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SKooLd buT INeDucATd?

How To Get An Education Even Though You Are In College!

*And wouldn't a really good educasstion endow them with the greatest caution in this regard?
But surely they have had an education like that. Perhaps we shouldn't assert this dogmatically, Glaucon.
What we can assert is . . . that they must have the right education, whatever it is...."
Plato, Republic 416b*

Introduction

Imagine that you have come down with a serious illness, serious enough to be admitted to the local hospital. Your doctor examines you carefully, offers his expert diagnosis, and recommends a course of treatment to rid your body of the pernicious disease. The prognosis is good. The various therapies are administered, you seem to improve, and eventually you are released. Because your stay was somewhat extended, the medical personnel who attended to you even celebrated your departure with a special little ceremony. Finally, at long last, you return home and resume your everyday life out in the real world.

Surprisingly, however, the symptoms of your disease persist, though not in an overly dramatic way. Nonetheless they are there and they affect you. Intuitively you know that something's just not quite right. As a matter of fact, you struggle along and live with the consequences of this illness on a day to day basis until your life ends.

The lingering effects of the disease, despite your stay in the hospital, leads to an unavoidable conclusion: *you were treated but not cured*. The reasons for this could be many. Possibly a stingy insurance company imposed financial limits on the scope of your treatment. Maybe there were procedures capable of effecting a cure

that your doctor simply did not know about or failed to employ for whatever reason. These might include such things as a nutritional regimen, a new drug, or a surgical procedure, omissions permanently affecting your well-being for life.

Perhaps the missing element was a personal dimension in your relationship with your physician. The film *Patch Adams*, starring Robin Williams, beautifully illustrates how the intangibles of humor and compassion, often omitted and even scorned in the medical community, are powerful tools in the healing process. In fact, the real-life Patch Adams, M.D., upon whom the movie is based, believes strongly that the omission of friendship is a major lacuna in the medical establishment, with serious consequences for patient-healing. He registers his complaint and explains his alternative in these forceful words.

Medicine, you are blowing it! Transference paranoia and professional distance be condemned! For the health of the patient, the staff, and for the health of our profession, patients and staff must strive toward friendship in the deepest sense of the word. Bedside manner has nothing to do with information! It is the unabashed projection of love, humour, empathy, tenderness, and compassion for that patient. Please, keep your scientific brilliance, it is an important tool, but it is not the magic inherent in healing; for that, we must look to love and caring. Friendship is great medicine for the patient. It overcomes all the inadequacies of the healing profession.¹

Whether you agree with Patch Adams or not, the point he illustrates is this: there maybe necessary components to the healing process whose omission is catastrophic to the life, health, and long-term well-being of the patient.

There is a parallel between this scenario in medicine and the world of higher education. Indeed, I submit to you that just as it is possible to be treated but not cured as a patient, so it is equally possible to be schooled but uneducated as a student. If certain omissions may result in an incomplete healing at the hospital, so it

¹ Patch Adams, M. D. "Friendship as Therapy: The Doctor-Patient Relationship." Available at <http://www.newage.com.au/contributions/friend.html>. Accessed August 8, 1999.

is also possible that certain omissions may result in an incomplete education at the university. Both mistreatment and miseducation in these respective domains are possible, with lifelong consequences for both the body and the mind.

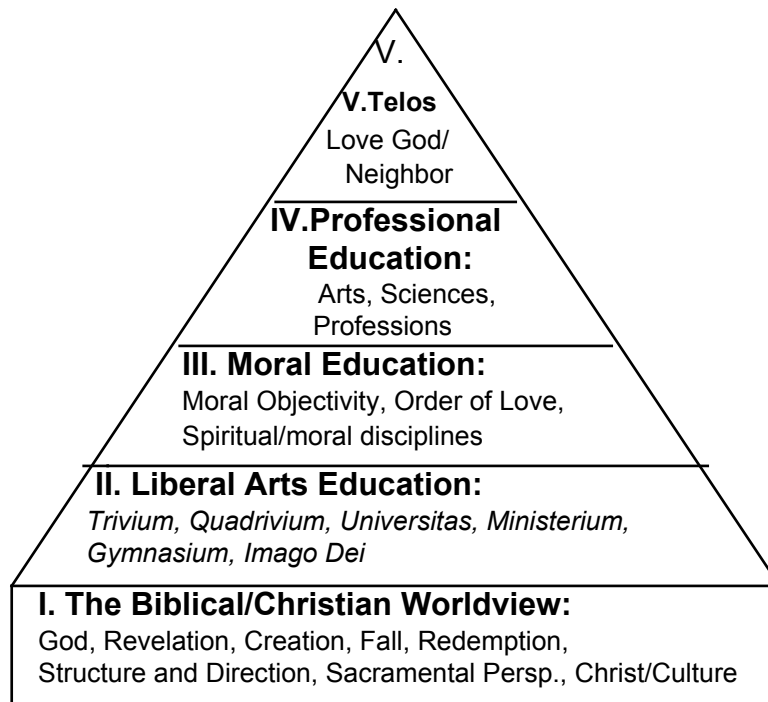
The world of higher education needs its own version of Patch Adams to call it to task and point out where there are serious gaps in the educational process, and how they might be filled. Though I am not nearly as funny as he, in this paper at least, I would like to momentarily assume his mantle to warn you that it is quite possible to be schooled but uneducated. That's the negative task. In a positive way and even more importantly, I want also to explore how you can get an education even though you are in college!

My motivation for this exercise is lodged in a great fear but also in a high hope. My great fear is associated with what I have come to call the "front door—back door" syndrome. Namely, that countless freshmen students who enter the front door of the university at the beginning of their undergraduate careers and go out the back door on the day of graduation with degree in hand, remain the same basic persons they were when they started. *They never recognized the potential that Christian higher education has to transform their very lives.* Who would want to spend four or five years in a hospital undergoing rigorous treatment without *remarkable* physical improvement? Analogously, who would want to spend four or five years at a hospital for the mind (the university), undergoing rigorous academic treatment (course work), without *remarkable* mental and moral improvement (uneducated)? No doubt students in college take many classes, have good experiences, make some close friends, and even grow up a bit. But all too often, they remain substantially unchanged at the root of their being and in the fruit of their lives. This is my great fear. My high hope, even my confidence, is that something revolutionary can and will happen to many Christian college students somewhere

between the front and back doors of their university careers which will affect them for the rest of their lives.

Schooled but Uneducated: How and Why

I begin with a diagram that explains my thesis. It consists of five essential educational components, plus two indispensable reinforcements.



The first essential component is the development of a comprehensive, wholistic biblical worldview as a foundational enterprise. The second concerns the pursuit of a classic, liberal arts education. The third focuses on the importance of moral education. The fourth highlights professional education.² The fifth points to the *telos* or final purpose education as a whole.

² I include “pre-professional” education, that is pre-law, pre-med, pre-ministerial, pre-MBA courses of study under the heading of professional education throughout this paper.

The indispensable reinforcements of these educational essentials are twofold. The first is the cultivation of a significant relationship between a student as an apprentice with a mentor, faculty or otherwise. The second encourages the active involvement of students in a like-minded community of believers that provides crucial spiritual and intellectual support as well as an outlet for service.

This chart, then, conveys my ideal model of a complete education. But it also explains how one can be schooled but uneducated: it is by largely focusing upon and really caring about the fourth element of this chart—professional education—to the neglect or even omission of the remaining four essentials and the two indispensable reinforcements. In other words, I am saying that the pursuit of professional education as the chief objective of an undergraduate career may be a form of schooling, but as the principal objective, it is not a true or complete education.

Let's return very briefly to my "great fear" which I mentioned earlier, the "front door—back door" syndrome. A recent survey of a cross-section of students in my classes has unfortunately confirmed it, revealing that they have little awareness or understanding of the educational components that remake lives. Their comprehension of the Christian worldview and liberal arts education is minuscule. I did not even question them on their perceptions of moral education, the overall purpose of an undergraduate career, or the roles of mentors and communities. But my suspicion is that there is considerable naiveté regarding these matters as well. Thus, students deficient in their understanding, much less the pursuit, of these crucial areas are at a distinct disadvantage. They are, in fact, prime candidates for the deception that *having* a degree is the same thing as *being* educated.

But happily there is an alternative, one that is established upon a biblical vision of life and reality. My reflections on an enlarged view of the meaning and

scope of higher education based on Christian assumptions has come together for me in the above diagram. My goal in the rest of this paper is to explain as briefly as possible the components of this diagram which I believe make for a true education.

How To Get An Education Even Though You Are In College!

Of the seven elements in this model—there are five educational essentials and two indispensable reinforcements. We begin with a look at the first of the five essentials by examining the biblical worldview.

Five Essential Components to True Education

I. The Development of a Biblical Worldview

The development of a biblical world view must be our first enterprise, for it serves as the basis for Christian higher education in general, and is the prerequisite necessary for making sense of everything else which follows. It begins, of course, with the infinite, personal, Trinitarian God and the revelation of Himself and all His works through His Word in the Scriptures. The ultimate fact of the universe is that God exists and has made Himself known—He is there, and He is not silent.³ To form a biblical worldview, then, we must begin by ascertaining the overall message of the Scriptures in order to discover the Christian meaning of things. Three themes are crucial to this understanding.

Creation, Fall, Redemption. These three concepts are the “pillar points” of the biblical worldview and together constitute the narrative-plot of Scripture. Each must be taken in a universal, all-encompassing sense. In the beginning, God created all things, made human beings as His image and likeness, established the institution of marriage and family, and gave humanity an original commission to be

³ This phrase comes from the title of a book by Francis A. Schaeffer, *He Is There And He Is Not Silent* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1972).

the stewards of creation by responsibly developing its physical and cultural potential. God declared this original world and His purposes for it to be unmistakably good.

But then humanity fell into sin, resulting in the comprehensive corruption of God's original handiwork. Manifested in social, cultural, personal, and natural ways, human rebellion rendered the creation and life within it abnormal. There was a desperate need for restoration.

In the fullness of time came the cosmic Christ, the Creator and Redeemer of the heavens and the earth. Through Him, "God was pleased to reconcile to Himself *all things*, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. 1: 20, NRSV). Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus "already" inaugurated the kingdom of God, procured salvation, and transformed the old creation into the new. His grace restores nature. But His work is "not yet" complete. At the end of history, Christ will return, consummate His redemptive plan, and usher in the new heavens and the new earth.

At the heart, then, of the biblical worldview are these three majestic themes which focus on an originally good creation, the corruption of that creation by sin, and the restoration of that creation through Christ. These crucial notions, best understood in the context of the unfolding story of the Bible, form an interpretative framework that opens up the whole of life to the Christian student, and also provides a foundation for the educational enterprise. Three additional notions are rooted in this outlook on reality.

Structure and Direction. While a majority of sincere, evangelical Christians embrace a split view of reality by dividing things up into sacred and secular compartments, the biblical worldview grounded in creation, fall, and redemption will not permit such a perspective. Rather, Scripture asserts that the very *structure* of all

things as created by God is very good. There are no inherently secular, temporal, or inferior components to God's creation. It is human sin that has corrupted things, and taken them in the *wrong direction*. Now here's the key to overcoming the sacred/secular split: instead of rejecting large chunks of life as if they were inherently bad (which they are not), the goal of Christian redemption is to reclaim these vast stretches of life and *redirect* them to their proper use. Food and sex are excellent examples. The distinction between structure and direction saves us from dualism, and enables us in everything to affirm the gift, reject the corruption, and reclaim all of life for Christian use and enjoyment to the glory of God. This includes education, which far from a secular endeavor, is the blessing of God to students.

Sacramental Perspective. The structural goodness of all things implies yet another significant implication of the biblical view of reality: its sacramental character. As sacramental, the entire creation is holy, and the bearer of the divine glory and grace. It reveals spiritual truths and possess sacred meaning. Several biblical texts bear this out. Not only are "the heavens telling the glory of God, and the firmament declaring the work of His hands" (Psa. 19: 1), but according to the prophet Isaiah in his vision, "the fullness of the whole earth is His glory" (Isa. 6: 3). In the New Testament, St. Paul makes essentially the same point, teaching that God's invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature for example, can be clearly seen in the things He has made (Rom. 1: 20). As these texts indicate, the whole cosmos is best perceived in sacramental tones, a concept Russian Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann has explained in these words.

The world, be it in its totality as cosmos, or in its life and becoming as time and history, is an *epiphany* of God, a means of His revelation, presence, and power. In other words, it . . . truly speaks of Him and is in itself an essential means both

of knowledge of God and communion with Him, and to be so is its true nature and its ultimate destiny.⁴

This sacramental vision underscores the sense of the holy in all things. It ought to transform the Christian's approach to thinking and living in the world. In education, this perspective imparts a kind of sanctity to the study of all disciplines, seeing in each of them an avenue to God.

Yet a serious problem has arisen. Despite its essential character as sacrament, the world and human culture have been deeply corrupted by sin. What kind of relationship, then, ought to exist between the Church and the world, between Christians and their culture?

Christianity and Culture. Various answers to this question of the relation between these two realms, so central to any Christian conception of life, have been elucidated by H. Richard Niebuhr in his classic book, *Christ and Culture* (1951).⁵ Extreme positions either place Christians and culture in a permanent, adversarial relationship (Christ against culture), or exalt the authority of culture over Christ and interpret the sum-total of the faith by it (Christ of culture). More centrist views place Christ and culture in a hierarchical relation (Christ above culture), or set them in tension (Christ and culture in paradox), or defend the role of Christ as the redeemer of culture. There is truth in each of these positions. At times we need to oppose the culture in its depravity, and at other times to learn from it in its brilliance. As Lord, Christ is certainly supreme over culture, and as residents of two kingdoms (the world's and God's), there will always be tensions in fulfilling our duties as Christians and citizens. Overall, however, the biblical worldview presented here greatly values human culture, recognizes its pervasive corruption, and calls for its transformation

⁴ Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World* (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1963), 120.

⁵ H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1951).

through believers as agents of the Kingdom of God across the whole spectrum of life. Christian students equipped with this perspective can view their education as an opportunity to prepare themselves to become instruments of change in a troubled world.

These are the basic elements of the biblical worldview. This matter ought to be the first order of business because it provides a coherent framework for thought and action that is wholistic, sacramental, and redemptive. Such concepts must come to constitute the solid Christian student's "well worn grooves of thought,"⁶ carved deeply into the heart. This mindset not only becomes the springs of a believer's life, but also lays the foundation for Christian higher education, including its liberal, moral, and professional aspects, all aimed at the distinctive goal of love.

II. Liberal Arts Education

Liberal arts education is, in its highest and holiest sense, a theological concept. It differs from other forms of education which looks upon human beings as means to ends, especially economic ones. Liberal education, on the other hand, is concerned with persons as persons possessing intrinsic value, and thus with their development as persons, both intellectual and moral. Herein lies its nature as a theological concept, for the Christian tradition promotes the aggressive pursuit of human excellence in mind and character which closely coincides with the vision of liberal education. Believers are to be "mature in their thinking" (1 Cor. 14: 20), and are to grow in character toward "the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4: 13). Liberal education, I submit, contributes significantly to the achievement of these goals, and can make a crucial, if not necessary contribution, to Christian growth and discipleship.

⁶ C. S. Lewis, "In Praise of Solid People," *Poems*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Fount Paperbacks, Harper Collins, 1994), 199.

What is liberal education? The model that I propose is derived from the medieval syllabus, focusing on the seven liberal arts, the *trivium* and *quadrivium*.⁷

Under the inspiration of this model, I submit the following definition:

Liberal education involves both a process and a goal. The process includes the cultivation of the tools of learning and the development of the core powers of the human mind (*trivium*). It entails an understanding of the core subjects of human knowledge (*quadrivium*), and how these subjects fit together into a unified whole (*universitas*). It also includes the responsibility of those possessing this knowledge to use it in service to others (*ministerium*). The goal of liberal education is human excellence in mind and body (*gymnasium*). To put it in theological terms, it makes a significant contribution toward the restoration of human beings as the image and likeness of God (*imago Dei*).

Trivium. The *trivium* refers to the tools of learning, which in the medieval syllabus consisted of a study of grammar (the structure of language), logic (constructing arguments with language), and rhetoric (the persuasive use of language in communication). Today we would focus on the development of mental skills in such areas as thinking, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and understanding. The genius of the medieval syllabus lies in its twofold division and in this simple insight: that one must *first* develop the tools of learning (*trivium*) as the necessary and prerequisite discipline *before* one tackles the subjects of learning (*quadrivium*). Otherwise, education merely consists of an exposure to a smattering of subjects, and fails miserably in teaching students how to think and how to learn. In liberal arts education, then, Christian students must initially commit themselves to developing their intellectual abilities to their highest capacity.

Quadrivium. The *quadrivium* consists of the subjects of learning, which in the medieval syllabus were four in number: arithmetic, astronomy, music, and

⁷ Most of what I know about the medieval syllabus has come from the Oxford University address (1947), turned pamphlet from Dorothy L. Sayers, "The Lost Tools of Learning," (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd. 1948). It is also available in Douglas Wilson, *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning: An Approach to Distinctively Christian Education*, Turning Point Christian Worldview Series, ed. Marvin Olasky (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1991), 145-64.

geometry. Today, we would include in this list other important disciplines such as literature, physics, history, psychology, foreign languages, fine arts, religion and philosophy. Regarding the study of these disciplines, we might with profit recall the quip of G. K. Chesterton who observed that there are in fact no uninteresting subjects, only uninterested people!⁸

Here, however, a very important point must be made: in the tradition of liberal arts education, these subjects are to be studied as ends in themselves, and not for professional or utilitarian purposes. Knowledge of the *quadrivium* is not pursued so that students will be able to do something *with* them, but that these disciplines might do something *with* students. They are studied simply for the joy and benefit of understanding the world and its culture through them. As my former student Brian Witherspoon has wisely stated, “A Christian liberal arts perspective, then, is perceiving the whole of liberal knowledge for its own sake, while operating from Christian assumptions about the nature of reality. . . . Doing so will result in fully shaping the total person of the Christian liberal artist.”⁹ Therefore, the pursuit of the *quadrivium*, or the subjects of learning as an intrinsic good ought to be a second priority for the Christian student in the liberal arts.

Universitas. It is not enough, however, simply to study a variety of interesting, but unrelated subjects. They must be joined to each other through the curriculum, by the professor, and most importantly in the mind of the student so that the unity of knowledge is revealed. According to John Henry Newman, the basis of this unity is rooted in God. He writes: “All branches of knowledge are connected together, because the subject-matter of knowledge is intimately united in itself, as

⁸ Cited in James V. Schall, *Another Sort of Learning* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 27.

⁹ Brian Witherspoon, “The Role of Science in Christian Liberal Arts Education and the Need for Pedagogical Reform,” TMs (photocopy), pp. 12, 15, Dallas Baptist University, May 7, 1999.

being the acts and the work of the Creator.” Newman also believed, and rightly so, that a comprehension of the subjects of knowledge and their mutual relations is the ultimate science and the highest philosophy. Again, he writes: “That only is true enlargement of mind which is the power of viewing many things at once as one whole, of referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, of understanding their respective values, and determining their mutual dependence.”¹⁰ This joining together of the disciplines into an architectonic whole constitutes the true glory of education as *universitas*—unity in diversity—and infuses within the heart of the student an amazing joy and fulfillment in study and learning. Thus, a third task of the Christian liberal artist ought to be to relate the subjects of learning together in pursuit of the organic unity of truth.

Ministerium. Though liberal education is pursued primarily as an end in itself, it still has moral ramifications. Education is an ethical enterprise. To know something is to be accountable for it. Once we possess the truth, we must also do it. In sum, once liberal education has performed its work in us, it must eventually culminate in service (*ministerium*)—in the church, the home, the workplace, the community, and so on. It ought to prepare people for responsible action in fulfillment of their fundamental roles in life. As the great puritan writer John Milton once put it, “I call therefore a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully and magnanimously all the offices both private and public, of peace and war.”¹¹ Christian students, therefore, must cultivate a deep sense of responsibility incurred by the gift of liberal arts education, and employ their

¹⁰ John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*, Rethinking the Western Tradition, ed. Frank M. Turner (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 76, 99.

¹¹ John Milton, “Of Education,” in *The Harvard Classics*, ed. Charles W. Eliot, vol. 3 (New York: P. F. Collier & Son Company), 251.

knowledge faithfully in their callings as believers, spouses and parents, workers, and citizens.

Gymnasium. This discussion would be seriously deficient if the physical component to liberal arts education was not addressed. Training the body for its own sake through rigorous physical exercise and athletic competition, as well as developing the mind and character, is an essential aspect to a complete education. The overall goal is captured nicely in this classic phrase: *mens sana in corpore sano* (a sound mind in a sound body). St. Paul, I think, would approve, for he has reminded us that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that we ought to glorify God in our bodies (1 Cor. 6: 19-20). Plato also included bodily exercise (gymnastics) in his program of education, along with the care of the soul. He argued that a harmony of body and soul in the same person was one of the world's most beautiful sights: "Therefore, if someone's soul has a fine and beautiful character and his body matches it in beauty and is thus in harmony with it, so that both share in the same pattern, wouldn't that be the most beautiful sight for anyone who has eyes to see?" (*Republic* III). As whole persons, therefore, Christian students must not neglect the importance of physical education.

Imago Dei. The process of liberal arts education does indeed aim at a goal, that of human excellence. In theological terms, it contributes to the restoration of men and women as the *imago Dei*. How could it be otherwise? Through the *trivium*, *quadrivium*, *universitas*, *ministerium* and *gymnasium*, human beings approach the fullness of their powers and the image of God comes to bright expression. This is not, however, for human glory, but for God's. As St. Irenaeus said, "When a person is fully alive, God is glorified!" Liberal arts education contributes significantly to this end. It is, indeed, a theological conception of the highest magnitude. It must be at the heart of a Christian student's undergraduate career.

III. Moral Education

Rooted in the biblical worldview, and permeating the content of liberal education is another necessary component of a true university career: moral education. Contemporary culture, however, is engulfed in what C. S. Lewis has called “the poison of subjectivism,” the fatal view that we have the power to create our own standards.¹² This view, expressed in the contemporary language of “values” and “rights,” is rooted in a subjectivist and relativist framework. It produces what Lewis aptly refers to in *The Abolition of Man* as “men without chests,” that is, people without moral character.¹³ The content of ethical discourse on today’s campuses and in society at large has been dominated by these ideas. The results have been telling.

Christianity proposes a radical alternative to the contemporary scene. It asserts that there is a moral order to the universe, ultimately and firmly anchored in the immutable character of a God of perfect love and justice. Objective standards for character and conduct are known by natural law and special revelation, and are applicable to the ethical dilemmas of everyday life. Human beings are responsible agents who will have to give an account of their lives on the basis of these moral demands.

In light of these realities, Christian students must give more than adequate attention to the matter of moral formation as another vital component to their university education. I would like to summarize the Christian moral vision and its educational implications under three headings: (1) objective morality, (2) the order of love (*ordo amoris*), and (3) the spiritual and moral disciplines.

¹² C. S. Lewis, “The Poison of Subjectivism,” in *Christian Reflections*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 72-81.

¹³ C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Touchstone Book-Simon and Schuster, 1996), chp. 1.

Objective Morality. Christian students must acknowledge the existence of the objective moral order rooted in the divine character, understand its weighty requirements, and become responsive to its demands. This recognition may be attained through study of the Scriptures. It can come by reflection on the idea of natural law and through an analysis of conscience and its inner promptings. On the basis of both special revelation and natural law, a set of time-honored virtues and vices, derived from Jewish-Christian and Greco-Roman sources, are also available for consideration. The cardinal virtues are seven in number, three derived from theology—faith, hope, and love, and four from philosophy—courage, justice, temperance, and prudence. There are the seven deadly sins or vices as well: pride, envy, anger, sloth, avarice, gluttony, and lust.

Equipped with this knowledge, students must recognize that moral education pervades the university curriculum, and is not restricted to religion or ethics courses. As Plato pointed out in the *Republic* III, learning to read depends on being able to recognize letters in all sorts of combinations, whether big or small, in all kinds of contexts. In a similar way, learning one's moral ABCs depends on being able to recognize right and wrong, virtue and vice in any and every situation. This can certainly include examples of conformity or non-conformity to the moral law continuously paraded before students in history, literature, psychology, philosophy, and business courses to name just a few. In other words, all education is in fact moral education.

Love And Its Proper Order (*Ordo Amoris*). Students also need to recognize the connection between their loves and the moral life. As St. Augustine has pointed out, the vices and the virtues are the products of our deepest affections. An excessive love of self culminates in pride, envy, and anger. A deficient love for the life of the mind and spirit results in sloth. An inordinate love for things, food and

sex expresses itself in avarice, gluttony and lust. Augustine called these misplaced affections “disordered love,” and he knew that disordered love would produce a disordered life. His personal experience, recounted for us in his remarkable *Confessions*, suggests as much. For a change in life, there must be a change in love, and this is possible only through Christ and the power of God’s Spirit. As a result, love for God comes first. Then love for self, others, and all other things falls into place. An appropriate love for self replaces pride, envy, and anger with humility. A love for the spiritual and intellectual life deposes sloth. And self-control is exercised in relation to things, food, and sex since they are no longer conceived as the keys of happiness. The power of rightly ordered love must be recognized and harnessed by students during the university years as the secret to the cultivation of virtue.

The Spiritual and Moral Disciplines. Contemporary writers such as Dallas Willard and Richard Foster have provided a remarkable service to the Christian community by pointing out the importance of the classical spiritual and moral disciplines.¹⁴ These disciplines are simply daily habits and practices that foster spiritual and moral growth. As part of a true education, Christian students must learn what these disciplines are all about, and begin to development them while they are in college. So what are they?

First of all there is what we might call the *everyday, experiential disciplines*. Both the Old and New Testaments indicate that God fashioned the character of His saints and cultivated their faithfulness through the ordinary events of every day life. Moses, for example, was shaped and nurtured by God through the daily discipline of

¹⁴ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: How God Changes Lives* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978).

leadership.¹⁵ Even Jesus Himself learned obedience from the things He suffered (Heb. 5: 5). Students should see their normal, everyday lives as an arena for developing virtue and personal discipline.

There are also the specific spiritual and moral disciplines which must be deliberately chosen and cultivated. Richard Foster suggests the following categories: There are the *inward disciplines* of meditation, prayer, fasting, and study. Next are the *outward disciplines* of simplicity, solitude, submission, and service. Finally, he recommends the *corporate disciplines* of confession, worship, guidance, and celebration. The college years are precisely the right time to begin to cultivate these practices shaping mind and heart that can last for life.

Christian students must give careful thought and attention to the objective nature of morality, to the power and order of the loves, and to the importance of cultivating a disciplined life. Indeed, moral education may be an essential intellectual pre-requisite. For as E. Michael Jones has argued, “the intellectual life is a function of the moral life of the thinker. In order to apprehend truth, which is the goal of the intellectual life, one must live a moral life.”¹⁶ Hence, just like the liberal arts, moral education is a necessary and integral component of a university career.

IV. Professional Education

Professional education is what most people think colleges and universities are for. In many ways they are right. Most people go to school for the sake of their careers. This is what choosing a major is all about: taking enough specialty courses in the arts (liberal or fine), the sciences (natural or social), and professional studies

¹⁵ R. Paul Stevens, “Spiritual Disciplines,” in *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity*, ed. Robert Banks and R. Paul Stevens (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 932.

¹⁶ E. Michael Jones, *Degenerate Moderns: Modernity as Rationalized Sexual Misbehavior* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 16. Later on in this volume, Jones quotes Ralph McInerny along the same lines: “The virtuous life is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the successful theoretical use of the mind” (p. 232).

(business, law, medicine, ministry, etc.) to prepare them for the workplace or graduate school in order to earn a living. This is as it should be. There is everything right about attending a college or university for this important purpose. Our culture and economic system demand that each of us pursue such training in order to assume our place in the workaday world in an effective and profitable way.

But my primary point is this: professional studies, apart from the three essential components I have just discussed, is seriously incomplete, more or less a form of schooling, and not genuine education. What would it be like for you to graduate from the university, degree in hand, prepared for a career perhaps, but somehow you missed out on the foundation and context supplied by the biblical worldview, the liberal arts, and moral education? For some reason, I think Patch Adams would have something to say about this! G. K. Chesterton certainly did when of business education he declared that “training youth to earn a living is not education at all, [and indeed] . . . a specific training may keep the youngster from earning the best kind of living.”¹⁷

How much deeper, richer, fuller would the pursuit of professional studies be if they were informed by a solid understanding of creation, fall, redemption, structure and direction, a sacramental view of reality, and knowledge of the Christ/culture relationship, all supplied by the biblical worldview?

How much deeper, richer, fuller would professional studies be if students were well prepared to pursue them by having cultivated the tools of learning, understood the subjects of learning, established an awareness of the unity of truth, and developed sensitivities for the responsibility of knowledge, all contributions of liberal arts education?

¹⁷ *Illustrated London News*, American edition, March 29, 1930; quoted in George J. Marlin, Richard P. Rabatin, and John L. Swan, eds. *More Quotable Chesterton*, intro. George W. Rutler (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 142.

How much deeper, richer, fuller would professional studies be if they were influenced at every level by penetrating insight into the moral order of the universe, by an understanding of the power of love and its proper order, and by a life shaped by the disciplines, all products of moral education?

What I am proposing here has two distinct advantages. First, with this emphasis on worldview development, liberal arts education and moral education, a distinct possibility is created that students immersed in this kind of curriculum will experience a deep transformation of life during their university years. They will then take this personal transformation directly into their professional studies. Second, it not only assigns to professional education a very important role in undergraduate studies, but places it in a new context, imparting to it a depth of meaning and moral significance that may be lacking without it. And incidentally, it also establishes a mechanism by which the professions themselves, and culture at large, may be positively changed through the vocations of thoughtful, caring graduates educated in this manner.

V. The *Telos* of Love

Is there an ultimate end to this entire process? Why go to college in the first place? What is the real point of a university career? Since every action aims at some good, as Aristotle has pointed out, it is good to step back occasionally and think about the goals of our lives. In medicine, the end is always clear. It is healing the body and the return to health. Do not go to any doctor who hasn't clearly thought this through and become convinced of it!

But it is not so clear in education, this matter of its final goal. Suggestions might include such things as money, credentials, grades, friends, prestige, advancement, and so on. But there is another, more profound motivation.

The Bible's response to the question of the *telos* of education is its response to the question about the end of all human action: the end is to be found in love, the greatest of all virtues. Of course, the basis for this is found in Jesus' teaching. When He was asked which was the greatest commandment in the Old Testament, which law summed it all up and brought the goal human life itself into sharp focus, He answered forthrightly:

And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." "This is the great and foremost commandment." "The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matt. 22: 37-39).

We are to love God with our entire being, with everything we have and everything we are, including the power of the intellect which must be dedicated to God. Furthermore, this love for God is bound up in and expressed through our love for our neighbors. Education, then, provides yet another occasion and context in which we can fulfill these greatest of commandments. Through it, we have the opportunity to become better lovers of God and better lovers of our neighbors as ourselves.¹⁸ This means that our academic endeavors must be cleansed of selfishness, and instead motivated by a desire to honor God and serve those around us. Therefore, the *terminus ad quem* of worldview formation as well as liberal, moral, and professional education ought to be unadulterated Christian charity! Put differently, the goal of university studies is not so much to become a scholar, but rather to become a saint. And as Leon Bloy has said, "There is but one sadness, that of not being a saint."¹⁹

¹⁸ These thoughts and this way of putting the matter I owe to Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., "Intellectual Love" (opening convocation sermon delivered at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, September 9, 1996); also available in *Christianity Today*, August 10, 1998, pp. 50-2.

¹⁹ Quoted in Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*, p. 54. French Thomist philosopher Jacques Maritan is an excellent example of a scholar-saint. Upon hearing him deliver a lecture at the Moreau Seminary on the University of Notre

In this light, St. Augustine rightly focused his magnificent *philosophia Christiana* on the theme of love as well. He believed that God was to be loved for His own sake, and everything else was to be loved in God and for His sake. Even the goal of reading the Scriptures had as its end “the kingdom of charity.”²⁰ For him, therefore, the sum-total of human endeavor ought to be directed to the fulfillment of the first and second greatest commandments. As he put it rhetorically in his *Confessions*, “Can it be wrong at any time or place to love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and to love your neighbor as yourself?”²¹ For Augustine, then, even as he told a particularly inquisitive university student named Dioscorus, there is no good purpose for education if in the long run it does not help people discover and attain the proper end of all their actions. And that end is love.²²

Bernard of Clairvaux believed the same. In analyzing the motives of learning communities, he noted over seven-hundred years ago that some are inspired by curiosity, others by fame, still others by profit. But best of all are those who are motivated by love: “There are many,” he writes, “who seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge: that is curiosity. There are others who desire to know in order that they may themselves be known: that is vanity. Others seek knowledge in order to

Dame campus on an autumn night in 1958, Ralph McInerney as a young man wrote these words about him: “He was a saintly man. That is what I sensed as I scuffled through the leaves on my way back from Maritain’s last lecture at Moreau He loved the truth, but his purpose in life was not to win arguments. He wanted to be wise. Such an odd ambition for a philosopher! He succeeded because he prayed as well as he studied.” Quoted in Schall, *Another Sort of Learning*, 47-8.

²⁰ Saint Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, intro., trans., notes Edmund Hill, O.P. The Works of St. Augustine for the 21st Century, vol. 11 (Hyde Park, New York: New City Press, 1996), p. 179 [3.15.23].

²¹ Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans., intro., notes Henry Chadwick, Oxford Classics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 45-6 [3. 8.15].

²² St. Augustine, “Letters of Augustine,” in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff, first series, vol. 1 (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 438.

sell it: that is dishonorable. But there are some who seek knowledge in order to edify others: that is love."²³

When students are sick and go to the doctor, they know exactly what they want: some medicine to get well. They are not quite as sure of their purpose for college. But if they are willing to step back for a moment and think about the end of their education, and if they are willing to swim against the cultural stream, then they need look no further than the greatest commandment of love as the primary goal of their studies.

Two Indispensable Reinforcements

Steve Garber has pointed out that the key to weaving together a “fabric of faithfulness” over an entire lifetime can begin during the university years when students learn how to connect belief and behavior. In addition to the development of a biblical worldview, he has demonstrated inductively how significant are the contributions of mentors and communities to this process.²⁴ Drawing, then, on his insights, I move on to discuss these two indispensable reinforcements of the entire educative process.

I. Mentors

John Henry Newman, whom I quoted earlier, has described better than anyone the indispensable requirement of mentors in university life.

The personal influence of the teacher is able in some sort to dispense with an academical system, but that system cannot in any sort dispense with personal influence. With influence there is life, without it there is none. . . . An academical system without the personal influence of teachers upon pupils is an arctic winter; it will create an ice-bound, petrified, cast-iron University and nothing else.²⁵

²³ Quoted in Mark Schwehn, *Exiles from Eden: Religion and the Academic Vocation in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 60.

²⁴ Steven Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief and Behavior During the University Years* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), chps. 6-7.

²⁵ Quoted in Schwehn, 61.

Early on in the history of our country, the English tutorial model of higher education that focused on mentoring relationships was replaced by the German research university that emphasized large lecture classes and little pupil-professor contact. Consequently, the personal influence of faculty members on students dwindled, creating the very condition that distressed Newman so greatly. It continues to this day.

A Christian student ought to resist this situation. Why? Because the central feature of Christian pedagogy is that teaching and learning is always *incarnational* at its heart.²⁶ This is seen most clearly in Jesus' relationships with His disciples (e.g., Mark 3: 14), and in Paul's nurturing of the members of his congregations (e.g., 1 Thess. 2: 8). So here is some advice: find a mentor! But in this matter of mentoring, remember first of all that the primary teacher is Divine in nature. As Clement of Alexandria has emphasized in his ancient and interesting work *Pædagogus*, "But our Instructor is the holy God Jesus, the Word, who is the guide of all humanity. The loving God Himself is our Instructor" (*Pædagogus*).²⁷

But once the identity of the ultimate Teacher is known, students also need to secure a human one as well. Not just anyone, and not necessarily a faculty member, but certainly someone who is a little older and a little wiser, and especially someone who has built into his or her life the habits of mind and heart that you wish to emulate for the rest of your life.

II. Communities

But one-on-one relationships are not enough. There is also a need for community. But just as mentoring has declined in the last several decades, so also

²⁶ Garber, *Fabric of Faithfulness*, 136.

²⁷ Clement of Alexandria, *Pædagogus*, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 2 (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 438.

has the experience of genuine community. But it, too, is a central component to the biblical vision of the Christian life, and its importance is hard to overemphasize. Perhaps that's because so much of life is shaped and habits are formed by the company we keep, a fact pointed out in these helpful words from Robert Bellah.

There are truths we do not see when we adopt the language of radical individualism. We find ourselves not independently of other people and institutions but through them. We never get to the bottom of ourselves on our own. We discover who we are face to face and side by side in work, love and learning.²⁸

So here is a second piece of advice: find a community (or start one), and make a commitment to it. Again, this can't be just any old community, but one that will provide the context for the growth of the convictions and character you admire. In a university setting, I would recommend a community that is established upon and consistently lives by a comprehensive biblical worldview. I would recommend a community that is immersed in the waters of the liberal arts (books, conversation, ideas). I would recommend a community that takes the moral life seriously, including the cultivation of the virtues and practice of the spiritual disciplines. Above all, I would find a saintly community that seeks to love God and neighbor in authentic ways.

I have had the great privilege of being involved in three communities similar to this during my Christian life. First of all, with my Young Life Leadership group in Fort Worth during the 1970s. Second, with the UTA College Life/Cornerstone Campus Ministry during the 1980s. And finally, with the Pew College Society at Dallas Baptist University in the late 1990s. These communities have provided some of the most influential and meaningful experiences in my life. I pray that you can find what I have had the privilege of being a part of these many years.

Conclusion

²⁸ Quoted in Garber, *The Fabric of Faithfulness*, 145.

What, then, is true education as opposed to mere schooling? For the Christian student, true education begins with the process of forming a biblical worldview. It includes an understanding of the nature and benefits of liberal and moral education. It is pursuing professional education in the rich context of the three previous components. The whole endeavor must be directed to the end of cultivating divine and human love, and find reinforcement through an influential mentoring relationship, and by involvement in a meaningful Christian community.

Will this be a student's portion? In the final analysis, as Augustine notes, people end up doing those things that they truly love. As he put it, "*Pondus meum amor meus; eo feror quocumque feror*"— "My weight is my love. Wherever I am carried, my love is carrying me"²⁹ Wherever we go, whatever we do, our deepest affections transport us to that location or action. On this basis, when it comes to education, we may conclude that we choose what we want to know, ultimately on the basis of the weight of our loves. This is true even when our choices arise out of ignorance, for we have chosen to remain ignorant in order to pursue other things we care about more deeply.

But the consequences of such decisions can be devastating. Hip hop artist Lauryn Hill apparently knows this. Though she may be an unlikely source of Augustinian wisdom, nonetheless she enunciates a profound truth in this tradition about the harmful results of wrong desire. In a song called "When It Hurts So Bad" from her compact disc provocatively titled "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill," she sings:

What you want might make you cry / What you need might pass you by / If you don't catch it / If you don't catch it / And what you need ironically / Will turn out what you want to be / If you just let it / If you just let it.³⁰

²⁹ St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 278 (13.9.10).

³⁰ Lauryn Hill, "When It Hurts So Bad," *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill* (Ruffhouse Records LP, 1998).

Students may allow a complete and generous education to pass them by because their loves are directed elsewhere. The results could be devastating. They just may not catch it. But once students understand its true nature and potential to transform, perhaps they will realize not only do they need it, but they also want it, since it will help them to become what they want to be. They might very well kindle a fire that will burn for a lifetime. They may pass beyond schooling and get a true education, even though they are in college. If they'll just choose it. If they'll just choose it.
