not limited to the following:
- requirements to teach content that is nonbiblical, such as secular concepts of sex education, diversity training, Darwinian evolution, etc.;
 - requirements to approve as truth what God's Word affirms as nontruth;
 - requirements to approve as untruth what God's Word affirms as truth;
 - requirements to hire people whose beliefs, values, and/or practices are in conflict with our mission and core values; and
 - requirements to adhere to regulations that are unduly burdensome, such that they may materially affect our ability to fulfill our mission and vision.

Is your school enrollment stagnant?
Or worse, is enrollment declining?



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WRITTEN IN STONE: THE WORLD'S FIRST TRIGONOMETRY REVEALED IN AN ANCIENT BABYLONIAN TABLET

by Daniel Mansfield and Norman Wildberger, University New South Wales

The ancient Babylonians—who lived from about 4,000 BCE in what is now Iraq – had a long forgotten understanding of right-angled triangles that was much simpler and more accurate than the conventional trigonometry we are taught in schools.

Our new research, published in *Historia Mathematica*, shows that the Babylonians were able to construct a trigonometric table using only the exact ratios of sides of a right-angled triangle. This is a completely different form of trigonometry that does not need the familiar modern concept of angles.

At school we are told that the shape of a right-angled triangle depends upon the other two angles. The angle is related to the circumference of a circle, which is divided into 360 parts or degrees. This angle is then used to describe the ratios of the sides of the right-angled triangle through sin, cos, and tan.

But circles and right-angled triangles are very different, and the price of having simple values for the angle is borne by the ratios, which are very complicated

$\sin \theta$	$\cos \theta$	$\tan \theta$	θ
0.017452	0.999848	0.017455	1
0.034899	0.999391	0.034921	2
0.052336	0.998630	0.052408	3
0.069756	0.997564	0.069927	4
0.087156	0.996195	0.087489	5

The three ratios of a modern trigonometric table, rounded to six decimal places, with auxiliary angle θ in degrees. Provided by Daniel Mansfield, author.

and must be approximated.

This approach can be traced back to the Greek astronomer and mathematician Hipparchus of Nicaea (who died after 127 BCE). He is said to be the father of trigonometry because he used his table of chords to calculate orbits of the moon and sun.

But our new research shows this was not the first, or only, or best approach to trigonometry.

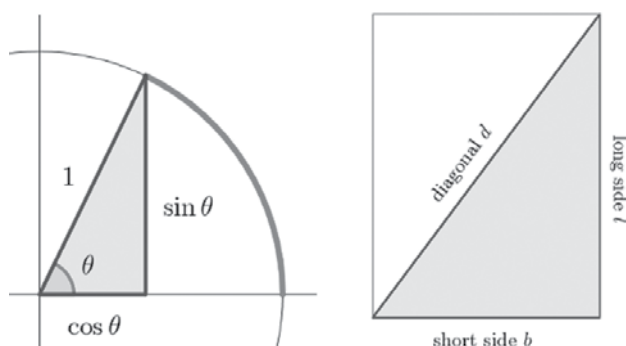
BABYLONIAN TRIGONOMETRY

The Babylonians discovered their own unique form of trigonometry during the Old Babylonian period (1900–1600 BCE), more than 1,500 years earlier than the Greek form.

Remarkably, their trigonometry contains none of the hallmarks of our modern trigonometry—it does not use angles and it does not use approximation.

The Babylonians had a completely different conceptualisation of a right triangle. They saw it as half of a rectangle, and due to their sophisticated sexagesimal (base 60) number system they were able to construct a wide variety of right triangles using only exact ratios.

Daniel Mansfield is an associate lecturer in mathematics, University New South Wales (UNSW). Norman Wildberger is an associate professor in mathematics at UNSW. This article was originally published in The Conversation.



The Greek (left) and Babylonian (right) conceptualisation of a right triangle. Notably the Babylonians did not use angles to describe a right triangle. Provided by Daniel Mansfield, author.

The sexagesimal system is better suited for exact calculation. For example, if you divide one hour by three then you get exactly 20 minutes. But if you divide one dollar by three then you get 33 cents, with 1 cent left over. The fundamental difference is the convention to treat hours and dollars in different number systems: time is sexagesimal and dollars are decimal.

The Babylonians knew that their sexagesimal number system allowed for many more exact divisions. For a more sophisticated example, 1 hour divided by 48 is 1 minute and 15 seconds.

This precise arithmetic of the Babylonians also influenced their geometry, which they preferred to be exact. They were able to generate a wide variety of right-angled triangles within exact ratios b/l and d/l , where b , l , and d are the short side, long side, and diagonal of a rectangle.

The ratio b/l was particularly important to the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians because they used this ratio to measure steepness.

THE PLIMPTON 322 TABLET

We now know that the Babylonians studied trigonometry because we have a fragment of a one of their trigonometric tables.

Plimpton 322 is a broken clay tablet from the ancient

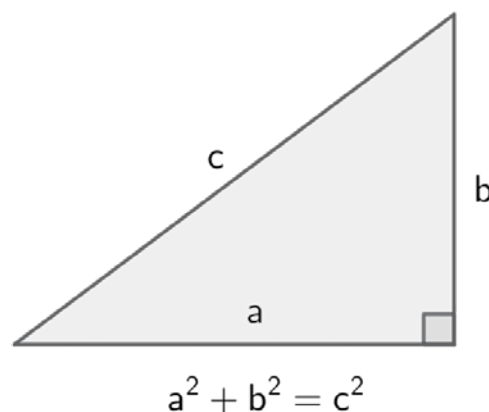
city of Larsa, which was located near Tell as-Senkereh in modern day Iraq. The tablet was written between 1822–1762 BCE.

In the 1920s the archaeologist, academic, and adventurer Edgar J. Banks sold the tablet to the American publisher and philanthropist George Arthur Plimpton.

Plimpton bequeathed his entire collection of mathematical artefacts to Columbia University in 1936, and it resides there today in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library. It's available online through the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative.

In 1945 the tablet was revealed to contain a highly sophisticated sequence of integer numbers that satisfy the Pythagorean equation $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$, known as Pythagorean triples.

This is the fundamental relationship of the three sides of a right-angled triangle, and this discovery proved that the Babylonians knew this relationship more than 1,000 years before the Greek mathematician Pythagoras was born.



The fundamental relation between the side lengths of a right triangle. In modern times this is called Pythagoras' theorem, but it was known to the Babylonians more than 1,000 years before Pythagoras was born.

Plimpton 322 has ruled space on the reverse which indicates that additional rows were intended. In 1964, the Yale based science historian Derek J. de Solla Price

discovered the pattern behind the complex sequence of Pythagorean triples and we now know that it was originally intended to contain 38 rows in total.



The other side of the Plimpton 322 tablet. UNSW/Andrew Kelly, Provided by the author.

The tablet also has missing columns, and in 1981 the Swedish mathematics historian Jöran Friberg conjectured that the missing columns should be the ratios b/l and d/l . But the tablet's purpose remained elusive.

b/l	d/l	Information relating to b/d or d/b			row
		$(d/l)^2$	b	d	
0.99166666	1.40833333	1.98340277	119	169	1
0.97424768	1.39612268	1.94915855	3367	4825	2
0.95854166	1.38520833	1.91880212	4601	6649	3
0.94140740	1.37340740	1.88624790	12709	18541	4
0.90277777	1.34722222	1.81500771	65	97	5

The first five rows of Plimpton 322, with reconstructed columns and numbers written in decimal.

The surviving fragment of Plimpton 322 starts with the Pythagorean triple 119, 120, 169. The next triple is 3367, 3456, 4825. This makes sense when you realise that the first triple is almost a square (which is an extreme kind of rectangle), and the next is slightly flatter. In fact, the right-angled triangles are slowly but steadily getting flatter throughout the entire sequence.



Watch the triangles change shape as we go down the list. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=aL9Q0fyTKxA)

So the trigonometric nature of this table is suggested by the information on the surviving fragment alone, but it is even more apparent from the reconstructed tablet.

This argument must be made carefully because modern notions such as angle were not present at the time Plimpton 322 was written. How then might it be a trigonometric table?

Fundamentally, a trigonometric table must describe three ratios of a right triangle. So we throw away sin and cos and instead start with the ratios b/l and d/l . The ratio which replaces tan would then be b/d or d/b , but neither can be expressed exactly in sexagesimal.

Instead, information about this ratio is split into three columns of exact numbers. A squared index and simplified values of b and d help the scribe make their own approximation to b/d or d/b .

NO APPROXIMATION

The most remarkable aspect of Babylonian trigonometry is its precision. Babylonian trigonometry is exact, whereas we are accustomed to approximate trigonometry.

The Babylonian approach is also much simpler because it only uses exact ratios. There are no irrational numbers and no angles, and this means that there is also no sin, cos, or tan or approximation.

It is difficult to say why this approach to trigonometry has not survived. Perhaps it went out of fashion because the Greek approach using angles is more suitable for astronomical calculations. Perhaps this understanding was lost in 1762 BCE when Larsa was captured by Hammurabi of Babylon. Without evidence, we can only speculate.

We are only beginning to understand this ancient civilisation, which is likely to hold many more secrets waiting to be discovered.

NOT ALL AGREE

Other mathematicians aren't convinced. Read Sarah Gibben's article "Ancient Tablet May Show Earliest Use of This Advanced Math" with *National Geographic* for additional perspectives on this story.

See: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/08/ancient-babylonian-trigonometry-tablet-plimpton-322-video-spd/>.



The Institute of Faith and the Academy

"Investigating how the Christian faith shapes and informs learning..."

SPECIAL CALL FOR PAPERS

Building the City of God: The Past, Present, and Future of Christian Higher Education

Spring Conference at Faulkner University: February 8-9, 2018

In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Faulkner University and the 10th anniversary of IFA, we are seeking conference papers from all academic disciplines exploring the relationship between faith and learning, especially as they relate to the value of Christian education.

Please submit at 250-word abstract to jfullman@faulkner.edu no later than 15 December, 2017.

Select papers from the conference will be published in a subsequent issue of *The Journal of Faith and the Academy*.

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OPEN LETTER TO LOGOS SECONDARY STUDENTS

by Jim Wilson, Word of Life Church

*An Open Letter from Jim Wilson to the Secondary Students
at Logos School in Moscow, Idaho*

I will be 90 years old on October 6. Here are my credentials for writing this letter to you:

- I have been a Christian for 70 years.
- I was Tom Garfield and Doug Wilson's Sunday school teacher when they were in high school.
- I taught the Practical Christianity elective at Logos for five years.
- Ten of my grandchildren went to Logos. Nine of my great-grandchildren are currently here.
- Two of my grandchildren and one granddaughter-in-law teach here.

First, I want to commend some of you for your godly life and desire to be more like Jesus.

This is a self-evaluation letter.

Are you a Christian? Here are a few ways to find out:

- "The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:14). You are

taught the Bible and read it. Do you understand it spiritually? If not, you are a natural man. A natural man cannot understand spiritual truths. They are foolishness to him.

- "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death" (1 John 3:14). Do you love Christians? Loving Christians is a means of knowing that you are one. Non-Christians do not love Christians.
- "We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands" (1 John 2:3). Do you obey God?
- "A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of" (Luke 6:45). What is your mouth like? If you have a dirty mouth, it is because you have a dirty heart.
- "I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness" (Rom.

Jim Wilson is the pastor of the Word of Life Church in Moscow, Idaho. You may write to him at jimwilson27@frontier.com.

6:19). Do you want to be holy?

There are more ways of finding out if you are a real Christian. Read the book of 1 John several times and read Colossians several times.

Here are my observations about you, both direct and secondhand. Some of you think you are Christians because you were raised in a Christian home or because you were baptized. These things don't make you a Christian. A mouse born in a cookie jar is not a cookie.

Are you bitter? Are you angry? Are you anxious? "Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice" (Eph. 4:31). "But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips" (Col. 3:8). "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7).

Do you lie? Do you cheat? Do you steal? Confess each one. For stealing, you must confess and return what you stole plus 20%. "The LORD said to Moses: 'If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the LORD by deceiving a neighbor about something entrusted to them or left in their care or about something stolen, or if they cheat their neighbor, or if they find lost property and lie about it, or if they swear falsely about any such sin that people may commit—when they sin in any of these ways and realize their guilt, they must return what they have stolen or taken by extortion, or what was entrusted to them, or the lost property they found, or whatever it was they swore falsely about. They must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day they present their guilt offering. And as a penalty they must bring to the priest, that is, to the LORD, their guilt offering, a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value. In this way the priest will make atonement for them before the LORD, and they will be

forgiven for any of the things they did that made them guilty'" (Lev. 6:1-7).

If you were not raised in a Christian home, you are probably in Logos because of its academic standards. Are you impressed with Christianity because of the Christians here? Or are you unimpressed?

Some of you will go into the secular education system when you graduate. Some of you have already made the decision to do that. You will be accordingly prepared for college academically, but you might not be spiritually prepared.

Some of you are secure in the presence of the opposite sex, and some of you are girl crazy or boy crazy. If you are on the crazy side, go to someone for help. It is not a virtue. You won't grow out of it, either. It will only get worse.

Some of you have problems with pornography (mostly boys, but more girls are having this problem now, too). You don't want anyone to know about it, so you only do it in secret. Unless you are delivered from this, it will not stop when you get married. This is a major source of wrecked marriages. I can help, or I can send you somewhere to get help. If you pretend you do not have a problem, you will just keep the problem. Jesus called it adultery. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28). The real solution to most of this is to call it sin and confess it and forsake it.

Some of you are the center of the rebellion here. Others are copying your dirty talk, but they are not at home with it like you are. You have pressured them to talk that way. There is a third group—those students who disapprove of this but do not try to stop it. There is a fourth group—those who are clean and stay clean. If you talked dirty in front of them, you would feel guilty; so you stay away from them.

In my senior year at the Naval Academy, I went to a

classmate's room to read the comics. (He was the only one who had a newspaper subscription.) When I came into his room, he met me with a mouthful of profanity. It was just his way of saying "Good morning" to me. I reached into my pocket to get a Christian booklet and threw it on his desk. "That will teach you to talk like that," I said. I sat down on his bed and started reading the comics.

Then I heard someone crying. I turned around. It was him. He said, "Jim, I didn't grow up talking like that." You may not have grown up talking like that, either.

Here is what the Bible says about this kind of talk.

"You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name" (Exodus 20:7).

"But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. 5:3–5).

"But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips." (Col. 3:8)

If you are not able to quit, it could be because you are not a Christian. You are not saved. You are on your way to hell.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34-35). All men will know that you are followers of Jesus because you love each other. It would be easy for others to doubt your salvation now

because God does a better job of saving than your life shows.

If you are a Christian, then you should confess and forsake the talk that is dirty and the talk that is not loving.

If you are a Christian, then "do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Rom. 12:2).

If you realize that you are not a Christian, tell someone who is clearly Christian and ask him how to become one.

If you want to see me about any of this, check with your parents. If they agree, I will be glad to see you alone or with your parents. You can email me at jimwilson27@frontier.com.

I can help you confess, and I can help you obey.

Respectfully,

Jim Wilson

MODERN HISTORIC EVENTS BY GENERATION

by Pew Research Center

Q. Please name the 10 historic events that occurred in YOUR lifetime that you think have had the greatest impact on the country. This could be one specific event, a series of related events or any other historic development or change that had an important impact on the nation.

Millennials			Generation X		
1	Sept. 11	86 %	1	Sept. 11	79 %
2	Obama election	47	2	Obama election	40
3	Iraq/Afghanistan wars	24	3	Fall of Berlin Wall/end of Cold War	21
4	Gay marriage	19	4	The tech revolution	20
5	The tech revolution	18	5	Iraq/Afghanistan wars	18
6	Orlando shooting	17	6	Gulf War	15
7	Hurricane Katrina	11	7	Challenger disaster	14
8	Columbine shooting	10	8	Gay marriage	10
9	Bin Laden	10	9	Hurricane Katrina	10
10	Sandy Hook	7	10	Columbine shooting	9
11	Boston Marathon bombing	7	11	Orlando shooting	9
12	Great Recession	7	12	Oklahoma City bombing	9

Baby Boomers			Silent Generation		
1	Sept. 11	70 %	1	Sept. 11	59 %
2	JFK assassination	45	2	WWII	44
3	Vietnam War	41	3	JFK assassination	41
4	Obama election	38	4	Vietnam War	37
5	Moon landing	35	5	Moon landing	29
6	The tech revolution	26	6	Obama election	28
7	Civil rights movement	18	7	The tech revolution	27
8	Fall of Berlin Wall/end of Cold War	16	8	Civil rights movement	18
9	MLK assassination	15	9	Korean War	18
10	Iraq/Afghanistan wars	11	10	Iraq/Afghanistan wars	14

Note: Shown are the top 10 events mentioned, including numerical ties. While events are ranked numerically for ease of reading, not all differences between ranked events are statistically significant. Look to accompanying text to highlight significant differences.

Source: Survey conducted June 16-July 4, 2016.

"Americans Name the 10 Most Significant Historic Events of Their Lifetimes"

Pew Research Center, U.S. Politics & Policy. Published December 14, 2016. Available at <http://www.people-press.org>.



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