

# Christ-Centered Education in the Home

Why are you home schooling this year? Do you have specific reasons for living this different lifestyle? The enemy of our souls would love to see any of us get sidetracked, exhausted, overwhelmed, discouraged, or focused on the wrong things. Knowing why this decision is important—with a quiet, firm conviction in our hearts—will go a long way toward keeping us on track in the coming months.

We homeschooled primarily because we desired to provide our children with a Christ-centered education. A personal background would be helpful.

I was a public school teacher when I asked Jesus Christ into my life. As I drove my little gold Volkswagen to the junior high school where I worked, I desired to incorporate my new-found Savior and Lord into my professional life. In the past, I had, by my lost nature and by my college training, deliberately kept Jesus Christ out of my life. Now I wanted Him and needed Him, all day, every day. Instead of relegating Him to my car in the parking lot each morning and eagerly greeting Him upon my return, I invited Him to come inside to be a part of my teaching life.

With dismay, I realized that the Lord was not welcome in my job. The indications of this were often subtle, but the result was that public education completely omitted God. He was regularly overlooked, ignored, thought unimportant, and considered without influence. I imagined Jesus patiently waiting outside that junior high, perhaps on the front steps or under the shade of a pine tree, longing to be included.

*“Nature abhors a vacuum.” If God remains outside, who or what moves in to fill the void? “When an evil spirit comes out of a man [or a place], it goes through arid places seeking rest and doesn’t find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man [or place] is worse than the first.” (Matthew 12:43-45)* I think of the tragic shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, CO, in April 1999 when I read these verses.

Therefore, we thought it imperative to obey the Lord in our home schooling and ensure He was included and honored in everything we did as a family. So, in direct contrast to our experiences in conventional schools, we developed a working definition of what we were aiming for. Here it is: a Christ-centered education is where God is accorded His rightful place and given all the significance He is due.

What would it look like in your family's home school if God were honored, included, and significant in everything you teach this year? My prayer for each of us is: “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom...And whatever you do, whether in word or

deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” (Colossians 3:15-17).

## What makes an education distinctively Christian?

“A Christ-centered education is one in which God is accorded His rightful place and is given all the significance He is due.” We developed this homeschooling goal after asking, “What makes an education distinctively Christian?”

For the answer, we must look at the “Teacher’s Guide.” When we turned to the Bible to see what principles God gave about educating our children, we found that God instructed parents (1) to teach their children about Him, (2) to teach what is godly and right, and (3) not to teach what is ungodly or evil.

First, He says to teach our children about Him. “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)

As parents who follow Christ, we must first have a saving faith in Jesus Christ, loving our God wholeheartedly, and then being committed to sharing that personal relationship with our children. We must make good use of all the teachable moments available to us. Home schooling becomes a lifestyle, an everyday adventure with God as the primary instructor who teaches us His truths in all areas of life. It is the most consistent way to teach and disciple our children in God’s ways as we go about our daily routines.

Second, God tells us to teach what is godly and right. “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Take an idea, hold it up to the plumb line of God’s absolute truth, and then consider how it measures up. The Lord commands us to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2b), and He teaches us that “in [Jesus Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). True wisdom and knowledge do not have their basis in textbooks and universities. Godly wisdom is found in the Lord Jesus. Our children need to have a personal relationship with Him -- then they can experience and understand all subject areas as they are being taught from a godly perspective.

Third, the Lord does not want us to teach our children the details of ungodliness, unrighteousness, or wickedness. He commands us: “Do not learn the ways of the [heathen or ungodly] nations” (Jeremiah 10:2); “Do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world” (Romans 12:2a); and “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ” (Colossians 2:8).

How could we carry out these instructions without homeschooling our children – without consistently placing Christ at the center of everything we study? How would we teach our

children to love God with all their minds as well as with all their hearts? How would we protect our children from being snared by the world's philosophies? Praying once in the morning or briefly before a class or adding Bible study to an otherwise secular curriculum is not what makes us a Christ-centered home school. Instead, we are distinctively Christian because we sincerely and prayerfully live out these (and many other) biblical education principles to the best of our ability. How can we accomplish this critical task by following God's wise plan?

## Faith, Character, and Knowledge

We talked about three principles of biblical education that should be part of the fabric of our homeschooling life. We are to:

1. Teach our children about Him.
2. Teach what is godly and right.
3. Do not teach our children the details of ungodliness.

Let's consider how we began accomplishing this vital task. We started with God's wise plan listed in 2 Peter 1:5-8, *"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Faith is the first building block in a Christ-centered education. As Christian parents, we are to pray for the salvation of our children diligently and specifically teach them their need to come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior as young as the Holy Spirit moves in their spirits. From their salvation, our home school's emphasis switched from evangelism to discipleship in the Christian faith. It is unnecessary to search far and wide for those who need to see and hear the reality of our faith daily. We do not need to ask the Lord to give us a mission field. If He has blessed us with children, we already have our primary mission field.

Goodness is the second building block. This same word is translated as virtue, moral excellence, or character. One of God's goals for us is to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29), and our home school should be a place where godly character is emphasized, encouraged, and taught. We pray that the Holy Spirit will produce His fruit in our lives, causing us to be the godly examples of Jesus our children need to see. We also pray to cooperate with the Holy Spirit's work in our children's lives.

Firmly, in third place comes knowledge. Knowledge refers to all the academic facts we want our children to be able to handle with ease: multiplication facts, historical events, and state capitals.

Each day, if I knew that we had spent time growing in our faith somehow, I felt we had accomplished the most important task before the Lord. Then, if we have time to focus on character building, we have tackled the second most important use of our time. Hopefully, after these two goals are accomplished, there will be time to fill in workbook blanks, read books, and do other school matters.

Conventional schools do not consider anything related to faith part of their job. Character training is occasionally taught, but it lacks a foundation of faith. Teaching our children to be truthful or patient or not to bully others is great. But without faith undergirding those qualities, the character is being built upon a foundation of sand. Our Christian children need to realize that we are to be truthful, not because it is merely a good idea, but because the God we serve is the true Truth. We are to be long-suffering with other people because we serve a God who is naturally perfectly patient. Our children are not to lord it over others, not because this will make them unpopular with others, but because God is a perfect gentleman and never forces His way into anyone's life. We must diligently connect all the dots between faith and character so that our children know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that godly character springs from a solid and living faith.

If we, as parents, seek knowledge for its own sake and permit our children to do so, then we are all serving the idol of Education. Knowledge without godly wisdom is like a jigsaw puzzle with no box lid to use as a guide for assembly. All the facts in the world will do us no good if they cannot be applied in such a way as to please God and demonstrate His kind of wisdom from above, which is pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial, and sincere (James 3:17).

## What does it mean to give God the glory in education?

"A Christ-centered education is one in which God is accorded His rightful place and is given all the significance He is due." While trying to understand this definition better, we have looked at some biblical principles of education and a possible curriculum order from 2 Peter 1:5-8 over previous parts of this article. Let's look at a third topic: what does it mean to give God the glory in education?

First Corinthians 10:31 says, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do [home school your children], do it all for the glory of God." The Greek word translated as glory is *doxa*, which means "reputation." The corresponding Hebrew word is *kabod*, meaning "weight." Glory maintains God's reputation, carries weight, and is essential, significant, and influential. As we homeschool our children, we are to teach and show our children that God's reputation can be upheld and honored in each subject area; that God carries weight in academics; that He is both essential and significant in history, mathematics, literature, and science; and that because He is sovereign, He influences all of knowledge. Do you see God in each area of your curriculum? You will need to see Him first to point Him out to your children.

Scripture also reminds us, "...in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:6). "To acknowledge" means to make Christ known, to give recognition to Him, to admit His existence, to recognize Him as having power. You may already be doing this as you go through your school day. If so, keep up the excellent work. But if this idea is new to you, keep reading!

## What are some examples of giving God the glory He deserves in home education?

Begin by asking yourself these questions:

1. How can I acknowledge the Lord, make Christ known, in this subject area?
2. What importance, significance, and influence does God have in this subject?

Let's try this process with history. How can I make Christ known or acknowledge Him in this area? Are there glimpses of God that can be seen or "coincidences" that are just timed too perfectly? (Albert Einstein is supposed to have said, "Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous.")

### 1. An Example from History of God Being Important

For instance, when I was in a conventional school, we studied Christopher Columbus every October. "In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." I learned that he went to look for spices in the Indies and was greedy for gold. Imagine my amazement when I finally discovered (as a homeschool mom) some information about Columbus' faith in God! Never before had I heard of anything related to his spiritual beliefs or how he believed that God had directed his life. Can you spot God being influential in the following quotes from Columbus' writings?

"I found our Lord very well-disposed toward this my desire, and He gave me the spirit of intelligence for it. He prospered me in seamanship and supplied me with the necessary tools, of astrology [astronomy], as well as geometry and arithmetic and ingenuity of intellect and of manual skill to draw spherical maps which show cities, rivers and mountains, islands and ports -- everything in its proper place...Who doubts that this illumination was from the Holy Spirit? He, with marvelous rays of light, consoled me through the holy and sacred Scriptures...encouraging me to proceed."<sup>1</sup>

"It was the Lord who put it into my mind – I could feel His hand upon me – the fact that it would be possible to sail from here to the Indies. All who heard of my project rejected it with laughter, ridiculing me."<sup>2</sup>

"I am a most unworthy sinner, but I have cried out to the Lord for grace and mercy, and they have covered me completely. I have found the sweetest consolation since I made it my whole purpose to enjoy His marvelous presence...No one should fear to undertake any task in the name of our Savior, if it is just, and if the intention is purely for His holy service."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Christopher Columbus: His Life and Discovery in Light of His Prophecies*, Kay Brigham, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, translated and edited by Cecil Jane, Empire House, Picadilly, 1930, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 147.

“My hope in the One who created us all sustains me: He is an ever present help in trouble....When I was extremely depressed, He raised me with His right hand, saying, ‘O man of little faith, get up, it is I; do not be afraid.’”<sup>4</sup>

Did you see how Columbus gives glory and credit to God for the idea and the talent to sail? Does it make your heart beat with amazement when you read something like this? Won't your children be delighted to understand that God was active and noticeable in discovering this continent?

There is much argument today about setting aside a day to honor Columbus. While it is true that Columbus was not the first European to have sailed to this continent (perhaps Leif Ericson was) and the native Americans were already here, God sovereignly chose Columbus to bring this area to Europe's attention. The New World became headline-making news! Before this time, God had not desired much publicity for these lands. After Columbus, however, the secret was out, and explorers came and made a way in the wilderness.

On the heels of this age of exploration came the Protestant Reformation and the subsequent persecutions of Protestants throughout Europe. It then became evident that God had gone before and prepared a place in the New World as a spiritual haven for the protection of His people.<sup>5</sup>

Next, I will share another example of God receiving the glory due to His name in our home schooling.

## **2. Another example from History of God Being Important**

We have looked at how we could give God glory in everything we do, particularly home schooling. Using Christopher Columbus as an example, we saw how God used Columbus to carry the light of the gospel to America. As a postscript to that story, do you know that the name “Christopher” means “Christ-bearer” or “one who carries Christ?” God did use Columbus to carry His name across the Atlantic to this new continent.

Here is another example from the area of history—sometimes referred to as “His story.” How is God involved in the affairs of men? This was the first time I realized that God was involved in history at all.

Our family was studying the relationship between Spain and England. Catholic King Philip II of Spain was determined to eliminate the Protestant religion in Europe. Therefore, he strongly opposed the Protestant Elizabeth I of England. Philip married Elizabeth's half-sister, Mary, which was Philip's Plan A to get England back to being a Roman Catholic nation. But Mary died childless, so there was no heir to the English throne. Plan B was to attempt to marry Elizabeth. She would have no part of that and was actively working to defeat Spain. So, Philip began to plot to overthrow Elizabeth. Plan C was to assassinate Elizabeth and place her Catholic cousin,

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<sup>4</sup> Brigham, p. 97.

<sup>5</sup> For more information see <https://www.icr.org/article/columbus-his-creator>

Mary Stuart, on the throne. The plot was discovered; Elizabeth had Mary imprisoned and then executed. Plan D: Philip decided to invade England.

So, in 1588, he sent an invasion force of 130 ships (called an *armada* in Spanish). England had few ships to go up against such a formidable enemy. The smaller English ships, however, were more maneuverable than the larger Spanish ships. The battered Spanish fleet turned north, where it encountered a fierce storm, causing most of the ships to wreck against the coasts of Scotland and Ireland. “The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the people,” it states in Psalms 33:10.

So, while discussing this with our children, the Holy Spirit spoke quietly to my heart and reminded me of a Scripture verse, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him” (Luke 8:25).

In that verse, Jesus and the disciples were together in a boat, crossing over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. A fierce gale came up, terrifying even experienced fishermen, and the disciples believed they were in danger of drowning. They woke up Jesus, who was sleeping peacefully despite the boat's pitching, and He rebuked the wind and the waves. It became calm – so quickly and entirely that the men who had spent their lives on this lake were amazed and fearful. It stands to reason that the wind and the waves would respond in obedience to the One who had created them!

It is said that the English Protestants acknowledged God's help in their victory. There was no doubt that the “Protestant Wind” that had wrecked the Spanish fleet came from God. Many commemorative medals were struck to celebrate the occasion. One, the English Armada Medal, bears the Latin inscription *Flavit Jehovah et Dissipati Sunt*, which means, “He blew with His winds, and they were scattered.”

The historical impact of that one day in history is considerable. “England was preserved from both Spanish and Catholic domination. It accelerated the decline of Spain, weakened Spanish sea power, and weakened Spain's position in the New World. It established England as a sea power and opened the way for English Protestants, instead of Spanish Catholics, to settle in America.”<sup>6</sup>

God says He works in the affairs of men, and this is what that looks like!

Next, we will look at an example of how God has made Himself known in the study of oceanography.

### **3. An Example from Oceanography of God Being Important**

A Christ-centered education involves asking good questions and praying for answers. Here is an example of a Christian doing just that.

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<sup>6</sup> *World History for Christian Schools* by Bob Jones University Press.

Matthew Maury is credited with being one of the founders of modern oceanography. Referred to as “the Pathfinder of the Seas,” he is known for identifying and charting the currents in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans. Just where did Maury get the idea that there were currents in these oceans? Matthew Maury treated God as significant and important and as being present in his field of scientific inquiry. Remember that is part of our definition of giving glory to God.

Maury was reading through Psalm 8 one day and came upon verses six through eight, which say, “You [God] made [man] ruler over all the works of your hands...the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the sea.” As you read those verses, what word is used similar to the idea of currents? Do you see the word “paths?” Maury believed that if God said there were paths in the seas, it would be possible to find them.

Charting these ocean paths is exactly what he prayed about and gave his life to researching. God was faithful to show him the answers to his prayers. He located the currents in the Atlantic that move from east to west, making sailing faster when sailors catch those paths. Traveling north in the Atlantic, sailors can also catch currents that move from west to east, making travel faster. If such currents were located in the Atlantic, it would be worth looking for similar currents in the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. Maury found those paths and made history by recording the currents for others to use. Maury is known today because he took God at His Word and discovered something exciting and wonderful about how God designed the world.

If we were to pray and ask God to show us wonderful things in His world that would benefit others, what might He be pleased to reveal to us? If we were to encourage that same inquiring heart attitude in our Christian children, what truths might God be delighted to demonstrate to the next generation? Perhaps abundantly more than we could ever think or imagine!

#### **4. An Example from Chemistry of the Importance of God**

Another aspect of a Christ-centered education is having the God-given wisdom to look at all of life from God’s perspective. Here is one of the finest examples I have come across highlighting someone who truly gave God the glory in his education and was amazingly rewarded by God!

Frequently, this man told the following story:

“Years ago, I went into my laboratory and said, ‘Dear Mr. Creator, please tell me what the universe was made for?’

“The Great Creator answered, ‘You want to know too much for that little mind of yours. Ask for something more your size, little man.’

“Then I asked, ‘Please, Mr. Creator, tell me what man was made for?’

“Again, the Creator replied, ‘You are still asking too much. Cut down on the extent and improve the intent.’

“So then I asked, ‘Please, Mr. Creator, will you tell me why the peanut was made?’

“That’s better, but even then it’s infinite. What do you want to know about the peanut?’

“Mr. Creator, can I make milk out of the peanut?’

“What kind of milk do you want? Good Jersey milk or just plain boarding house milk?’

“Good Jersey milk.’



“And then the Creator taught me to take the peanut apart and put it back together again. And out of that process have come forth all these products!”<sup>7</sup>

This Christian gentleman had discovered over three hundred products from the peanut alone and an additional one hundred eighteen products from the sweet potato.

A year later, in 1921, this same man, George Washington Carver, was invited to Washington, D.C., to address the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means about the many uses of the peanut to improve the South's economy. The committee initially gave Dr. Carver a mere ten minutes to explain the results of his research. Over an hour and a half later, however, the chairman asked him,

“Dr. Carver, how did you learn all of these things?”

Dr. Carver answered, “From an old book.”

“What book?” asked the senator.

Dr. Carver replied, “The Bible.”

The senator inquired, “Does the Bible tell about peanuts?”

“No, sir,” Dr. Carver replied, “But it does tell about the God who made the peanut. I asked Him to show me what to do with the peanut, and He did.”

When asked about his success, Dr. Carver remarked, “It is simple. It is found in the Bible, ‘In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.’” (Proverbs 3:6)<sup>8</sup>

## **5. An Example from Medicine about the Importance of God**

One of the lessons we learned while having babies was that a Christ-centered education involves applying God's truth to everyday life.

Our first two children were born in hospital settings, and our last two children were born at home with a midwife attending. We learned much about God by trusting Him in each birth to direct us to bring these precious children into the world. When our two sons were born at home within about two years of each other, the first medical issue we faced after their safe deliveries was regarding circumcision. We were expected to take them to a doctor's office or hospital for that procedure. With our first son, that procedure was done within the first twelve hours of his life while he was still in the hospital.

When it was time for our second son's procedure, we could choose where to take him. We knew that God had commanded Hebrew babies to be circumcised on the eighth day<sup>9</sup> after birth, so we thought we would do the same thing. Although we didn't know why this was the best time for this procedure, we did trust that God had good and beneficial reasons for His commands. We did the same for our third son, and in both instances, we were required by the hospital to remain

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<sup>7</sup> William Federer, *George Washington Carver: His Life and Faith in his Own Words* (St. Louis, MO: Amerisearch, 2002). 35. [See also John Perry, *Unshakable Faith: Booker T. Washington & George Washington Carver* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1999), 337-338.]

<sup>8</sup> For more information see

<https://www.cslewisinstitute.org/resources/george-washington-carver-1860-1943/>

<sup>9</sup> Genesis 17:12; Leviticus 12:3.

after the procedure for at least an hour or longer. The boys were checked by the nurses every fifteen minutes. I finally asked what they were so diligently checking for. They answered that most boys bled a lot, and they were constantly watching to be sure the bleeding was under control. They were surprised that with both our boys, there was little to no bleeding.

We brought them home and researched the medical information regarding the wisdom of the eighth day. Babies are born without any Vitamin K, which helps to clot blood. By the eighth day, the baby's body can produce enough Vitamin K to prevent bleeding. It seems that God wisely called for the procedure to be done when the babies were at just the right age to be protected.

“In the 1930s, Danish researcher Henrik Dam and American researcher Edward Doisy found that which was required for blood to clot. They shared the 1943 Nobel Prize in Medicine for this research.

“The human body has 2 blood clotting elements. One of them is called Vitamin K. Vitamin K is not formed in the body up until the 5th to the 7th day.

“The 2nd clotting factor which is essential is called Prothrombin. It surprisingly enough develops to 30% of normal by the 3rd day of life and after that with seeming in-consequence, peaks at 110% on the 8th day, just before leveling off at 100% of normal.

“If vitamin K is not present when a baby boy is circumcised, the baby will bleed to death. The reason why Yahweh established Day Eight for circumcision is that vitamin K peaks in a newborn at 8 days of age. The 8th day is the optimum day for circumcision because of the highest presence of the clotting factor vitamin K.

“Today when baby boys are circumcised within a couple of days of birth, they are administered vitamin K to help with blood clotting.<sup>10</sup>

“We should commend the many hundreds of workers who labored at great expense over a number of years to discover that the safest day to perform circumcision is the eighth. Yet, as we congratulate medical science for this recent finding, we can almost hear the leaves of the Bible rustling. They would like to remind us that four thousand years ago, when God initiated circumcision with Abraham...Abraham did not pick the eighth day after many centuries of trial-and-error experiments. Neither he nor any of his company from the ancient city of Ur in the Chaldees ever had been circumcised. It was a day picked by the Creator of vitamin K.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Scientific Evidence for Circumcision on the Eighth Day  
<https://evidence-for-the-bible.com/scientific-evidence-for-the-bible/scientific-evidence-for-circumcision-on-the-eighth-day/#:~:text=The%208th%20day%20is%20the,circumcise%20on%20the%208th%20day%3F>

<sup>11</sup> *None of These Diseases*. S. I. McMillen. 1984, p. 93.

So, one of the lessons we learned is that a Christ-centered education involves applying God's truth from Scripture to everyday life.

## **6. An Example from Life and Social Skills about the Importance of God**

God taught us another lesson about Christ-centered education here: The truth of a physical reality is often used to illustrate the truth of a spiritual reality.

We can see and experience a marriage relationship in the real world. Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:32 that marriage also illustrates a spiritual truth that is much harder to see and comprehend. Marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and His church, that body of believers who have trusted Jesus Christ for their salvation.

How a husband is to love and cherish his wife shows us how Christ Himself loves and cherishes believers. That a husband is given by God a role of authority over his wife shows us how Christ has authority also given by God over the church.

Thinking from the physical to the spiritual can teach us truths. Will Christ ever leave or desert the church, His bride? No, for it says in Hebrews 13:5, "I [God] will never leave you or forsake you." What does that tell us about commitment and staying married for life?

Jesus frequently taught the principle of moving from the physical to the spiritual. These teachings are recorded as parables (particularly in the book of Luke). Jesus would relate something common and well-known to the listeners, and then He would relate a spiritual significance to those everyday objects He had mentioned.

In education, we call this teaching analogies. Thinking by analogy is a higher-order critical thinking skill, and it is tested to determine a person's ability to do graduate-level college work.

## **7. An Example from Anthropology of the Importance of God**

Have you ever been stumped by an unbeliever's question regarding the eternal destiny of those who haven't heard about God? "Well, what about the heathen?" your friend asks.

This was a lesson in which God taught me that a Christ-centered education causes a Christian to praise God, get to know Him better, and get excited about that.

*Eternity in Their Hearts* is a book published in 1981 by Don Richardson. The title is based on Ecclesiastes 3:11: "He [God] has also set eternity in the hearts of men."

Richardson teaches that the God who prepared the gospel for all people has also prepared all people for it. He shares numerous examples of how God has hidden a witness of His existence in the cultures of many pagan peoples.

First, there can be some hidden or forgotten information about a vague god in the past who, upon closer examination, amazingly resembles the True God of the Bible.

Second, there might be a legend of a lost book that the native people have longed to reclaim.

Third, some people have seemingly strange customs, and when a Christian learns of these, the believer realizes that the customs clearly point to God. Such customs are the subject of another of Richardson's books called *Peace Child*.

I was delighted to know such a marvelous and compassionate God when I read these books! He had carefully and deliberately made many provisions for people to come to know Him in a personal way. Tracking these clues throughout various cultures is far better than any mystery or detective novel!

### **8. An Example from Mathematics of the Importance of God**

My last example will be from the area of mathematics. It seems easier to catch the vision for a Christ-centered education in other subject areas but harder to grasp in mathematics.

"What is so Christian about math, anyway?" The lesson I learned from God and mathematics was that Christ-centered education makes God's character more understandable.

Galileo wrote, "Mathematics is the alphabet with which God has written the universe." He recognized that God was a heavyweight, significant in math.

"Mathematics is the language God used in His creation of the universe, and thus it is logical, orderly, beautiful, and very practical in science and daily life. No subject matter better reflects the glory of God than mathematics. To study mathematics is to study God's thoughts after Him, for He is the great Engineer and Architect of the universe."<sup>12</sup>

Before I became a follower of Christ, I taught junior high students in public school. My struggling students would frequently ask me why math was necessary anyway. Reflecting my lack of godly wisdom, I had no good reasons to give them. But through the years of home schooling our children, God has taught me these lessons.

First, we can begin to comprehend the character of God in math because God is infinite, like numbers; God is orderly; you must evaluate numbers in a specific sequence of operations; God is honest, and He expects our weights and measures to be as exact as humanly possible; God is absolute, there are correct answers and wrong answers.

Second, we can study biblical financial principles in math: tithing, giving gifts rather than loans, being prompt to pay bills, being good stewards of the money God has given us, being honest about under- or overpayments, and assisting widows or orphans without reward.

Third, we can understand the importance of precision. It matters exactly where a decimal point goes in my grocery bill total: \$150.00 versus \$15,000. In aviation terms, even one degree is

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<sup>12</sup> A Beka Home School Catalog, 1992, p. 4.

huge. So pilots are taught the 1 in 60 rule, which states that after 60 miles, a one-degree error in heading will result in straying off course by one mile. Being precise is a character quality of God, and it is also an important truth in life.

Fourth, we can grow in character – more than in any other subject- for math teaches us to be patient, persevere, start over again when necessary, be obedient, and be discerning, among other character qualities.

Instead of being the least likely subject in which to see God, mathematics is one of the finest areas to give God the significance He truly deserves.<sup>13</sup>

“Every time you solve a math problem, you’re relying on the underlying consistency in math. Any time you see that math still operates consistently, it’s testifying that God is still on His throne, faithfully holding all things together.”<sup>14</sup>

## Summary

We began this article by asking, “What makes an education distinctively Christian?” Then, we proposed our answer as a definition: a Christ-centered education is where God is accorded His rightful place and given all the significance He is due. This definition tells us what we hope to achieve as a result.

We have asked a series of questions to help us consider how to reach that goal:

- How can I acknowledge the Lord, make Christ known, in this subject area?
- What importance, significance, and influence does God have in this subject?
- Are there glimpses of God that can be seen or “coincidences” that are just timed too perfectly?

What might all of this look like in your home school? A Christ-centered education:

- Involves being aware of the insights the Holy Spirit can give us as parents
- Is where God is treated as a “heavyweight” in every situation and academic study
- Is where godly wisdom is diligently sought after and valued
- Is where God is not omitted or ignored, but He is given all the credit He deserves
- Involves asking good questions and searching prayerfully for the answers
- Is having the godly wisdom to look at all of life from God’s perspective
- Involves applying God’s truth to everyday life
- Uses the truth of a physical reality to illustrate the truth of a spiritual reality
- Causes you and your children to praise God daily

We have looked for examples of God’s importance in various subjects: history, oceanography, chemistry, medicine, life and social skills, anthropology, and mathematics. These examples are

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<sup>13</sup> For more information, see *Mathematics: Is God Silent?*, James Nickel. Ross House Books, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Katherine Hannon, author of *Principles of Mathematics*. Master Books. 2015.

by no means exhaustive, but they are how God taught me and our family. May these examples help you recognize what God will show you and your family.

If all of this sounds overwhelming, please remember that believing parents have the experience of the Holy Spirit dwelling inside them, helping at every point. As their children, in turn, accept Christ as their Savior, they will have that same Spirit within them to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).” In John 14:26, Jesus said, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” There is also comfort for us in Isaiah 54:13, “All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.” I pray sincerely for God’s peace to be on your children and on our children.

It thrills my heart to imagine what this generation of homeschooled children may discover, invent, create, or design because they have been taught from childhood to believe in the truth of God’s Word in every detail. Will you set this example before your children as something they could prayerfully strive for, each in their own field of interest?

Let me close with a quote that has been attributed to both Dwight L. Moody and Henry Varley. “The world has yet to see what Almighty God can and will do with, for, through, in, and by a man [or woman] wholly and fully yielded to Him and to His service.”