

ADVENTIST EDUCATION

Biblical Foundations for Adventist Education

Education for What?
Thoughts on the
Purpose and Identity
of Adventist Education

Schools of the Bible:
Contours of the Divine
Plan for Education

Scriptural Foundations
for Academic Disciplines:
A Biblical Theme
Approach

A Biblical
Foundation Course
Design Model
That Works

We're Going Digital!

Beginning January 1, 2017, THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION® will transition to a quarterly, all-digital format, and from a subscription model to a cost-based model. The cost-based model structure will allow us to provide the digital version of the JOURNAL to anyone who wishes to receive it, free of charge, through the Apple App Store (iOS devices) and Google Play (Android devices). The print edition (parallel to the digital version) will continue in divisions of the world church that choose to print and distribute the publication locally.

This special October-December issue of the JOURNAL is published as part of our digital launch. To access the digital version of the JOURNAL, download the app from: Apple App Store (iOS devices): Google Play (Android devices).

We look forward to sharing this new and dynamic format of THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION with Adventist educators worldwide!

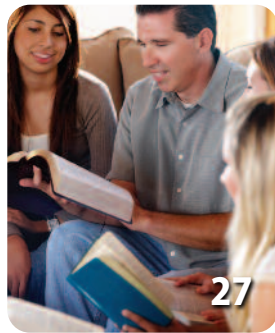
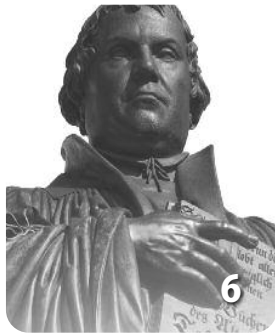
**The Journal of
Adventist Education**
Editorial Staff

We're C

Beginning January 1, 2017, THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION® will transition to a quarterly, all-digital format, and from a subscription model to a cost-based model. The cost-based model structure will allow us to provide the digital version of the JOURNAL to anyone who wishes to receive it, free of charge, through the Apple App Store (iOS devices) and Google Play (Android devices). The print edition (parallel to the digital version) will continue in divisions of the world church that choose to print and distribute the publication locally.

This special October-December issue of the JOURNAL is published as part of our digital launch. To access the digital version of the JOURNAL, download the app from: Apple App Store (iOS devices): Google Play (Android devices).

We look forward to sharing this new and dynamic format of THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION with Adventist educators worldwide!



OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2016 • VOLUME 79, NO. 1

- 4 Editorial: Becoming the Head—Priorities in Adventist Education**
By John Wesley Taylor V

S P E C I A L S E C T I O N

- 6 Education for What? Thoughts on the Purpose and Identity of Adventist Education**
By George R. Knight
- 13 Schools of the Bible: Contours of the Divine Plan for Education**
By John Wesley Taylor V
- 27 Scriptural Foundations for Academic Disciplines: A Biblical Theme Approach**
By Michael E. Cafferky
- 38 A Biblical Foundation Course Design Model That Works: Teaching Millennials in Higher Education**
By Cynthia M. Gettys and Elaine D. Plemons

- 46 Perspectives: Teaching Biology in the Light of Creation**
By George T. Javor

- 51 Best Practices at Work: Flexible and Alternative Seating in Classrooms**
By Yanina C. Jimenez

Photo and art credits: Cover and issue design, Harry Knox; pp. 10, 33, 51, Thinkstock; p. 52, Yanina Jimenez, Downers Grove Adventist School.

The Journal of Adventist Education®, Adventist®, and Seventh-day Adventist® are the registered trademarks of the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists®.

EDITOR
Faith-Ann McGarrell

EDITOR EMERITUS
Beverly J. Robinson-Rumble

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
(INTERNATIONAL EDITION)
Julián Melgosa

SENIOR CONSULTANTS
John Wesley Taylor V
Lisa M. Beardsley, Geoffrey G. Mwabana,
Ella Smith Simmons

CONSULTANTS
GENERAL CONFERENCE
John M. Fowler, Mike Mile Lekic,
Hudson E. Kibuuka

EAST-CENTRAL AFRICA
Andrew Mutero

EURO-AFRICA
Marius Munteanu

EURO-ASIA
Vladimir Tkachuk

INTER-AMERICA
Gamaliel Florez

MIDDLE EAST-NORTH AFRICA
Leif Hongisto

NORTH AMERICA
Larry Blackmer

NORTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC
Richard A. Saubin

SOUTH AMERICA
Edgard Luz

SOUTH PACIFIC
Carol Tasker

SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN
Mozezie Kadyakapita

SOUTHERN ASIA
Prabhu Das R N

SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC
Lawrence L. Domingo

TRANS-EUROPEAN
Daniel Duda

WEST-CENTRAL AFRICA
Juvenal Balisasa

COPY EDITOR
Randy Hall

ART DIRECTION/GRAPHIC DESIGN
Harry Knox

ADVISORY BOARD
John Wesley Taylor V (Chair), Sharon Aka, Ophelia Barizo, Lisa M. Beardsley-Hardy, Larry Blackmer, Jeanette Bryson, Erlene Burgess, Keith Hallam, Hudson E. Kibuuka, Brian Kittleson, Linda Mei Lin Koh, Gary Krause, Davenia J. Lea, Mike Mile Lekic, Julián M. Melgosa, James Mbyirikira, Carole Smith, Charles H. Tidwell, Jr.

THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION publishes articles concerned with a variety of topics pertinent to Adventist education. Opinions expressed by our writers do not necessarily represent the views of the staff or the official position of the Department of Education of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION (ISSN 0021-8480) is published bimonthly, October through May, plus a single summer issue for June, July, August, and September by the Department of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, U.S.A. TELEPHONE: (301) 680-5071; FAX: (301) 622-9627; E-mail: mcgarrell@gc.adventist.org. Subscription price: U.S. \$18.25. Add \$3.00 for postage outside the U.S. Single copy: U.S.\$3.75. Periodical postage paid at Silver Spring, Maryland, and additional mailing office. Please send all changes of address to 3200 West Fourth Street, Buchanan, MI 49107, U.S.A., including both old and new address. Address all editorial and advertising correspondence to the Editor. Copyright 2016 General Conference of SDA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION, 3200 West Fourth Street, Buchanan, MI 49107, U.S.A.



John Wesley Taylor V

It is an intriguing story found in 1 Kings 3. “At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night. And God said, ‘Ask! What shall I give you?’”¹

As an educator, what would you do with a blank check?

Would you ask for a new building? For more students? For needed faculty? For a large endowment? What would you request?

Solomon said: “Give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil.”

What do you think? Was it a good choice?

Scripture records that “the speech pleased the LORD.” God was evidently impressed and said to Solomon: “‘Because you have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart. . . . And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor. . . . If you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments . . . then I will lengthen your days.’”

Did Solomon’s choice make a difference? Did his priorities yield tangible results?

Consider the experience of a visitor to Solomon’s kingdom. “When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon’s fame, which brought honor to the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions. When she met with Solomon, . . . Solomon had answers for all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her.”²

If we place this incident in the context of education, we no-

tice that the Queen of Sheba came to the school because she had heard that something remarkable was taking place, something that placed God in a position of honor. When she arrived, however, she did not simply accept matters at face value. She asked probing questions, and the leaders of the school were able to share with her the reason for each aspect of the program.

As a result, the Queen of Sheba “was overwhelmed,” enthralled with what she was experiencing. What was it that so impressed her? “She was amazed at the food on his tables,

the organization of his officials and their splendid clothing, the cup-bearers, and the burnt offerings Solomon made at the Temple of the LORD.”

It may be instructive to highlight the five aspects that were most prominent. First, she noticed the diet. The food served at the school was different from that provided in the schools with which she was familiar. Next, she observed the manner in which the school was organized, noting an orderly approach in the delegation of authority and responsibility. Third, she was impressed with the distinctive and yet attractive way in which those at the school

were dressed. Her attention then turned to the cupbearers. She noticed that the staff were faithful, trustworthy, and committed to service. Finally, she was amazed with the spiritual ethos of the school, the manner in which the worship of God was conducted throughout the educational program.

After reviewing the school, what did the Queen conclude? “Everything I heard in my country about your achievements and wisdom is true!” she announced. “I didn’t believe what was said until I arrived here and saw it with my own eyes. In fact, I had not heard the half of it!” Then she added: “How happy your people [your students] must be! What a privilege



for your officials [your teachers] to stand here day after day!”

What were the results of this assessment? The Queen of Sheba exclaimed: “Praise the LORD your God, who delights in you and has placed you on the throne.” The most important outcome is that the success of the school is attributed to the blessing of God. But there was more. “Then she gave the king a gift of 9,000 pounds of gold, great quantities of spices, and precious jewels.” The school receives a major gift, an indication of the appreciation and confidence that she has in the school.

The reputation of the school continued to extend worldwide. “So King Solomon became richer and wiser than any other king on earth. People from every nation came to consult him and to hear the wisdom God had given him.”

In Seventh-day Adventist education, we have a favorite passage: “The LORD will make you the head and not the tail.”³ As educators, we want our institutions to be the head. But what does this mean, and what is the condition of attainment?

To understand the meaning of this passage, we should note the following phrase: “You shall be above only, and not beneath.” To be the head, then, means that we will be successful, superior in every essential aspect. But how will we define success? Will the criteria be newly updated facilities, optimum enrollment, highly qualified faculty, better funding?

The more important question is, How does God define success? Ellen White wrote: “Increasing numbers in your college is no evidence that your labors are being crowned with success. It is the strength of moral power increasing and pervading the college that testifies of its prosperity.”⁴ Later she would add, “What is needed to give success? A large, expensive building? If so, we cannot have success. But this does not give success. It is the atmosphere of grace which surrounds the soul of the believer, the Holy Spirit working upon mind and heart, which makes him a savor of life unto life and enables God to bless his work.”⁵

Aren’t growing enrollments, balanced budgets, and representative facilities important indicators of success? While these have their place, the evidence of success in God’s perspective is found in “the strength of moral power” and “the atmosphere of grace.” Indeed, when God established a school in Eden, a school which was to be “a model for human beings throughout all time,”⁶ enrollment was two and the buildings were none. What made the difference? God was the teacher.

What, then, is the condition of authentic success in our schools, colleges, and universities? The final part of the verse points to the answer: “The LORD will make you the head . . . if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, and are careful to observe them.” To state it another way: “Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.”⁷ Or as God said to Solomon, “If you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments.”⁸

As Solomon discovered, priorities matter. Our points of reference are not secular educational institutions. Our benchmark is the Word of God. Our overarching goal is not to be successful. Our purpose is to be faithful. Because when we are faithful to the divine plan, we are then truly successful.

Ellen White reminds us: “As our work has extended and institutions have multiplied, God’s purpose in their establishment remains the same. The conditions of prosperity are unchanged.”⁹ “With us, as with Israel of old, success in education depends on fidelity in carrying out the Creator’s plan.”¹⁰

Perhaps the Old Testament prophet, Zechariah, sums it best. “‘Not by might, nor by power; but by my Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts.”¹¹

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. These passages are taken from 1 Kings 3:5-14. All passages quoted are from The Holy Bible, New King James Version (NKJV). Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. All rights reserved.

2. These passages are excerpts from 1 Kings 10:1-24.

3. Deuteronomy 28:13.

4. Manuscript 2, 1881. See also *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 6, page 143: “To lower the standard in order to secure popularity and an increase of numbers, and then to make this increase a cause of rejoicing, shows great blindness. If numbers were an evidence of success, Satan might claim the pre-eminence; for in this world his followers are largely in the majority. It is the degree of moral power pervading a school that is a test of its prosperity.”

5. Manuscript 85, 1899.

6. Ellen G. White, *True Education: An Adaptation of Education* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publ. Assn. 2000), 14.

7. Matthew 6:33.

8. 1 Kings 3:14.

9. *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 224.

10. *Education*, p. 34.

11. Zechariah 4:6.

Education for What?

Thoughts on the Purpose and Identity of Adventist Education

“Nothing can be more important in a free society than the clear statement of goals for education.”¹ So wrote Millicent McIntosh in the first sentence of her booklet *Education for What?*

The Crucial Role of Education

“Education for What?” is directly related to the question of “Why Have Adventist Schools?” And certainly, we as Adventist educators can and should paraphrase Dr. McIntosh to read “nothing can be more important in an Adventist society than the clear statement of goals for education.”²

Ellen White would certainly agree

with that statement. In *Counsels to Teachers*, she wrote that “by a misconception of the true nature and object of education, many have been led into serious and even fatal errors.” And here she means fatal not merely for this earth but eternally fatal. Ellen White goes on to note that “such a mistake is made when the regulation of the heart or the establishment of principles is neglected in the effort to secure intellectual culture, or when eternal interests are overlooked in the eager desire for temporal advantage.”³

Again, she wrote, “the necessity of establishing Christian schools is urged upon me very strongly. In the schools of to-day many things are taught that are a hindrance rather than a blessing. Schools are needed where the word of

God is made the basis of education. Satan is the great enemy of God, and it is his constant aim to lead souls away from their allegiance to the King of heaven. He would have minds so trained that men and women will exert their influence on the side of error and moral corruption instead of using their talents in the service of God. His object is effectually gained, when by perverting their ideas of education, he succeeds in enlisting parents and teachers on his side; for a wrong education often starts the mind on the road to infidelity.”⁴

From Ellen White’s perspective, Dr. McIntosh was absolutely correct when

BY GEORGE R. KNIGHT

she highlighted the fact that nothing is more important “than the clear statement of goals for education.” Secularists around the world down through history have also been in agreement. As a result, George S. Counts has written that “to shape educational policy is to guard the path that leads from the present to the future. . . . Throughout the centuries since special educational agencies were first established, the strategic position of the school has been appreciated by kings, emperors, and popes, by rebels, reformers, and prophets. Hence, among those opposing forces found in all complex societies, a struggle for the control of the school is always evident. Every group or sect endeavors to pass on to its own children and to the children of others that culture which it happens to esteem; and every privileged class seeks to perpetuate its favored position in society by means of education.”⁵

In another connection, Counts observed in discussing the challenge of Soviet education that the failure of revolutions has been a record of the failure to bring education into the service of the revolutionary cause. Revolutionary bodies will possess no more permanence, he pointed out, than the small bands of idealists who conceived them if the children of the next generation cannot be persuaded to leave the footsteps of their parents. As a result, the history of the Soviets, Germany’s Nazi Party, and other successful revolutionary movements has demonstrated that one of the first measures taken by revolutionary governments is to place all educational agencies under the direct control of the state and to give the schools a central hand in building the new society.⁶

The same might also be said of the heirs of democratic revolutions or even of religious movements. Thus, we find the rise of vernacular education as an integral part of the Lutheran Reformation. After all, individuals needed to be able to read the all-important Bible for themselves if they were to maintain their faith independent of an influential priesthood. In a similar vein, one

of the first moves of the Puritans after their arrival in the wilderness of North America was to found Harvard College in 1636. They realized that their mission was doomed without both civil and religious leaders educated in biblical principles.

Early Adventists were inspired by similar insights. Thus, it was no accident that Ellen White framed her educational thought within the context of the great controversy struggle between Christ and Satan and their respective principles. The greatest of all the world’s culture wars is for the minds and hearts of the coming generations. And the epicenter of the struggle is for the control of schooling; control of the institution that has so much to do with shaping minds and hearts, goals and aspirations, values, and direction.

And at this point, I should note that biblical Christianity is in a very real sense a revolutionary movement. But as such, it is not out to control the kingdoms of this world but to put an end to the current confusion and usher in the fullness of Christ’s kingdom at His second advent. In that sense, Christianity in general and Adventism in particular is a revolutionary force of the first order.⁷ Thus, the importance of a clear understanding of the goals of Adventist education; of the questions of “Why Have Adventist Schools?” and “Education for What?” That thought leads us to the discussion of the aims and goals of Adventist education, the identity of Adventist education.

Aspect No. 1 of Adventist Educational Identity—the General

Certainly, one aim of Adventist education is the development of young people intellectually, socially, and professionally. Ellen White, for one, was clear on those goals. As a result, she wrote in 1891 that “it is right that you should feel that you must climb to the highest round of the educational ladder. Philosophy and history are important studies.”⁸

And in the face of misunderstandings of her counsel on “speedy preparation,” Ellen White penned that “no movement should be made to lower the standard of education in our school at Battle Creek. The students should tax the mental powers; every faculty should reach the highest possible development.”⁹ And regarding Battle Creek College as an institution, she urged the school to “reach a higher standard of intellectual and moral culture than any other institution of the kind in our land.”¹⁰ She had no doubt on the importance of “the highest culture of the mind” and the fact that ignorance was not a Christian virtue.¹¹

Similar statements can be found in Ellen White’s writings on the necessity of preparing students for the world of work. And she did not merely mean work with a person’s hands as he or she prepared for careers in agriculture or the trades. To the contrary, she urged the upgrading of Adventist education to prepare individuals for the professions. Thus, she recommended that the education to be given at the fledgling institution at Loma Linda should be of “the highest order” and that the youth studying there were to be given “a medical education that will enable them to pass the examinations required by law.”¹² That meant that Adventist colleges and secondary schools must also aim at preparing students to meet the legal standards.¹³ And what she noted about the medical field extends to the other professions.

There is not the slightest doubt that Ellen White held that Adventist schools should prepare young people to succeed in this earthly life by developing them mentally, socially, physically, and vocationally. Those areas of education are an essential part of the identity of Seventh-day Adventist schooling.

But if we only accomplish those goals, there is really no need for Adventist schools. After all, those are the aims of the public schools, and they often do an excellent job of preparing people academically, socially, physi-

cally, and vocationally. If those are the only goals we achieve or even aim at as Seventh-day Adventist educators, we might as well save our money and put it to a better use. That conclusion brings us to the second aspect of Adventist educational identity.

Aspect No. 2 of Adventist Educational Identity—the Spiritual

The book *Education* in its first chapter sets forth what is in many ways the heart of Adventist education. In the first paragraph, we read that “our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range.” Such is true when we as Adventist educators aim only or primarily at the tasks that form the goals of secular or public education.

“There is,” we read on, “need of a broader scope, a higher aim. True education means more than the pursual of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.”¹⁴

There are several key words in that paragraph. The first centers on “true” education, which transcends the goals of secular education. True education also has a “higher aim” than merely preparing people to be good and productive citizens of Chile, Korea, Germany, Nigeria, or the United States.

The second key word is *whole*, a word she uses with two dimensions. First, Adventist education must emphasize the “whole” or entire period of human existence. Thus, it is not merely focused on helping students learn how to earn a living or on becoming cultured by the standards of the present world. Those aims may be worthy and important, but they are

not sufficient. The realm of eternity and preparation for it must also come under the purview of any Adventist education worthy of church support.

On the other hand, some pious but misdirected individuals might be tempted to make heaven the focus of education while neglecting the present realm and preparation for the world of work and participation in human society. Ellen White asserted that neither extreme is correct. Rather, preparation for both the earthly and the eternal worlds must be included in Adventist education and placed in proper relationship to each other. The book *Fundamentals of Christian Education* catches that balance when it highlights the fact that while students should aim at the “highest round of the educational ladder” intellectually, “unless the knowledge of science is a steppingstone to the attainment of the highest purposes, it is worthless. The education that does not furnish knowledge as enduring as eternity, is of no purpose.”¹⁵

The second aspect of wholeness in the book *Education*’s opening paragraph is the imperative to develop the entire person. Secular education leaves out the spiritual aspect. But Adventist education must aim at developing all aspects of human beings, including the spiritual as well as the intellectual, the physical, the social, and the vocational. In short, the goal of Adventist education is to develop whole persons for the whole period of existence open to them in both this world and the world to come. In that sense, it transcends the possibilities of secular education, as well as many forms of Christian education, and, unfortunately, even some so-called Adventist education.

One other key word in *Education*’s opening paragraph is *service* (“the joy of service in this world and . . . the higher joy of wider service in the world to come”). It should be noted that the centrality of service is not only featured in the book’s first page, but also on the last, which points out: “In our life here, earthly, sin-restricted

though it is, the greatest joy and the highest education are in service. And in the future state, untrammelled by the limitations of sinful humanity, it is in service that our greatest joy and our highest education will be found.”¹⁶

That emphasis on service should come as no surprise to any reader of the Bible. Jesus more than once told His disciples that the very essence of Christian character was love for and service to others. Such characteristics, of course, are not natural human traits. “Normal” people are more concerned with their own needs and being served than they are in a life of service to others. The Christian alternative outlook and set of values does not come about naturally. Rather, the Bible speaks of it as a transformation of the mind and heart (Romans 12:2). And Paul appeals to us to let Christ’s mind be our mind, pointing out that even though Christ was God, He came as a servant (Philippians 2:5-7).

If the first page in the book *Education* makes room for Adventist education in the pedagogical world by adding in “the spiritual” and preparing for the “whole” period of human existence, it is the book’s second page that begins to move beyond generalities and to focus on what she meant by those ideas.

Specifically, Ellen White points out that if educators really want to understand the primary purpose of education, they need to understand four things. As she puts it, “In order to understand what is comprehended in the work of education, we need to consider both [1] the nature of man and [2] the purpose of God in creating him. We need to consider also [3] the change in man’s condition through the coming in of a knowledge of evil, and [4] God’s plan for still fulfilling His glorious purpose in the education of the human race.”¹⁷

She fleshes out the core of her philosophy of education by refining those four points in the next few paragraphs. First, in reflecting upon

GOOD

Ellen White describes each person's life as the scene of a micro-cosmic great controversy between good and evil, and every human being as having not only "a desire for goodness" but also a "bent to evil."

EVIL

human nature, she emphasizes that Adam was created in the image of God—physically, mentally, and spiritually. Second, she highlights the purpose of God in creating human beings as one of their constant growth so that they would ever “more fully reflect the glory of the Creator.” To that end, God endowed human beings with capacities that were capable of almost infinite development.

“But,” thirdly, she notes in discussing the entrance of sin, “by disobedience this was forfeited. Through sin the divine likeness was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man’s physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity was lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed.”

While those three points are foundational to Ellen White’s philosophy of education, it is her fourth and last

point that is absolutely crucial and that fully expresses the primary purpose of education. She writes that, in spite of its rebellion and Fall, “the race was not left without hope. By infinite love and mercy the plan of salvation had been devised, and a life of probation was granted. To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life.”¹⁸

Ellen White returns to that theme in the fourth chapter of *Education*, where she describes each person’s

life as the scene of a microcosmic great controversy between good and evil, and every human being as having not only “a desire for goodness” but also a “bent to evil.” Building upon her earlier insight that God’s image is not totally obliterated in fallen humanity, she notes that every human being “receives some ray of divine light. Not only intellectual but spiritual power, a perception of right, a desire for goodness, exists in every heart. But against these principles there is struggling an antagonistic power.” As the heritage of the Edenic Fall, there is within each person’s nature an evil force which “unaided, he cannot resist. To withstand this force, to attain that ideal which in his inmost soul he accepts as alone worthy, he can find help in but one power. That power is Christ. Co-operation with that power is man’s greatest need. In all educational effort should not this co-operation be the highest aim?”¹⁹

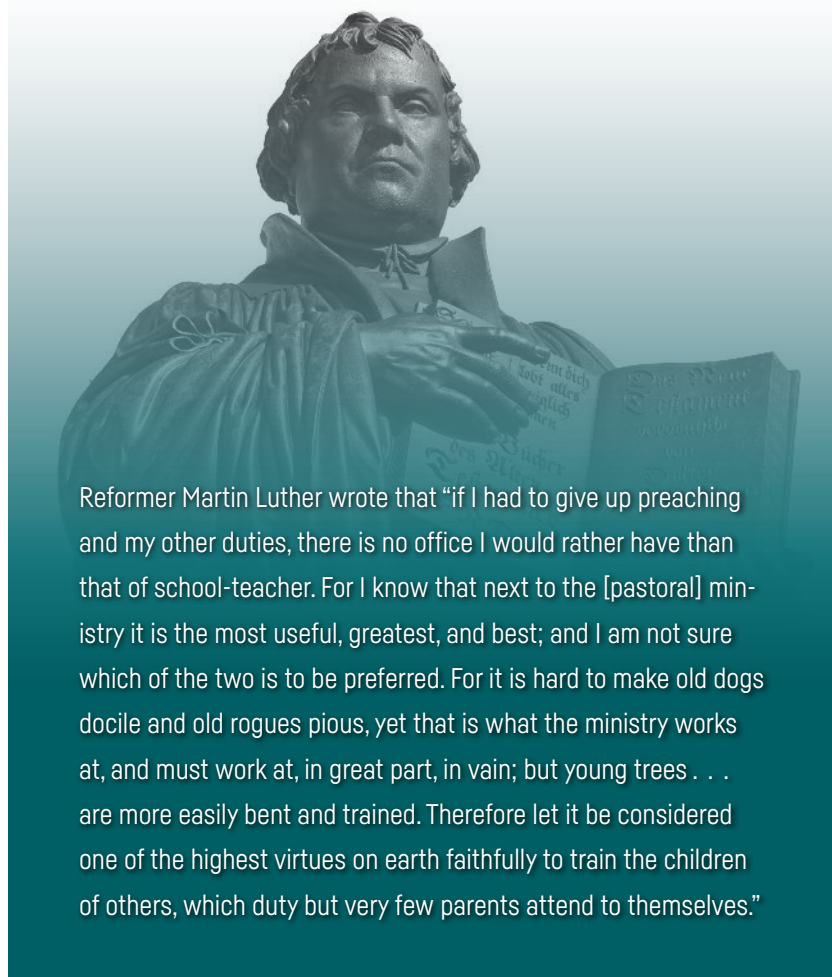
On the next page, she develops this point a bit more, writing that “in the highest sense the work of education and the work of redemption are one, for in education, as in redemption, ‘other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.’ . . . To aid the student in comprehending these principles, and in entering into that relation with Christ which will make them a controlling power in the life, should be the teacher’s first effort and his constant aim. The teacher who accepts this aim is in truth a co-worker with Christ, a laborer together with God.”²⁰ Although she had no formal training as a philosopher, Ellen White hit the pivot point of educational philosophy when she placed the human problem of sin at the very center of the educational enterprise.

The redemptive role of education has many implications for the Adventist school. Not only must the school introduce its students to Jesus, but also it must endeavor to get them to follow Him in their daily lives as they interact with others in their community.

The redemptive role of Adventist education also transforms the role of

the teacher from one who transmits information and skills to one who is essentially a minister or pastor to his or her students. From a Christian perspective, it is of interest that the New Testament does not differentiate between the roles of pastors and teachers. Rather, it pictures them as a unified calling. Thus, in Ephesians 4:11, Paul writes that “some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers” (RSV).²¹ The apostle in that passage uses a Greek construction that indicates that the same person holds the combined office of pastor and teacher. It is true that in today’s job market, the role of pastor has been separated from that of teacher, but it is a fact that every pastor must be “an apt teacher” (1 Timothy 3:2, RSV), and every teacher is a pastor to his or her students in ministering to them day after day in the classroom. That conclusion, it should be noted, has massive implications for Adventist educational administrators as they select new teachers in the hiring process. Suddenly, we realize that academic qualifications are not the only ones that are important. In fact, academic qualifications must take second place to the spiritual aspects of a teacher’s life if Adventist schools are to accomplish their most important purpose. After all, if we are successful in cramming students’ heads full of knowledge and preparing them for the world of work but fail in giving them a genuine opportunity to accept Christ and walk with Him, we have not failed partially but totally.

Teaching young people is not only a pastoral function but also one of the most effective forms of ministry, since it reaches the entire population while at its most impressionable age. Reformer Martin Luther recognized that fact when he wrote that “if I had to give up preaching and my other duties, there is no office I would rather have than that of school-teacher. For I know that next to the [pastoral] min-



Reformer Martin Luther wrote that “if I had to give up preaching and my other duties, there is no office I would rather have than that of school-teacher. For I know that next to the [pastoral] ministry it is the most useful, greatest, and best; and I am not sure which of the two is to be preferred. For it is hard to make old dogs docile and old rogues pious, yet that is what the ministry works at, and must work at, in great part, in vain; but young trees . . . are more easily bent and trained. Therefore let it be considered one of the highest virtues on earth faithfully to train the children of others, which duty but very few parents attend to themselves.”

istry it is the most useful, greatest, and best; and I am not sure which of the two is to be preferred. For it is hard to make old dogs docile and old rogues pious, yet that is what the ministry works at, and must work at, in great part, in vain; but young trees . . . are more easily bent and trained. Therefore let it be considered one of the highest virtues on earth faithfully to train the children of others, which duty but very few parents attend to themselves.”²² The clearest and fullest integration of the gift of teacher-pastor appeared in the ministry of Christ. One of the terms by which people most addressed Him was “Master.” The actual meaning of the Greek word is “Teacher.”

The spiritual and redemptive aspect of Adventist educational identity will also make a major impact on the school’s curriculum; especially in terms of the centrality of the Bible and

its worldview. According to Ellen White, “the science of redemption is the science of all sciences,” and the Bible is “the Book of books.”²³ Only an understanding of that “science” and that “Book” makes everything else meaningful in the fullest sense. Viewed in the light of “the grand central thought” of the Bible, Ellen White points out, “every topic has a new significance.”²⁴ Every student, she noted in another connection, should gain a knowledge of the Bible’s “grand central theme, of God’s original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should

see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found.”²⁵

In such passages as those cited above, Ellen White not only highlights the all-important place of the Bible in the Adventist curriculum, but also sets the stage for what we have come to think of as the integration of faith and learning—a topic that has seen massive emphasis in Adventism in the last three decades through the efforts of George Akers and Humberto Rasi.

We could go on and on about the implications of the redemptive or spiritual aspect for Adventist educational identity, but, to put it briefly, the implications of the spiritual must shape and reshape every part of the school program, including our practice of the so-called extracurricular and social parts of the school program.

But, for the sake of argument, let us say that a particular Adventist school did provide the highest intellectual and vocational education, that it did introduce young people to Jesus as Lord and Savior, that it did place the Bible at the center of education, that it did integrate every academic field and every school activity into the biblical worldview. Still, I would argue, it has fallen short if that is all it has accomplished. After all, those are functions that every evangelical Christian school should be accomplishing. And if we only manage to accomplish what other Christian schools are already doing, then there is no pressing justification for duplicating their activities in yet one more Christian school.

That conclusion brings me to the third aspect of Adventist educational identity.

Aspect No. 3 of Adventist Educational Identity—The Apocalyptic

The third aspect of Adventist educational identity relates to its grasp of the denomination’s apocalyptic under-

standing and the implications of that understanding for worldwide mission and the Second Advent. Here we need to remember that Seventh-day Adventism has never seen itself as merely another denomination. Rather, from its very inception, it has viewed itself as a movement of prophecy with a mission to all the world.

That apocalyptic/missiological understanding is based on certain passages in the heart of the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation. Especially important in that understanding are the following:

- Revelation 10 with its portrayal of the bitter disappointment after the Book of Daniel had been unsealed. Particularly important in Revelation 10 is verse 11, with its prediction that the disappointed ones would preach a message of prophecy again to “many peoples and nations and tongues and kings” (RSV).

- Revelation 11:19 with its portrayal of the opening of the Most Holy Place at the end of time and the revealing of the ark of the covenant.

- Revelation 12:17 with its exposition of the contents of the ark of the covenant to the world at the end of time and especially the fact that God would have a commandment-keeping people at the end of earth’s history.

- And especially Revelation 14:6-12, with its highlighting of the preaching of the three angels immediately preceding the Second Advent in verses 14-20. Here the early Adventists found a worldwide commission to preach a special message “to every nation and tribe and tongue and people” (RSV). Included in that message were admonitions regarding the presentation of the full gospel message, the time of the judgment, the need to worship the Creator-God of the Sabbath, and once again the fact that at the end of time God would have a people who keep all His commandments.

Revelation 14 with its command to

preach its message to the entire world has become central to Adventist self-understanding. Early Seventh-day Adventists began to think of themselves as the people preaching the three angels’ messages. And rightly so. Of the five great gospel commissions in the New Testament, the ones in Matthew 28:19, 20; Matthew 24:14; and Acts 1:8 have been accepted by the church in general. But the ones in Revelation 10:11 and 14:6 have been largely neglected by all but Seventh-day Adventists.

Adventism’s unique task became to preach God’s end-time apocalyptic message to all the world. That understanding has led generations of Adventist young people to give their lives in obscure mission fields and has prompted older church members to sacrifice not only the nearness of their children but also their financial means to fulfill the prophetic imperative in the Apocalypse of John.

Adventism at its best and healthiest has linked its apocalyptic mission with education.²⁶ It is no accident that the establishment of its first college and the sending of its first official foreign missionary both took place in 1874. And it is no accident that the needs of the apocalyptic mission to every nation and people and tongue that fueled the rise of Adventist education in the 1870s also led to the virtual explosion in the denomination’s schooling in the 1890s. The statistics are informative. While the denomination had two schools in 1880 and 16 in 1890, it rapidly expanded to 245 in 1900, more than 600 in 1910, and 2,178 by 1930.²⁷

What is important here is that the growth in Adventist mission shows exactly the same growth curve as that for education. The year 1880 found eight missions outside of North America with five evangelistic workers. Ten years later, there were still eight missions with some 56 workers. But by 1900, the number of missions had risen to 42 and the number of workers to 481. As with education, we are looking at a growth curve that goes nearly straight up beginning in the

1890s. The year 1930 found Adventism with 270 missions being operated by 8,479 evangelistic workers outside of North America.

Both the birth and the expansion of Seventh-day Adventist education were stimulated by the explosive fuel of apocalyptic mission as the denomination sought to educate the coming generation of young people not only about that apocalyptic mission but also to dedicate their lives to it.

Thus, the health of Adventist education has been historically tied to a self-conscious realization of apocalyptic mission. It is the apocalyptic vision that has made Adventism a dynamic, worldwide movement. When that vision is lost, Adventism will become merely another toothless denomination. The losing of the apocalyptic vision and Adventism's place in prophetic history is the greatest threat that Adventism and its educational system face in the 21st century.²⁸

When that apocalyptic understanding has been lost sight of, it is not surprising to find increasing numbers of parents sending their children to other Christian schools or even to public institutions.²⁹ Adventist education that has lost the apocalyptic vision is no longer truly Adventist. *And Adventist education is important only if it is truly Adventist.* If it's not, it might be seen as an alternative to other systems of education, but not necessarily an important one, and certainly not one worthy of much financial sacrifice.

Conclusion

"Education for What?" "Why Have Adventist Schools?" The short answer is that at their best, they are unique institutions that fill a special place in the great end-time controversy between Christ and Satan. As such,

- they not only prepare students for life in this world academically, vocationally, and socially;

- they not only introduce young people to Jesus as Lord and Savior and help them understand the Bible

and its implications for all knowledge and life;

- but they also inspire the coming generation with an understanding of God's end-time apocalyptic vision that leads them to dedicate their lives to that vision and the advent of their Lord.

Adventist educational identity and mission are healthy only when all three of those factors are evident and in proper relationship. Neglect one of them, and the system and its institutions are less than Adventist education. ✍



George R. Knight, Ed.D., is Professor Emeritus of Church History at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Dr. Knight has authored and edited a number of books and articles on Adventist history and education. He writes from Rogue River, Oregon. This article is a transcript of the Keynote Address presented at the 2014 International Conference for College and University Presidents, Silver Spring, Maryland.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Millicent Carey McIntosh, *Education for What?* (Stamford, Conn.: Overbrook Press, 1948), 3.
2. For fuller discussions of this topic, see George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective*, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 2006), 169-264; George R. Knight, *Educating for Eternity: An Adventist Philosophy of Education* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University, 2016).
3. Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1943), 49.
4. Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assn., 1923), 541.
5. J. Crosby Chapman and George S. Counts, *Principles of Education* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1924), 601, 602.
6. George S. Counts, *The Soviet Challenge to America* (New York: John Day, 1931), 66, 67.
7. For a fuller discussion of the Adventist school as a revolutionary agent, see George R. Knight, "Redemptive Education (Part III)," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 73:1 (Oc-

tober/November 2010):53-55.

8. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 192.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 373.

10. _____, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1948), vol. 4, 425.

11. _____, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 47, 316; see also "The Myth of the Ignorant Christian," in George R. Knight, *Myths in Adventism: An Interpretive Study of Ellen White, Education, and Related Issues* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1985, 2009), 113-123.

12. Ellen G. White, "A Statement Regarding the Training of Physicians," *Pacific Union Recorder* (February 3, 1910):3.

13. _____, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 479, 480.

14. _____, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1952), 13.

15. _____, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 192.

16. _____, *Education*, 309.

17. *Ibid.*, 14, 15.

18. *Ibid.*, 15, 16.

19. *Ibid.*, 29.

20. *Ibid.*, 30.

21. Bible texts credited to RSV are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971, by Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

22. Martin Luther, "Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School," in *Luther on Education* by F. V. N. Painter (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1889), 264.

23. White, *Education*, p. 126;

- _____ , *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 138.

24. _____, *Education*, 125.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

26. For a fuller development of this topic, see George R. Knight, "The Dynamics of Educational Expansion: A Lesson From Adventist History," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 52:4 (April/May 1990):13-19, 44, 45.

27. Homer R. Salsbury, "A Steady Growth," *Christian Education* 3:1 (September/October 1911), 14.

28. For treatments of this topic see George R. Knight, "Seventh-day Adventist Education and the Apocalyptic Vision," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 69:4 (April/May 2007):4-10; 69:5 (Summer 2007):4-9; _____, *The Apocalyptic Vision and the Neutering of Adventism*, rev. ed. (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 2009).

29. Shane Anderson, *How to Kill Adventist Education (and How to Give It a Fighting Chance!)* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 2009).

Schools of the Bible:

Contours of the Divine Plan for Education

Does God have a plan for education? If so, might the educational programs He has established throughout the Bible communicate essential features of this model? Paul wrote that God's interactions with His people serve "as examples . . . for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come."¹ Accordingly, it seems that the schools of the Bible could provide us with clarifying contours of a divine plan for education.

The intent of this article is to take a *sola Scriptura* position and directly research the schools of Scripture,² of which at least 10 are documented—five in the Old Testament and five in the New Testament. In each, we will examine key elements of education, including educational purpose, setting, teacher and student characteristics, curriculum, methods, learning activities, and outcomes. Finally, we will endeavor to identify shared themes and patterns in these examples, which may then serve as a framework for practice as we endeavor to carry out Christian education in contemporary settings.

The Eden School: An Experiential Classroom

In the beginning, God created a suitable setting for an educational program—an outdoor classroom that incorporated aesthetic elements.³ In the Eden school, God was the teacher, interacting personally with His students, providing guidance, and clarifying consequences.⁴

The curriculum included the study of God's creation, with nature as the textbook.⁵ It also incorporated manual labor, principles of diet, and an understanding of divine expectations.⁶ Teaching methods focused on high-level thinking. As soon as Adam was created, God assigned him the cognitive task of naming the animals, which called for creative thinking.⁷ With the creation of Eve, learning became collaborative.⁸

The first students were given responsibility. They were to manage the earth—developing the garden, caring for its creatures, and using its resources wisely.⁹ The educational program included assessment.¹⁰ A point of evaluation, the tree of

BY JOHN WESLEY TAYLOR V

the knowledge of good and evil, was placed in the garden and the students were given the power of choice. Tragically, Eve and Adam distrusted God's goodness and His authority.¹¹ They tried to gain knowledge apart from Him.¹² Consequently, they failed the test and were dropped from the program.

God, however, did not abandon the students in the Eden school. Rather, He reached out to them, asking them a series of reflective questions.¹³ In the midst of despair, He provided them with hope.¹⁴ As Adam and Eve left Eden,¹⁵ their Teacher helped them set up another school.

The School of the Patriarchs: A Family-based School

The school of the patriarchs was a family school. Abraham, for example, provided instruction regarding a God-centered code of conduct to his children and the members of his extended family.¹⁶ The purpose of the school was to promote loyalty to God and to serve as a bulwark against idolatry.¹⁷ The ultimate aim was that individuals might experience salvation.¹⁸

The teachers in the school of the patriarchs were men and women of faith,¹⁹ the result of a personal relationship with God.²⁰ God, in turn, communicated directly with the instructors,²¹ who were heaven-focused²² and endeavored to follow the divine instructions.²³ These instructors did not shrink from reproofing wickedness or clarifying ethical conduct.²⁴ A key role of the teachers, however, was also found in their function as peacemakers.²⁵ Teachers were sensitive to the needs of the students.²⁶ They interceded for their students and assured them of divine guidance in their lives.²⁷

The program of studies included the principles of morality, and the development of key dispositions, such as kindness, courtesy, generosity, and hospitality.²⁸ It involved experience in practical occupations and the development of a work ethic.²⁹ Other components of the curriculum included principles of nutrition,³⁰ the importance of service,³¹ and the necessity of prayer.³²

Learning activities included worship and allocating time for reflection and communion with God.³³ Students were given responsibility and the opportunity to exercise the power of choice.³⁴ Evaluation took place for both students and teachers.³⁵

The products of the patriarchal school were illustrious. Joseph, who at first seemed only a spoiled favorite son, soon gave evidence of ethical character and rose to positions of responsibility.³⁶ Similarly, although the time Moses spent in the patriarchal school was brief, it provided the foundation of his success.³⁷ There he developed his commitment to God and to His cause.³⁸

The school of the patriarchs, when fully implemented,

served to preserve the worship of God across generations. Unfortunately, that came to be the case less frequently, particularly during the period of Egyptian slavery. A remedial program was needed.

The School of the Desert: An Intensive, Remedial Program

When God brought His people out of Egypt, He established a school. This system of mass education began when God instructed parents to gather their children into their homes so that they would not perish.³⁹ God created the school so that students might get to know Him, develop faith in Him, and worship Him.⁴⁰

The school of the desert was well organized. Moses served as leader and head teacher,⁴¹ while other individuals, such as Aaron, Bezalel, Miriam, and Oholiab, functioned as assistants.⁴² These instructors were chosen by God, filled with His Spirit, and provided with skills.⁴³ Especially consecrated for their work,⁴⁴ they were to be God's representatives.⁴⁵ They were to be characterized by humility, modesty, and a teachable spirit, serving as role models for their students.⁴⁶ Parents were also to participate in the instruction of their children.⁴⁷

The school had a large and diverse student population.⁴⁸ Although primarily comprised of Israelites, the student body also included a "mixed multitude" from among the Egyptians.⁴⁹ Initially, the students promised that they would follow God's instruction and the rules of the school.⁵⁰ Shortly thereafter, however, under the leadership of an assistant teacher, they returned to worshipping a pagan

god.⁵¹ The students also grumbled and complained—quite frequently, in fact—about the school leadership, the setting, the curriculum, their diet, their assignments, and the long years of study.⁵² Despite these failings, God granted the students continued evidences of His protection and love.⁵³

The program of studies centered on the sanctuary—an experiential, multimedia curriculum intended to reveal the plan of salvation.⁵⁴ At the heart of the tabernacle was the ark of the covenant containing God's visible presence and His law.⁵⁵ In essence, God and His Word were at the center of the curriculum.

The educational program incorporated the transmission of values, including honesty, fairness, respect, compassion, and generosity.⁵⁶ The curriculum also included health and hygiene,⁵⁷ specific instruction on diet,⁵⁸ and principles of attire.⁵⁹ Students learned the importance of the Sabbath and of tithing.⁶⁰ They were to recognize their relationship to leadership,⁶¹ as well as to respect limits and to make restitution for

The educational program incorporated the transmission of values, including honesty, fairness, respect, compassion, and generosity. The curriculum also included health and hygiene, specific instruction on diet, and principles of attire.

wrongs.⁶² Fundamentally, students were to learn about God, understanding His expectations, and developing trust in Him.⁶³

In addition to the sanctuary, instructional materials included concrete objects and visual imagery.⁶⁴ At times, for example, the teacher would create a physical memorial to commemorate significant events.⁶⁵ Learning activities included music,⁶⁶ field research,⁶⁷ and the development of manual skills.⁶⁸ Students were frequently involved in worship experiences.⁶⁹

At various points, evaluation took place.⁷⁰ While there were stellar students such as Caleb and Joshua, the results overall were disappointing. Slowly, however, a corporate understanding began to emerge as to the nature of God and of their relationship to Him.⁷¹ After 40 years, the students of the desert school, or rather, their children and grandchildren, graduated from the remedial program and were ready to enter the school of Canaan.⁷²

The School of Canaan: Community-based Education

Before the Israelites entered Canaan,⁷³ God gave special instructions regarding the educational program that they were to establish, as described in Deuteronomy 6:4-9.⁷⁴ A number of key concepts are highlighted: (1) God is the center of the educational program⁷⁵; (2) The educational dynamic is love; the scope is comprehensive⁷⁶; (3) The words of God form the core curriculum, but these must be internalized first in the life of the teacher⁷⁷; (4) The instructional process requires intentionality and integrates theory and practice⁷⁸; (5) God's words must guide a whole-person development—encompassing physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions.⁷⁹

The school was community based. Some instruction took place in the home.⁸⁰ Another principal setting was at the sanctuary, particularly during the religious feasts, when special instruction was provided by parents, priests, and Levites.⁸¹ Furthermore, every seventh year was to be a time when the predominantly agrarian population would abstain from planting fields or pruning vineyards, eating only what the land spontaneously produced.⁸² This sabbatical year could then be utilized to study the law of God, as well as to learn various trades.⁸³

Teachers in the school of Canaan included parents, priests, and judges.⁸⁴ These teachers were to internalize God's word and evidence faithfulness.⁸⁵ They were to live a healthy lifestyle.⁸⁶ Teachers were at times especially commissioned for their work.⁸⁷ Students in the school of Canaan included men, women, children, and "the foreigners who lived among them."⁸⁸ Even the future kings of Israel were to be educated by studying God's Word.⁸⁹

The program of studies included the study of religion, values education, life skills, and instruction regarding social relationships. God's laws and decrees were at the heart of the curriculum.⁹⁰ Moral values were emphasized. Students were taught practices intended to foster generosity, particularly to-

ward "the foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow."⁹¹ They learned the importance and the implications of honesty and integrity.⁹²

Students were taught principles of hygiene, diet, and dress.⁹³ They were to learn practical skills, such as architectural design and construction,⁹⁴ as well as the principles and practices that were to govern military operations.⁹⁵ The curriculum also included an understanding of the judicial system and legal responsibilities.⁹⁶ Students were taught principles to guide social interactions and relationships.⁹⁷ They were especially to safeguard the rights of the vulnerable and socially marginalized.⁹⁸

Learning activities included music, worship, and praise.⁹⁹ Students were encouraged to make moral choices and were subject to evaluation.¹⁰⁰ Teachers would at times use visual reminders of key concepts to reinforce learning.¹⁰¹ The school of Canaan was intended to safeguard Israel's spiritual allegiance and to serve as a witness to other nations.¹⁰² Sadly, it largely failed to accomplish these purposes.¹⁰³ In an endeavor to bring His people back to the divine plan, God raised up judges to deliver and instruct. When a judge died, however, "the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their ancestors."¹⁰⁴ Clearly, a revival was needed.

The School of the Prophets: A System Focused on Revival

Samuel, a prophet and the last of the judges, led out in establishing training programs to prepare spiritual leaders.¹⁰⁵ Subsequently revived by the prophets Elijah and Elisha, the schools were located at Jericho, Bethel, and Gilgal, among other sites.¹⁰⁶ The instructional role of the prophets, however, did not conclude with these formal programs, but rather extended throughout the Old Testament period.¹⁰⁷

The purpose of the school of the prophets was threefold: (1) to promote revival and reformation,¹⁰⁸ (2) to provide moral guidance, especially to civil leadership,¹⁰⁹ and (3) to mentor a new generation of spiritual leaders.¹¹⁰

Called by God,¹¹¹ teachers in the school of the prophets were filled with His Spirit.¹¹² As instructors, they were to receive and faithfully convey God's message.¹¹³ This included reviewing God's leading in the past and pointing out the consequences of choices,¹¹⁴ recording current events as lessons for future generations,¹¹⁵ addressing social issues such as injustice and violence,¹¹⁶ and leading out in special events of praise and celebration.¹¹⁷

These teachers related with their students in personable ways. Elisha, for example, shared meals with his students and looked out for their welfare.¹¹⁸ Samuel took time to converse with his students and demonstrate compassion.¹¹⁹ The teachers were also persons of prayer, interceding on behalf of their students.¹²⁰

The curriculum was based on the Word of God, and especially an understanding of God's character and His law.¹²¹ It included the study of specific doctrines, such as tithing, the Sabbath, the mission and ministry of the Messiah, the Second Coming, and the new earth.¹²² The program of studies also fo-

cused on character development, highlighting particularly the core values of justice, mercy, and humility.¹²³ Students were to engage in witness and service.¹²⁴ Emphases included music, history, health, and manual labor.¹²⁵

Teaching methods utilized parables and allegories,¹²⁶ as well as visual illustrations.¹²⁷ Students were given responsibilities—preparing food for the school, for example, and participating in religious services.¹²⁸ Students were also given opportunity to make choices and to understand the consequences of their actions.¹²⁹ They were subject to evaluation.¹³⁰

The school of the prophets achieved significant results. Social injustice was successfully confronted, and the nation experienced peace and prosperity.¹³¹ Surrounding societies observed the effect and desired to know the true God.¹³² The most important result, however, was revival and reformation, evidenced in changed lives, obedience to God’s will, and an outpouring of God’s Spirit.¹³³

Tragically, however, the work of the prophets was often ig-

nored, ridiculed, or rejected.¹³⁴ Some of the prophets were killed.¹³⁵ As a result, the people experienced societal turmoil and ultimately destruction.¹³⁶ This collapse of the school of the prophets was compounded by the appearance of false prophets—individuals who pretended to convey a message from God but who “spoke lies,” motivated by greed, position, and power.¹³⁷ A prophet, steadfast and courageous, was desperately needed.¹³⁸

The School of John the Baptist: Simplicity and Reformation

In the New Testament, the first school identified is the one in which John the Baptist was the only pupil. It was a family school, a school whose purpose prepared the way for a reformation.

The school was located in a rural setting, a context that seemed to contribute to the success of the school.¹³⁹ It was a two-teacher school, with Zachariah and Elizabeth as teachers. They were individuals of prayer and Spirit-filled, their lives evidencing their commitment to God.¹⁴⁰ God communicated

School	Purpose	Setting	Teacher
The School of Eden: An experiential school	To obtain a personal knowledge of God and of His plan for life	An outdoor classroom, a place of aesthetic delight	God, personally interacting with students, providing guidance, clarifying consequences
The School of the Patriarchs: A family-based school	To promote loyalty to God, serving as a bulwark against idolatry; to experience salvation	The family; covenant-based	Patriarchs—called of God, individuals of faith, obedient, heaven-focused, reproved wickedness; peacemakers, sensitive to the needs of students
The School of the Desert: An intensive, remedial program	To help students know God, have faith in Him, and worship Him; to reveal the plan of salvation	Rural and simple; centered on the sanctuary; established through a series of miracles; covenant-based	God; Moses as leader; assistant teachers, chosen by God and filled with the Spirit; parents; all to be characterized by a teachable spirit, temperance, a personal relationship with God
The School of Canaan: Community-based education	To prepare a people who would love God; to safeguard Israel’s spiritual allegiance; to serve as a witness to other nations	Community; home; sanctuary, particularly during the religious feasts and the Sabbatical year; covenant-based	Parents, priests, Levites, judges; were to review God’s leading in the past, to live a healthy lifestyle; characterized by faithfulness and obedience; commissioned for their work
The School of the Prophets: A system for revival	To promote revival and reformation; to provide moral guidance, especially to civil leadership; to mentor a generation of spiritual leaders	Formal schools, often in cities or towns; informal instruction by individual prophets in a variety of settings	Prophets—men and women, called by God, filled with Spirit; reviewed God’s leading in the past; pointed out consequences of choices; recorded current events as lessons; personable with students; persons of prayer

with the teachers, and they, in turn, transmitted a vision of God’s calling to their student.¹⁴¹

John the Baptist was characterized by certain attributes, developed through the educational experience: courage, humility, and a sense of divine calling. In his ministry, for example, John preached with boldness.¹⁴² but also developed the disposition of humility: “‘After me,’” he said, “‘will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry.’”¹⁴³

Although the program of studies is not explicitly defined, a number of features can be inferred. It seems that instruction was provided regarding lifestyle principles and social justice,¹⁴⁴ and that the curriculum included an emphasis on the Word of God and prepared the student for witness.¹⁴⁵ Simplicity of diet and dress prevailed.¹⁴⁶

The results of John’s ministry were significant. “The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.”¹⁴⁷ Jesus described him as “more than a

prophet.”¹⁴⁸ Perhaps the most significant result of the educational experience was that John was enabled to recognize and proclaim Jesus as the Son of God.¹⁴⁹

The School Where Jesus Learned: A Home School

Jesus did not attend the rabbinical schools of His time. As He taught in the temple, the people were amazed and asked, “‘How did this man get such learning without having studied?’”¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Jesus was well-educated. Luke, for example, notes that “He came to Nazareth . . . and as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read.”¹⁵¹

If Jesus did not attend a formal school, how did He learn? In essence, his parents were his teachers. Joseph was described as a “righteous man,” sensitive to the circumstances and feelings of others.¹⁵² Mary was portrayed as one who had “found favor with God.”¹⁵³ She was also characterized by a reflective spirit.¹⁵⁴ Together, Jesus’ parents endeavored to fulfill civil and religious obligations¹⁵⁵ and to

Students	Curriculum	Methods	Activities	Results
Adam and Eve, created in the image of God	Study of God’s creation; manual labor; principles of diet; understanding of the Great Controversy	Focus on high-level thinking; collaborative learning; reflective questions	Given authority and responsibility to manage the earth; freedom of choice; time for rest; assessment	Failed the test and were dropped from the program; provided with hope—redemption, restoration
Children and extended family	God-centered code of ethical conduct; values of fairness, kindness, courtesy, generosity; work ethic; tithing; interpersonal relationships	Direct instruction; modeling	Worship; offerings; service; prayer and reflection; given responsibility and the power of choice; evaluation of students and teachers	Individuals of ethical character, selfless, forgiving, committed to God, humble, filled with the Spirit; preserved the knowledge of God; few parents implemented
Mass education of men, women, and children; some were non-Israelites; initially promised to follow God, but quickly regressed; frequently complained; rebelled and rioted at times	God and His Word; principles of pardon and power to live; moral values: honesty, justice, mercy, respect, compassion; health, attire, diet, hygiene; Sabbath, tithing; consequences; relationships	Multi-sensory; experiential; concrete objects and visual imagery; memorials; repetition	Music and praise; manual skills; field research; worship; giving offerings; evaluation	A few stellar students (e.g., Caleb, Joshua); most students failed and had to repeat their coursework; slowly, corporate understanding formed of the nature of God and their relationship with Him
Men, women, children, and foreigners, even future kings; whole-person development	God and His Word; tithing; avoiding the occult; values of generosity, honesty, justice, mercy; principles of hygiene, diet, dress; practical skills; social relationships	Direct instruction; visual reminders of key concepts	Music, worship, praise; moral decision-making; evaluation	Largely failed; people served God only while Joshua and the elders were alive; God raised up judges to deliver and instruct; when they died, people reverted to paganism
Civil leaders; population at large; “sons of the prophets”	Based on the Word of God—understanding God’s law, mercy, forgiveness, consequences; doctrines of tithing, Sabbath, Messiah, heaven; values of justice, mercy, humility; music, history, health, manual labor	Mentoring; parables and allegories; memorials of concepts and events; visual illustrations	Moral decision-making; witnessing and serving; music and praise; prophesying; preparing food and accommodations for the school; delivering messages from God; evaluation	Social injustice confronted; national peace and prosperity; revival and reformation; outpouring of God’s Spirit; tragically, often ignored, ridiculed, rejected, resulting in social turmoil, violence, and destruction

Chart continued on page 18

provide a safe environment for Jesus.¹⁵⁶ They were, however, of scarce economic means.¹⁵⁷

The educational setting was not idyllic, since a portion of Jesus' early experience took place in a foreign country where He and His parents were refugees.¹⁵⁸ Subsequently, they returned to the family home in Nazareth, a small town in the Galilean countryside. It was a community, however, with an objectionable reputation.¹⁵⁹

As a student, Jesus was inquisitive. At the age of 12, He spent several days in the temple with the religious scholars, "listening to them and asking them questions."¹⁶⁰ Jesus was also a sociable and outgoing child. When He was lost, His parents assumed that He was with relatives or friends.¹⁶¹

Referencing Jesus' development during infancy and early childhood, the physician Luke noted that "the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of

God was upon him."¹⁶² After Jesus' visit to the temple at the age of 12, Luke describes further development, adding the social dimension.¹⁶³

The program of studies fostered whole-person development. Jesus, for example, developed skill in a manual trade, which He learned from Joseph.¹⁶⁴ Jesus' later ministry evidenced His keen observation of the natural world,¹⁶⁵ as well as His understanding of Scripture.¹⁶⁶ Christ's teaching also evidenced His perceptive study of people and the events of everyday life.¹⁶⁷

The results of Jesus' education can be seen in His sense of a divine mission for His life. At the age of 12, He asked His parents, "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"¹⁶⁸ He also developed insight. When Jesus' parents found Him in the temple, asking and answering questions, "everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding

Schools of the Bible: Contours of a Divine Plan for Christian Education

School	Purpose	Setting	Teacher
The School of John the Baptist: A school of simplicity and reformation	To bring about a reformation of godliness	Family-based; rural and rustic	Parents, who observed the commandments, were individuals of prayer and Spirit-filled
The School Where Jesus Learned: A home school	To know God and His plan; to prepare for a life of ministry	Home, not the rabbinical schools; Egypt and Nazareth—not idyllic settings	Parents—righteous, submissive to God's leading, filled with the Holy Spirit; reflective spirit; fulfilled civil and religious obligations; endeavored to provide a safe environment; meager economic means
The School Where Jesus Taught: A program of discipleship	To unmask Satan's deception regarding God's character; to reveal the principles of the kingdom of heaven; to glorify God	Outdoors—hillside, seaside; private homes; public venues—temple or synagogue	Lived in harmony with God's will; created contexts of joy; invitation to success; conveyed tenderness, sympathy; differentiated instruction; reached out to the socially marginalized; spoke with confidence; humble spirit; demonstrated personal association; centrality of prayer
The School of the Christian Church: A missionary school	To fulfill the gospel commission	Temple court, synagogues, and other public venues (e.g., the Areopagus and the school of Tyrannus); private homes; outdoors (e.g., beside the river in Philippi, in the Gaza wilderness)	Christ and the Holy Spirit; apostles and other church leaders; parents, grandparents; especially commissioned; bold, courageous, patient, gentle, confident, qualified, faithful
The School of Heaven: The school of eternity	To understand God and His plan for the universe; to experience unlimited development and the realization of full potential; to bring eternal security to the universe	Heaven and the new earth—a place where God is, a place of aesthetic delight; both the Holy City and natural settings of peace, safety, and security	God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit; angels and other unfallen beings

and his answers.¹⁶⁹ Perhaps most significantly, Jesus developed a personal relationship with God.¹⁷⁰ In essence, Jesus' early education prepared Him for ministry.¹⁷¹

The School Where Jesus Taught: A Program of Discipleship

The teaching ministry of Jesus revealed perhaps most clearly the divine plan for education. His overarching purpose was to reveal God's character, and, by extension, the principles of His kingdom.¹⁷²

While Jesus frequently taught in the synagogue and later in the temple,¹⁷³ His instructional setting was varied. It included the open countryside, private homes, and more public venues in cities and villages.¹⁷⁴ His students were most often His 12 disciples.¹⁷⁵ On certain occasions, He taught larger groups, numbering at times in the thousands.¹⁷⁶ Sometimes, however, His teaching was one-on-one, as was the case with

Nicodemus and with the woman at the well.¹⁷⁷ Those attending His classes included women and children, as well as laborers, merchants, members of security forces, scribes, and religious leaders.¹⁷⁸

Personal characteristics contributed significantly to Jesus' success as a teacher. These attributes included perceptiveness,¹⁷⁹ tenderness and sympathy,¹⁸⁰ and a spirit of humility.¹⁸¹ Jesus was further characterized by creating contexts of joy,¹⁸² inviting students to success,¹⁸³ recognizing student differences,¹⁸⁴ and courageously confronting wrong.¹⁸⁵ His students experienced personal association with their teacher,¹⁸⁶ as well as tangible evidence of the value He awarded each individual, even those marginalized by society.¹⁸⁷ Perhaps the most significant attribute, however, was the centrality of prayer.¹⁸⁸

In His instruction, Christ emphasized certain themes, which

Students	Curriculum	Methods	Activities	Results
John and John's disciples; sense of divine calling; bold and courageous; humble; Spirit-filled	Lifestyle principles—simplicity of diet and dress; emphasis on the Word of God	Self-study	Fasting and prayer; witness and evangelism	Became strong in spirit; fearlessly rebuked even royalty; brought about repentance and reformation
Jesus—inquisitive, sociable and outgoing, trustworthy, obedient	Scripture; nature; manual skills; life experiences	Nurture; apprenticeship; self-study	In-depth study of Scripture; participation in religious experiences; observation of the natural world; perceptive study of people and social interactions; asking questions	Well-rounded development—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social; sense of divine mission; insight; physical stamina; compassion for the socially marginalized; life of prayer; prepared to carry out His lifework
Disciples—group of 12, group of 70; large groups, numbering in the thousands; individual sessions; adults and children; men and women; day laborers, merchants, members of security forces, scribes, and religious leaders	Clarify the attributes of God; distinguish the essential from the trivial; recognize the “big picture”; understand the past; visualize the future; centrality of Scripture: initiate thought, expand concepts, clarify meaning, create connections, give a call to action	Illustrations—stories, news items, historical events, analogies, tangible objects; demonstration; repetition; questions; comparison and contrast; paradoxes and anomalies; emphasis through hyperbole; active learning; problem solving; collaborative learning	High-level thinking: knowing, understanding, being, doing; prayer; witness; service	Crowds of thousands flocked to hear Him; listeners were amazed at His teaching; some of His listeners rejected Him, and one of His disciples betrayed Him; the majority of His disciples effectively carried on His ministry, even at great personal sacrifice
Jews and Gentiles; children and adults; kings and slaves; everyone everywhere	Word of God, especially the words of Jesus; understanding the plan of salvation; doctrines—state of the dead, Second Coming; character development	Christ-centered, direct instruction; modeling; apprenticeship; thought-provoking questions; encouragement; oral and written communication	Interacting directly with the Word of God; application of knowledge; acquisition of practical skills; teamwork; music; service; witness and evangelism	Transformation of understanding, attitudes, and life; non-believers were amazed; impact felt throughout the entire society; many believers were added to the church
A great multitude—of all nations, ethnicities, and language groups; high admission standards: obedient, faithful, overcomers; white robe, new name; vested with immortality	Character of God; wonders of God's creation; plan of salvation; manual skills—building trades, horticulture; music—vocal and instrumental, performance and composition	Direct interaction with instructors; relationships with fellow students from diverse backgrounds; no evaluation—students have already passed the test; exploration, discovery; self-regulated learning	Worship, praise, and celebration; witness—sharing one's experience of God's amazing grace and power; service; adjudication—high-level thinking, perceptive analysis, appraisal	The Great Controversy is over—the character and acts of God are forever vindicated; unbounded joy, security, peace, and belonging; continual development

included the role of Scripture,¹⁸⁹ distinguishing the important from the trivial,¹⁹⁰ recognizing the “big picture,”¹⁹¹ an emphasis on service,¹⁹² and a view toward the future.¹⁹³ Jesus oriented His teaching to actively engage His students in the learning experience. This involved a focus on thinking,¹⁹⁴ knowing,¹⁹⁵ understanding,¹⁹⁶ being,¹⁹⁷ and doing.¹⁹⁸

In His teaching, Christ used a variety of instructional strategies, methods that promoted high-level thinking and helped His students to better understand, recall, and apply His instruction. These strategies included illustrations,¹⁹⁹ stories,²⁰⁰ news items,²⁰¹ and reference to historical events.²⁰² They incorporated the use of analogies,²⁰³ tangible objects,²⁰⁴ demonstration,²⁰⁵ and repetition.²⁰⁶ Other instructional methods included the use of questions,²⁰⁷ comparison and contrast,²⁰⁸ paradoxes and anomalies,²⁰⁹ and emphasis using hyperbole.²¹⁰ On various occasions, His students also engaged in active learning,²¹¹ problem solving,²¹² and collaborative learning.²¹³

Jesus had a profound influence on His students. When He concluded a teaching session, His listeners were amazed at His teaching. Turning to one another, they asked, “Where did this man get these things?” “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.”²¹⁴ One day, alarmed with His growing popularity, the chief priests sent the temple guards to arrest Him. At the end of the day, however, the guards returned empty-handed. “Why didn’t you bring Him in?” the priests fumed. “No one ever spoke the way this man does,” the guards declared.²¹⁵

The School of the Christian Church: A Missionary School

At the conclusion of His ministry on earth, Christ instructed His followers: “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”²¹⁶ This commission established the school of the Christian Church, focused on witness and evangelism. It is instructive to consider examples of this school in action.

Philip, one of the seven deacons, was directly involved in the education process.²¹⁷ Of particular significance in his encounter with the Ethiopian treasurer are the central role of the Holy Spirit, the Christ-centered nature of the instruction, the use of thought-provoking questions, a direct interaction with the Word of God, and the transformation of the student’s understanding, attitudes, and life.

As a child, Timothy received Bible-based instruction from his mother and grandmother.²¹⁸ Observing the positive influence of this early education, the apostle Paul invited Timothy to join his ministry as an apprentice.²¹⁹ As a mentor, Paul encouraged Timothy to focus on character development, to reject the lure of materialism, and to teach others through example.²²⁰ The church subsequently recognized in Timothy the gift of teaching and especially commissioned him for this ministry.²²¹

Similarly, Titus, a Gentile convert on the island of Crete, was appointed to teach various groups of individuals, which included older men and women, youth, and even slaves. They were to be given a Bible-based, values-oriented training. Titus was also to instruct others in the teaching ministry.²²²

Education in the early church took place in a variety of settings, including public buildings, private homes, nature, and within the family.²²³ Students included Jews and Gentiles, children and adults, kings and slaves.²²⁴ Such was the pervasiveness of the educational effort that its adversaries charged that the apostles taught “everyone everywhere.”²²⁵

Teachers included the apostles and other church leaders.²²⁶ The school also incorporated the concept that believers were to instruct one another and that parents were to teach their own children.²²⁷ Teaching was considered a divine calling, closely linked to the role of pastor.²²⁸ Those called to teach were to be instructed in the Word and given a clear understanding of belief and doctrine.²²⁹ They were to be bold and courageous, patient and gentle, confident, qualified, and faithful.²³⁰ They were to teach as co-workers with God.²³¹

The curriculum focused on the Word of God, particularly the teachings of Jesus.²³² Students were to understand

the gospel,²³³ develop Christian character, and devote themselves to a life of service.²³⁴ Teaching strategies included modeling and mentoring, as well as oral and written communication.²³⁵ Learning activities included the acquisition of practical skills, the application of knowledge, teamwork, service, and witness.²³⁶

The school of the early church achieved significant results. The believers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching,” which produced a transformative influence in their lives.²³⁷ The effects were felt throughout the entire society, and many believers were added to the church.²³⁸

Education in the early church took place in a variety of settings, including public buildings, private homes, nature, and within the family. Students included Jews and Gentiles, children and adults, kings and slaves. Such was the pervasiveness of the educational effort that its adversaries charged that the apostles taught “everyone everywhere.”

The School of Heaven: Education for Eternity

The divine plan for education culminates in the school of heaven. What will that school be like? While the setting surpasses comprehension,²³⁹ Scripture provides a sketch of its features. The school includes a city, the New Jerusalem.²⁴⁰ It is a place of aesthetic delight,²⁴¹ illuminated by God's presence.²⁴² In addition, the classroom will again include a garden,²⁴³ with learning taking place in a natural, peaceful setting.²⁴⁴

God will be the instructor,²⁴⁵ and the redeemed will be the students.²⁴⁶ Teacher and students will live together,²⁴⁷ with the students directly interacting with Him "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."²⁴⁸

While the students in the school of heaven are numerous and diverse,²⁴⁹ admission standards are high. Students must have "clean hands and a pure heart."²⁵⁰ They must be committed to knowing and living the truth.²⁵¹ They are overcomers whose names "are written in the Lamb's book of life."²⁵²

The program of studies will focus on the character of God,²⁵³ the wonders of His creation,²⁵⁴ and the plan of salvation.²⁵⁵ It will also incorporate manual skills,²⁵⁶ music,²⁵⁷ service,²⁵⁸ and worship.²⁵⁹ In a special way, students will focus their study on those aspects that they were unable to comprehend during their earthly life.²⁶⁰

Students in the school of heaven develop deep, enduring relationships with the redeemed from diverse backgrounds and cultures.²⁶¹ They also engage in adjudication,²⁶² which involves high-level thinking, critical analysis, and appraisal.

In many ways, the first school, the school of Eden, and the school of heaven are remarkably similar. This is no surprise, however, since Eden was an extension campus of the school of heaven. There is, nonetheless, an important difference. In heaven's school there will be no evaluation, no tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The students have already passed the test, and before them lies an eternity of self-regulated learning and development.

There is, however, an activity that will take the place of evaluation. Students in the heavenly school will be involved in witness.²⁶³ The redeemed will share their own experiences of God's amazing grace and power, their conviction of His goodness and love with the angels and other unfallen beings.²⁶⁴ The word of their testimony contributes to the eternal security of the universe.²⁶⁵

What will be the results of the school of heaven? Joy, unbounded joy²⁶⁶—the exhilaration of being in God's presence,²⁶⁷ and of experiencing His new creation.²⁶⁸ It is unalloyed delight, because sorrow, pain, and suffering have been banished.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, the students in heaven's school experience security,²⁷⁰ peace,²⁷¹ belonging,²⁷² and unlimited opportunities for continual development.²⁷³

Emergent Themes

Christian education bears fruit when it connects to its roots. What, then, are the themes that emerge from these schools described in the Bible?

The *purpose* of the schools of the Bible was that students

might obtain an experiential knowledge of God. As a result, they were to develop faith in Him and His plan for their lives. Given the great conflict between good and evil, the schools were to unmask Satan's deception regarding God's character and reveal the principles of His kingdom. Particularly, they were to serve as a bulwark against paganism and idolatry. The schools were to delineate the plan of salvation and guide their students to experience God's grace and power. Ultimately, these schools were to mentor spiritual leaders—individuals prepared to fulfill the divine commission and committed to a life of ministry.

While the *setting* of the schools varied, certain patterns emerge. The home was the foremost educational setting, followed closely by the church. Another frequent setting was in the outdoors, where students might be in direct contact with God's creation. At times, public venues were utilized, particularly to reach those who might not otherwise come into contact with the school.

God was the ultimate *teacher* in each of the schools. His assistants were priests, prophets, pastors and other godly people, and parents. Of these, the latter figured most prominently. All, however, were called by God and were to be guided by His Spirit. Many were especially commissioned for their work. These teachers were to be characterized by courage, humility, patience, gentleness, fidelity, and temperance. They were to evidence a teachable spirit and sensitivity to the needs of their students. They were to be persons of prayer and of faith. They were to provide guidance, clarify consequences, reprove sin, review God's leading in the past, convey tenderness and sympathy, personally interact with students, and create contexts of joy.

Students included men and women, young and old, believers and non-believers. On occasion, instruction was provided to large groups of students, numbering in the hundreds or thousands. More often, however, instruction was given to smaller clusters of students and sometimes one-on-one. The emphasis was on whole-person development, particularly in terms of the mental, physical, social, and spiritual dimensions. Students were to be inquisitive, trustworthy, bold, humble, and Spirit-filled. They were to have a clear sense of divine calling. Unfortunately, the students at times resented various features of the educational program, complaining and even rebelling. Their teachers, however, did not abandon them. Rather, they patiently continued their work on behalf of the students, regarding them as candidates for salvation, created in the image of God and redeemed by His grace.

The Word of God was at the heart of the *curriculum*. Through the study of the Scriptures, students were to develop an understanding of the character of God, of the Great Controversy, and of the plan of salvation. Students were also to study the works of God, discerning evidences of God's character through His creation. They were to acquire practical proficiencies and cultivate a strong work ethic. They were to develop a lifestyle characterized by temperance, simplicity of diet and dress, and an emphasis on health and hygiene. Subjects of study included music, history, interpersonal relationships, and an un-

derstanding of the consequences of one's actions. One of the most important elements in the program of studies was character development—the formation of a God-centered code of conduct.

A variety of *methods* were used in the schools. These included direct instruction, demonstration, and repetition, as well as modeling, mentoring, and apprenticeship. Instruction focused on high-level thinking, including creativity and perceptive analysis. These processes were fostered by thought-provoking questions, reflection, and problem-solving. Teachers frequently used illustrations—analogy, parables, and allegories, as well as stories, news items, and historical events. Tangible objects, visual imagery, and multisensory experiences were also employed. Teachers further promoted active learning, collaborative learning, exploration, and discovery.

Students participated in meaningful *learning activities*. They engaged in the in-depth study of Scripture. They observed nature and social interactions. They asked questions. They applied knowledge and acquired real-world skills. They engaged in field research, service, witness, and evangelism. They were given responsibility and the opportunity for moral decision-making. Students also participated in a variety of spiritual experiences, including prayer and reflection, music and praise, celebration and worship. Students were evaluated, and also participated as evaluators in the assessment process.

The *results* of the schools of the Bible were mixed, not due to imperfections in design, but because of flaws in implementation. Few parents carried out their God-given responsibilities, and generations grew up without a knowledge of God. In the schools, students began to ignore or ridicule their teachers, and a number rejected the program itself, rebelling and even rioting. As a result, some teachers became discouraged and deserted their teaching assignments.

The good news is that God didn't give up, nor did the committed teachers. They persevered and provided their students with the hope of redemption and restoration. And there were stellar students, men and women who experienced a transformation of understanding, attitudes, and life. They were well-balanced individuals, with physical stamina, wisdom, social skills, and a deep commitment to God. They developed ethical character, evidenced a deep sense of divine mission, lived a life of prayer, and were filled with the Spirit. They fearlessly confronted social injustice, evidenced compassion for the socially marginalized, and effectively carried out their ministry, even at great personal sacrifice.

In all, the schools of the Bible preserved the knowledge of God and prepared individuals who more clearly understood the nature of God and of their relationship with Him. The result was revival and reformation. Furthermore, an impact was felt throughout the entire society. Non-believers were reached, and believers were added to the church.

Today, as Christian educators, we seek to understand and implement God's plan for education. The schools of Scripture provide the contours of this divine plan, a framework upon which we can safely and effectively develop, implement, and assess our endeavors in Christian education. ✍

This article has been peer reviewed.



John Wesley Taylor V, Ed.D., Ph.D., is Associate Director of Education at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland. He is the liaison for the Inter-American Division, the South Pacific Division, the West-Central Africa Division, the Northern Asia-Pacific Division, and the Middle East and North Africa Union. He has taught at all levels—elementary through graduate—and has served at several institutions around the world: Montemorelos University (Mexico), the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (Philippines), and Andrews University and Southern Adventist University (U.S.A.). He may be reached at taylorjw@gc.adventist.org.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. 1 Corinthians 10:11. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture texts in this article are quoted from the New International Version of the Bible. Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
2. For the purpose of this article, a school is defined as a setting in which a teacher and student interact in a teaching-learning experience.
3. The campus incorporated trees pleasant to the sight, fruit desirable for food, and even precious stones (Genesis 1:1-25; 2:8-12).
4. Genesis 2:15-17, 29; 3:8.
5. Genesis 1:3, 6; 1:9; 1:14, 15; 1:11; 1:20, 24; Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20.
6. Genesis 1:29; 2:15-17.
7. Genesis 2:19. It is perhaps significant that the only description of God prior to the declaration, "So God created mankind in his own image" (Genesis 1:27), is that of God the Creator. Whatever other aspects of God may be embraced in the concept of *imago dei*, it must surely include the creative dimension.
8. Genesis 2:21-22. In fact, the only time in the creation account in which God said that something was "not good" was when His student was working alone (Genesis 2:18).
9. Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15.
10. Genesis 2:9, 16, 17.
11. Genesis 3:1-6.
12. John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 2 Peter 1:16.
13. Genesis 3:8-13.
14. Genesis 3:15.
15. Genesis 3:16-19, 23, 24.
16. Genesis 18:19. Note that the teacher taught by direct instruction and through modeling—training his students "after him."
17. Genesis 6:5, 6. Preparing to enter Canaan, Jacob, for instance, called together his household and instructed them, "Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves" (Genesis 35:1-4).
18. This salvation focus was demonstrated, for example, to Noah and his family when God said, "Go into the ark, you and your whole family" (Genesis 7:1; see also Luke 17:27 and 1 Peter 3:20).
19. Enoch, Noah, Isaac, Joseph, and the parents of Moses are expressly identified in Scripture as individuals whose lives evidenced a tangible faith in God (Hebrews 11; Romans 4:15; Galatians 3:9).
20. Enoch and Noah, for example, are described as "walking with God" (Genesis 5:24; 6:9), while Abraham is called "God's friend" (James 2:23).
21. Genesis 6:13-21; 17:1-21; 35:1, 11-15; 46:2-4; Exodus 3. When Moses, for instance, felt inadequate for the task before him, God encouraged him, providing Aaron as an assistant, and saying, "I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do" (Exodus 4:15).
22. Abraham, for example, anticipated "the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:8, 10). Others "admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. . . . They were longing for a better country—a heavenly one" (Hebrews 11:13, 16).

23. Scripture records that Noah “did everything just as God commanded him” (Genesis 6:22; 7:5), while Enoch is described as “one who pleased God” (Hebrews 11:5). Similarly, when God instructed, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you,” Abraham “obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going” (Genesis 12:1; Hebrews 11:8).

24. Enoch spoke of a judgment day, when God would “convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done” (Jude 14, 15). Likewise, Noah delineated righteousness and rebuked immoral behavior (2 Peter 2:5; Genesis 9:20-27).

25. When there was a dispute between herdsmen as to pasture, Abraham said to Lot, “Let’s not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are close relatives. Is not the whole land before you? Let’s part company. If you go to the left, I’ll go to the right; if you go to the right, I’ll go to the left” (Genesis 13:8, 9). With similar altruism, Isaac didn’t argue with the herdsmen of Gerar over the ownership of the wells that his servants had dug (Genesis 26:19-22).

26. Jacob, for instance, stated, “So let my lord go on ahead of his servant, while I move along slowly at the pace . . . of the children” (Genesis 33:14).

27. Genesis 18:16-33; 24:7, 12-14, 40, 42-44.

28. Genesis 9:5, 6; 18:1-7, 19; 24:12-25.

29. Genesis 4:2; 6:14-16, 22. This is evidenced, for example, in Rebekah’s offer to provide water for the camels (Genesis 24:19, 44).

30. Genesis 9:4.

31. Genesis 12:2.

32. Genesis 24:12-14; 32:9-12. Students learned that they should form life relationships within the community of faith (Genesis 24:3; 26:34, 35; 28:1-9) and that divine love is to form the bedrock of relationship (Genesis 24:67).

33. Genesis 4:3, 4; 8:10; 21:33; 24:63; 26:25; 33:20; 35:7.

34. Genesis 24:2-9, 58; 37:14.

35. Genesis 4:3-5; 22:1-12.

36. Genesis 39:4, 9, 22, 23; 41:39-41. It became clear to those around him that God was his frame of reference (Genesis 40:8; 41:16; 45:5, 7, 8), and that God was with him (Acts 7:9, 10). Even the Pharaoh declared, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?” (Genesis 41:38). Perhaps one of the most significant results in his life, however, was the development of a selfless and forgiving spirit (Genesis 44:33; 45:4, 5; 50:20, 21).

37. Exodus 2:5-10; Acts 7:20-22.

38. Hebrews 11:24-26. From that early education, Moses also developed humility, meekness, and a keen sense of justice (Exodus 2:11-13, 17; 3:11; Numbers 12:3; Acts 7:23-28).

39. Exodus 12:21-23.

40. Exodus 4:8, 9, 29-31; 6:2-7; Deuteronomy 4:10.

41. Exodus 3:14, 15; 4:15; 25:21.

42. Exodus 4:13-17; 31:1-6; 35:34; Leviticus 10:8-11. It should be noted that while each of these individuals was involved in the teaching ministry of the school, God would, at times, provide direct instruction (Exodus 20; 29:42-46; Deuteronomy 5).

43. Exodus 35:30-35; Numbers 11:24-29.

44. Exodus 29:1; Leviticus 8.

45. Exodus 7:1; 18:20; 28:30, 36-38; Leviticus 10:1-3, 8-11; Numbers 6:24-26.

46. Exodus 18:13-24; 28:42-43; Numbers 12:3. Jethro, for example, gave Moses a suggestion as to how to better organize the school through a decentralized administration and the delegation of authority, a plan which Moses readily accepted and implemented (Deuteronomy 1:9-18).

47. Deuteronomy 4:10. When children, for example, asked, “What does this ceremony mean to you?” parents were to explain, “It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes” (Exodus 12:26, 27).

48. About 600,000 men, in addition to women and children, both at the time of the exodus from Egypt and upon entry to Canaan (Exodus 10:8-11; 12:37; Numbers 1:46; 2:32).

49. Exodus 12:38; Deuteronomy 7:6. At times this non-Israelite group became a catalyst in leading the student body astray, such as when “the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?” (Numbers 11:4, KJV)

50. When Moses “told the people all the Lord’s words and laws, they responded with one voice, ‘Everything the Lord has said we will do’” (Exodus 24:3, 7).

51. Exodus 32.

52. Exodus 15:24; 16:2, 3; 17:3; Numbers 11:1; 14:2, 36; Deuteronomy 1:27. On occasion, they even rebelled and rioted (Exodus 17:4; Numbers 14:4; 16:41, 42).

53. Exodus 15:13; 19:4; 28:3; 31:1-6; Deuteronomy 2:7; 8:4; 29:5; 32:10-13.

54. Exodus 25:8; Leviticus 1-6; Hebrews 9:1-11. This curriculum was ini-

tiated with the first Passover, even before the tabernacle was built. An understanding of the plan of salvation was conveyed through the Passover lamb, its blood sprinkled on the doorposts of each home, and of the firstborn son, whose life was spared (Exodus 12).

55. Exodus 24:12; 25:21, 22; 40:20; Numbers 7:89; Deuteronomy 10:2-5; 31:26.

56. Students, for example, were taught: “Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. Use honest scales and honest weights” (Leviticus 19:35, 36). “Do not show partiality” (Deuteronomy 1:17). “Do not spread false reports. . . . When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd. . . . Do not accept a bribe” (Exodus 23:1-6, 8). “Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind” (Leviticus 19:14). “Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless” (Exodus 22:22). “Show respect for the elderly” (Leviticus 19:32). “The foreigner residing among you must be treated as one of your native-born” (Leviticus 19:33, 34). “When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. . . . Leave them for the poor and the foreigner” (Leviticus 19:9, 10).

57. Exodus 15:26; 19:10; Leviticus 13-15, 17; Numbers 5:1-4.

58. Leviticus 7:22-26; 11.

59. Exodus 20:26; 33:4-6.

60. Exodus 16:22-30; 20:8-11; 31:12-17; 35:1-3; Leviticus 23:3; 27:30-33; Numbers 18:21-32.

61. Numbers 12; 14:4-11; 16-17; 27:12-23; Deuteronomy 31:1-8.

62. Exodus 19:12; 22; Numbers 2:1-31; 4; 5:5-10; 10:11-33. In essence, they were to understand the consequences of obedience and disobedience, as well as the possibility of repentance and forgiveness (Exodus 32:35; Leviticus 26; Numbers 14:20-45; Deuteronomy 7:12-15; 8:5; 11:13-32).

63. Exodus 14:13, 14, 31; Deuteronomy 4:35; 10:12, 13.

64. For example, water from a rock, tables of stone, a staff that budded, a bronze serpent, and manna that that fell every morning except for the Sabbath (Exodus 16:19-35; 24:12; 31:18; Numbers 17:8; 20:8-10; 21:8, 9; Deuteronomy 8:15; John 3:14).

65. Exodus 17:15.

66. Exodus 15:1; Numbers 21:17.

67. Numbers 13:1, 17-20, 27-33.

68. Exodus 35:30-35; 36:8-38:20; 39:1-30.

69. Exodus 3:12, 18; 15:2; 25:1; 35:4-9, 20-29; Leviticus 1-7. The teachers and students were also to ask those not of their faith for additional means to carry out the work of the school (Exodus 11:2, 3; 12:35, 36).

70. Exodus 20:20; 39:32-43; Deuteronomy 8:2.

71. Deuteronomy 6:4; Exodus 15:11, 18; 20:22, 23; Deuteronomy 29:13.

72. Exodus 3:17; Deuteronomy 31:3, 6.

73. This education setting was prepared by God: “You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance—the place, Lord, you made for your dwelling, the sanctuary, Lord, your hands established” (Exodus 15:17)

74. See also Deuteronomy 11:18-21.

75. Verse 4. This verse (the *shema*), considered by Jews to be one of the most sacred passages in the Torah, is often recited by Jewish parents with their children at the end of the day.

76. Verse 5. The purpose of education, to love God, is highlighted in this passage. To the list of “heart, soul, and strength,” Christ added the concept of “mind” (Mark 12:30), including the intellectual element implied in verse 8.

77. Verse 6. An instructional process of modeling seems inherent. One cannot share what he or she does not have.

78. Verse 7. The terms “impress” or “teach diligently” suggest a striving for mastery. Sitting “in your house” and walking “by the way” imply both receptive and active learning. The prime moments for learning, “when you lie down and when you rise up,” provide a biblical basis for morning and evening devotional periods.

79. Verses 8 and 9. “Hands” are used to actively modify one’s context, and can correspond to an individual’s physical development. The “forehead,” as the seat of thought, reason, and executive function, can reference cognitive development. As these words were originally spoken to the Israelites during their desert sojourn, a reference to the “doorframes of your house” would recall that last memorable night in Egypt, when they were to indicate their faith and spiritual commitment by sprinkling the Passover blood on the doorposts of their homes. Finally, gates were often used, as in many places today, to post announcements for the wider community, thus implying a social dimension, with elements of service and witness. These four dimensions of whole-person development correlate with those described in Luke 2:52.

80. Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

81. Exodus 12:17, 24-27; 13:1-16; Deuteronomy 31:9-13. These national learning experiences were to occur at least three times a year—at the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Firstfruits, and during the Feast

of Tabernacles. Together, these feasts involved about a month each year (Exodus 23:14-17; 34:23; Leviticus 23; Numbers 28 and 29; Deuteronomy 16:1-17). One of the families that attended these yearly feasts was that of Elkanah (1 Samuel 1).

82. Leviticus 25.

83. Deuteronomy 31:10-13. The yearly feasts and the sabbatical year may have contributed to render Israel one of the more literate nations of antiquity.

84. Leviticus 10:10, 11; Deuteronomy 1-3; 9, 10; Joshua 24:1-13; 1 Samuel 1 and 2; Judges 2:18, 19. Parents, for example, were to teach the word of God and lessons from life experience to their children and grandchildren (Deuteronomy 4:9, 10).

85. Deuteronomy 30:14; 31:23; Joshua 5:13-15; Judges 13:8; 1 Samuel 2:35; 3:21.

86. Judges 13:2-5.

87. God directed Moses, for example, to bring Joshua to “the tent of meeting, where I will commission him” (Deuteronomy 31:14). As a result, “Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him” (Deuteronomy 34:9).

88. Deuteronomy 11:2; Joshua 8:34, 35; Judges 13:24, 25; 14:6, 19; 15:14.

89. Deuteronomy 17:18-20.

90. Deuteronomy 4:5-8; 6:1, 2. It was not sufficient, however, to merely have an awareness of God and His law. Students were to understand the significance of these commands, and apply them to their lives (Deuteronomy 6:20-25).

91. Deuteronomy 24:19-21.

92. Deuteronomy 25:13-16. Note the incident recorded in Joshua 9:19-21. Other values incorporated in the curriculum included impartiality, justice, and mercy, including kindness to animals (Deuteronomy 16:19; 25:4).

93. Deuteronomy 14:1-21; 22:5. Soldiers engaged in a campaign, for example, were instructed to “designate a place outside the camp where you can go to relieve yourself. As part of your equipment have something to dig with, and when you relieve yourself, dig a hole and cover up your excrement.” The rationale for this practice included a spiritual component: “For the Lord your God moves about in your camp to protect you” (Deuteronomy 23:9-14).

94. “When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof” (Deuteronomy 22:8).

95. Before going into battle, a priest was to address the army and state, “Hear, Israel: Today you are going into battle against your enemies. Do not be fainthearted or afraid; do not panic or be terrified by them. For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory” (Deuteronomy 20:1-4). When planning to besiege a city, the army was to first make that city an offer of peace, which, if accepted, would result only in forced labor, rather than annihilation (Deuteronomy 20:10-12). Furthermore, military campaigns were not to result in ecological devastation. “When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them. . . . Are the trees people, that you should besiege them?” (Deuteronomy 20:19).

96. Deuteronomy 16:9; 17:6; 19:15-21; 25:1-3. Content included laws of inheritance, as well as safeguards protecting the rights of women (Numbers 27:1-11; 36; Deuteronomy 21:15-17; Joshua 17:3-6). A special feature was the concept of “cities of refuge,” available for Israelites and foreigners alike, where an individual who accidentally killed another might flee and stand trial before an assembly (Numbers 13; Deuteronomy 19:1-13; Joshua 20).

97. Leviticus 25:17; Deuteronomy 15:1-18; 22:13-30; 23:19-25; 27-30; Joshua 23. They learned, for example, that if they were to find something that had been lost, they were to return it to its rightful owner (Deuteronomy 22:1-4). In taking security for a debt, they were not to deprive a person of his or her source of livelihood (Deuteronomy 24:6).

98. Deuteronomy 24:10-17.

99. Deuteronomy 8:10-18; 12:13, 14; 31:19-22; 32:44-47.

100. Deuteronomy 13:3; 30:11-19; Joshua 24:14-28.

101. Joshua, for example, wrote a copy of the law on stones that were placed on Mount Ebal (Deuteronomy 27; Joshua 8:30-32). Similarly, after crossing the Jordan River, Joshua created a monument of that event with an instructional purpose: “In the future, when your children ask you, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. . . . These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever” (Joshua 4:4-7, 21-23; see also Joshua 22:9-24; 24:25-28).

102. “These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live” (Deuteronomy 6:1, 2). Also, Deuteronomy 4:5-8, 15-31; 7:1-6; 30:15-20.

103. Judges 2:7-11.

104. Judges 2:18, 19.

105. 1 Samuel 7:16, 17; 19:20.

106. 2 Kings 2:3-5; 4:38.

107. While the educational work of the prophets was most enduring, there were moments when other forms of instruction took place. King Jehoshaphat, for example, sent his officials throughout Judah, along with priests and Levites, to teach the Word of God (2 Chronicles 17:7-9). As a result, a spiritual revival took place among the people (Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1943], 191). After the exile, another reformation took place. Ezra, a priest and scribe who “had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel” (Ezra 7:10), read the Word of God before all the people. Joined in this work by the Levites, “they read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read” (Nehemiah 8:1-8).

108. Samuel, for example, instructed the Israelites, “If you are returning to the Lord with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ash-toreths and commit yourselves to the Lord and serve him only” (1 Samuel 7:3-6). As a result of this entreaty, the people fasted and confessed their sins. Ezra also observed that the prophets throughout Israel’s history had served as advocates of revival and reformation (Ezra 9:10-12).

109. 2 Kings 6:32-7:2; 2 Chronicles 12:5; 16:7-9; 19:2; 12; 25:15, 16; Isaiah 39:1-7. Throughout this period, Israel and Judah were ruled by kings, beginning with Saul and extending to Hosea in the northern kingdom and Zedekiah in the south. The prophets endeavored to provide instruction to these leaders. Elijah, for instance, sent a letter to Jehoram reproving him for his idolatrous and violent actions, and warning him of impending judgment (2 Chronicles 21:12-15). The prophets were also commissioned to convey God’s guidance in the political affairs of the nation. Nathan, for example, was involved in ensuring that Solomon became king (1 Kings 1:11-48); Ahijah, in making Jeroboam king (1 Kings 14:2); the prophet Jehu, in the case of Zimri (1 Kings 16:6-12); and Elijah, in anointing Jehu as king (1 Kings 19:16).

110. God instructed Elijah, for example, to extend an invitation to Elisha to serve as his assistant in preparation for his own prophetic ministry (1 Kings 19; 2 Kings 2; 4:11-14, 29-31; 5:10-27; 6:15-17).

111. Jeremiah 1:5-9. Also, 1 Samuel 3; Jeremiah 1:17-19; Ezekiel 2:1-8; 3:17; 33:7.

112. 2 Kings 2:9-15; Isaiah 9:15; Daniel 6. These instructors included prominent personages, such as Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, as well as lesser-known individuals, such as Gad, Ahijah, Shemaiah, Jedduthun, and Iddo. They also included women—Huldah, as well as the wife of Isaiah (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chronicles 34:22; Isaiah 8:3). Some, such as Ezra, were priests and scribes, while others, like Amos, came from the common walks of life (Ezra 7:11; Amos 7:14, 15).

113. Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; 1 Samuel 9:15-17, 27; 2 Kings 20:1; Jeremiah 23:28. At various times, these messages included encouragement, warning, reproof, a call to action, or an invitation to return to God (1 Samuel 13:11-14; 15:16-31; 2 Kings 17:13, 23; 20:14-18; 21:10-15; Isaiah 37:21-38; Haggai 1:2, 3; 2:1-9, 23; Zechariah 1:3).

114. 1 Samuel 12:6-25.

115. 1 Chronicles 29:29; 2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 26:22; 35:15.

116. Habakkuk 1:2-4.

117. 1 Samuel 11:14; 2 Chronicles 29:25, 30.

118. 2 Kings 4:1-7, 38-44.

119. 1 Samuel 9:25; 15:30-31, 35.

120. 1 Samuel 7:9; 2 Kings 6:15-17; 2 Chronicles 32:20; Daniel 9:1-19; Habakkuk 3.

121. 2 Samuel 7:4; 24:11; 1 Kings 12:24; 13:1-5; 16:7; 18:1; 19:9; 22:19; 2 Kings 7:1; 20:16; 24:2; 2 Chronicles 17:7-9; Micah 7:18, 19; Malachi 4:1-4.

122. Isaiah 53; 58:13, 14; 65:17-25; Zephaniah 1:14; Malachi 3:6-12; 4:1-3.

123. 1 Samuel 10:25; Joel 3:14; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 7:8-10.

124. 2 Kings 3:11; 8:4-6; Isaiah 58:6, 7.

125. 2 Kings 3:15; Isaiah 38:21; Zechariah 14:5. Students, for example, worked together with their teacher to construct the school buildings (2 Kings 6:1-7). Perhaps it is also significant that the teacher responded positively to student initiatives.

126. To memorialize a victory over the Philistines, for example, Samuel “took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, ‘Thus far the Lord has helped us’” (1 Samuel 7:12). See also 2 Samuel 12; Isaiah 8:1-4; Ezekiel 16 and 17; Hosea 1:2-11; 12:10.

127. Jeremiah, for example, used a linen belt (13:1-11), a potter’s work (18:1-10), a broken clay jar (19:1-13), a yoke (27:2), and stones buried in clay (43:8-13) to illustrate key concepts. Ezekiel filled a boiling cooking pot with bones, and also packed his belongings and dug a hole through the city wall (12:3-8; 24:1-14). On another occasion, God instructed Ezekiel to “take a block of clay, put it in front

of you and draw the city of Jerusalem on it. Then lay siege to it: Erect siege works against it, build a ramp up to it, set up camps against it and put battering rams around it. Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face toward it. It will be under siege, and you shall besiege it. This will be a sign to the people of Israel” (Ezekiel 4:1-3). Other prophets, such as Hosea and Zechariah, also used tangible illustrations (Hosea 3; Zechariah 6:9-15).

128. 2 Kings 4:38-44; 9:1-3; 1 Chronicles 9:22. Student activities also included praise and prophesying (1 Samuel 10:5; 19:19-24; 2 Chronicles 29:25, 26; Isaiah 5:1-7; 25; 26; 63).

129. 2 Samuel 24:11, 12; 1 Kings 18.

130. Jeremiah 35.

131. 2 Chronicles 17:10, 11; 20:20; 28:9-15.

132. Zechariah 8:23.

133. When Asa, for example, heard “the prophecy of Azariah son of Oded the prophet, he took courage. He removed the detestable idols from the whole land of Judah and Benjamin . . . and he repaired the altar of the Lord” (2 Chronicles 15:8). Similarly, after the captivity, Zerubbabel, Joshua, “and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai. . . . They came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God” (Haggai 1:12-14; also Ezra 5:1, 2; 6:14). See also 1 Samuel 10:6, 7, 9-11; 16:13; Ezekiel 36:26, 27.

134. 2 Chronicles 36:12, 16; Daniel 9:6-10; Jeremiah 7:25, 26; 25:1-14; Zechariah 7:11, 12.

135. 2 Chronicles 24:19-21; Nehemiah 9:26; Jeremiah 26:8-11; 29:19; 35:15; 37:2; Zechariah 1:4; 7:12.

136. 2 Chronicles 15:3-6; Nehemiah 9:30.

137. Isaiah 30:10. See also Isaiah 9:15; Jeremiah 5:13, 31; 8:10; 14:14-16; 23:10, 11, 14, 16-40; Ezekiel 13; Micah 2:6-11; Zephaniah 3:4.

138. Malachi 4:5, 6.

139. Luke 1:39. “And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel” (Luke 1:80).

140. Luke 1:13, 23, 41. They are further described as “righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commands and regulations blamelessly” (Luke 1:6). See also Judges 13:4.

141. Luke 1:11-20, 76-79.

142. To the religious leaders John declared, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance” (Matthew 3:7, 8; Luke 3:7-9). He also fearlessly rebuked King Herod for an adulterous relationship with his brother’s wife, and for “all the other evil things he had done” (Matthew 14:3, 4; Luke 3:19, 20). Christ, Himself, recognized John as immovable in the face of opposition, in stark contrast with “a reed swayed by the wind” (Matthew 11:7; Luke 7:24-28).

143. Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:7; Luke 3:15-17; John 1:27; Acts 13:25. Similarly, when Jesus came to John to be baptized, John remonstrated, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” (Matthew 3:14). To his followers, he clarified, “This is the one I spoke about when I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me’” (John 1:15). When Jesus began His ministry, some of the Jews said to John, “‘Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.’” John replied, “‘He must become greater; I must become less’” (John 3:26-30).

144. Luke 1:15; 3:10-14.

145. Matthew 3:1, 2; Luke 3:2-6.

146. Matthew 3:4; 11:8, 18; Mark 1:6; Luke 1:15; 7:24-28, 33. Apparently, John was subject to conditions of the Nazarite vow, which included a number of additional parameters, as noted in Numbers 6:3-7; Judges 13:4, 5; and Amos 2:11, 12.

147. Mark 11:32; 1:4, 5; also Matthew 21:32.

148. Matthew 11:7-9; Luke 7:24-28.

149. John 1:33, 34.

150. John 7:15.

151. Luke 4:16-20, NKJV. While often emphasized that it was Jesus’ Sabbath custom to attend the synagogue, the passage also notes that it was His custom to “stand up to read.” This indicates that Jesus was recognized by His community as one who would read Scripture with clarity and accuracy.

152. Matthew 1:19.

153. Luke 1:30-38, 46-56.

154. Luke, on two distinct occasions, notes that Mary “treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19, 51).

155. Luke 2:4, 22-24, 27, 39, 41.

156. Matthew 2:13, 14, 22.

157. Of the two offerings that Joseph and Mary could have offered at Jesus’ dedication, they brought the offering allowed for the poor (Luke 2:24).

158. Matthew 2:13-15.

159. When Philip informed Nathaniel that he had found the Messiah and

that He was from Nazareth, Nathaniel asked incredulously, “‘Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?’” (John 1:46).

160. Luke 2:46.

161. Luke 2:44. This assumption also indicates the trust that His parents placed in Him.

162. Luke 2:40. Note that the passage first specifies that Jesus’ physical development was robust. It then indicates that Jesus developed cognitively, gaining mental acuity (Luke 2:46, 47).

163. Luke 2:52.

164. When Jesus returned to Nazareth on a certain occasion, the people asked, “‘Isn’t this the carpenter’s son?’” (Matthew 13:55). Mark, however, records that on a Nazareth visit, people wondered, “‘Isn’t this the carpenter?’” (Mark 6:3).

165. When teaching, He frequently referred to lessons derived from nature—lessons based on salt, water, wind, birds, sheep, lightning, and lilies; lessons that highlighted reeds bending in the wind, a hen gathering her chicks, the habits of vultures, and small seeds growing into large plants, as well as seasonal changes and weather patterns. See Matthew 5:13; 6:25-34; 11:7; 13:31, 32; 16:2, 3; 24:27, 32; Mark 4:26-29, 30-32; 9:50; 13:28; Luke 6:43, 44; 7:24; 9:58; 12:24-27, 54-56; 13:18, 19, 34; 14:34, 35; 17:24, 37; 21:29-31; John 3:8; 4:13; 10:4, 5; 12:24; 15:4, 5.

166. Matthew 4:4, 6, 7, 10; 8:4; 12:3-5, 39-42; 16:4; 19:4, 7-9; 21:13; 22:31, 35-40; 23:35; 24:15, 37-39; 26:24, 31; Mark 1:44; 7:6-13; 9:12, 13; 10:2-9; 11:17; 12:10, 26; 13:14; 14:21, 27; Luke 4:1-12, 14-21, 24-27; 5:14; 6:3; 7:27; 11:29, 51; 18:31; 17:26-29, 32; 19:46; 20:27-38, 41-44; 24:27, 44; John 3:14, 15; 5:46; 6:32, 45; 7:22, 23.

167. Building a house, illuminating a home, mending clothes, making bread, hiring workers, and herding animals; from wedding festivities, seating arrangements, laws of inheritance, investments, and hidden treasure; from children playing in the marketplace, fishermen sorting fish, a merchant looking for products, a shepherd finding his sheep, a king planning a war, and farmers planting seed and eradicating weeds. See Matthew 5:14-16, 38-42; 6:1-8, 16-18, 24; 7:24-27; 9:16, 17; 11:16-19; 12:11, 12; 13:1-9, 24-30, 33, 44-48; 15:3-6; 18:12-14; 20:1-15; 22:1-8; 23:1-7, 16-26, 29-32; 25:1-13, 14-30, 31-46; Mark 2:19, 20, 21, 22; 3:23-27; 4:1-8, 13-20, 21, 22; 7:9-13; Luke 5:36-39; 6:46-49; 7:31, 32, 41-43; 8:4-8, 16-18; 11:5-8, 11, 12, 21, 22, 33, 42-47; 12:6, 7, 16-20, 29, 30, 35-40, 42-48, 57-59; 13:6-9, 15, 20, 21; 14:5, 7-11, 16-24, 28, 29, 31, 32; 15:4-7, 8-10, 11-32; 16:1-8, 13, 19-21; 17:7-10; 18:1-5, 9-13; 19:12-27; 20:9-16, 21-25, 46, 47; 22:25, 31; 10:1-6, 8-13; 12:35; 15:1-3, 6, 13-15; 16:21; 18:36.

168. Luke 2:49, NKJV.

169. Luke 2:47.

170. Matthew 14:23; 26:36; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28, 29; 11:1; John 17:11, 20.

171. “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people” (Matthew 4:23). As with His development (Luke 2:52), Christ’s ministry incorporated each of these dimensions: cognitive (teaching in the synagogues), spiritual (preaching the gospel), physical (healing disease), and social (interacting with the people; see a similar passage in Matthew 9:35, which emphasizes that Jesus carried out this ministry throughout “all the towns and villages”).

172. John 14:9; 17:6; Matthew 13.

173. Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 13:54; 21:23; 26:55; Mark 1:21; 6:2; 11:15-17; 12:35; 14:49; Luke 4:15, 31; 13:10; 19:47; 20:1; 21:37; John 6:59; 7:14, 28.

174. Matthew 5:1, 2; 11:1; Mark 2:13; 4:1, 2; 6:6, 34; Luke 5:3, 17-19; 13:22.

175. Matthew 5:1, 2; 11:1; Mark 8:34; 9:31; Luke 11:1.

176. Matthew 5:1-3; 14:21; 15:38; Mark 6:44; 8:9; 10:1; Luke 5:1-3; 9:14; 10:1, 17; John 6:10.

177. John 3:1-21; 4:5-26.

178. Matthew 9:10-13; 12:14; 14:21; 15:1-9, 38; Mark 5:21; Luke 19:1-28; John 6:9; 7:32-46.

179. Mark 4:33; 9:33-35; Luke 8:44-46; John 16:12.

180. Matthew 9:36; 11:29, 30; 14:12, 13; Mark 6:30-32; 49, 50; John 8:10, 11; 11:32-36.

181. Matthew 20:28; John 13:4-17; 3:26-36; 4:1-3.

182. Luke 5:33, 34; 19:37-40; 6:22, 23; 10:17-21; 15:4-7; John 3:29; 16:20-24; 17:13; 15:4-7; 15:11; 10:10.

183. Mark 1:16-18; Luke 5:4-11.

184. Mark 8:31-33; Luke 7:37-47.

185. Matthew 16:23; 21:12; 23:13-37; John 2:13-17.

186. Matthew 17:1, 2; 26:36-44; Mark 3:14; John 1:38, 39; 21:4, 12.

187. Matthew 8:3; 18:10, 14; 19:10, 11, 13, 14; 25:40; Mark 9:42; 12:41-44; Luke 9:46-48; 19:5-7; John 4:40.

188. Matthew 14:23; 26:36; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28, 29; 11:1; John 17:11, 20.

189. See, for example, Luke 4:16-21 and 24:27, 32. In His teaching, Christ

used Scripture to initiate thought (Luke 10:26), expand concepts (Mark 9:12), clarify meaning (Matthew 5:27, 28), create connections (Luke 20:17), understand the past (Luke 24:26, 27), visualize the future (Luke 24:44), and give a call to action (Luke 11:17).

190. Luke 12:22-31; Matthew 16:24-27; 23:23.
191. Mark 10:2-9; Matthew 5:21-44.
192. Matthew 20:28.
193. Mark 14:8, 9; Matthew 28:19, 20.
194. Matthew 17:25; 18:12; 22:42; 21:28.
195. Matthew 22:29; John 8:32; 14:7.
196. Matthew 13:23; Mark 7:14; John 13:12; Luke 24:45.
197. Luke 10:29, 36; 6:36; Matthew 10:16; Luke 12:40.
198. Matthew 5:16; John 13:17; Matthew 7:21; also Matthew 16:27.
199. Matthew 13:34; 7:16; 9:16, 17; 15:14; 24:43, 44.
200. Mark 4:33, 34.
201. Luke 13:1-5; 10:30.
202. Mark 2:23-26; 12:26; Luke 11:50, 51.
203. Matthew 11:16-19; 23:27, 28; 24:32, 33; 23:37.
204. Mark 12:13-17; 11:13-23; Luke 12:24-27; Matthew 26:26-28.
205. Matthew 11:2-5; John 13:4, 5, 12-17.
206. Matthew 13:11-52.
207. Matthew 11:7-9; 14:31; 16:9, 10, 13-15; Mark 5:30; Luke 13:14-16; John 4:35.
208. Matthew 7:24-27; 25:1-4; 21:13.
209. Matthew 20:26, 27; Luke 17:33; Mark 10:31; Matthew 11:11.
210. Luke 18:25; Matthew 23:24; Luke 6:41, 42.
211. Matthew 17:24-27; Mark 5:18-20.
212. Matthew 21:28-31; Luke 9:12, 13.
213. Mark 6:7-13; Luke 10:1; Mark 6:30.
214. Matthew 7:28, 29; Mark 6:2, 3; Matthew 9:33.
215. Luke 13:17; John 7:32, 45, 46; Luke 24:32.
216. Matthew 28:19, 20. It is perhaps significant that the term “make disciples” (~~μὴ ἀποστολῆς~~) is the imperative in this passage and constitutes the focus of the gospel commission.
 217. Acts 8:26-39.
 218. 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15.
 219. Acts 16; 1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2.
 220. 1 Timothy 4:12; 6:6-11.
 221. 1 Timothy 4:13, 14.
 222. Titus 2:1-10, 15.
 223. At the onset, the apostles taught in the temple court (Acts 5:21, 42). At a later time, Paul would often teach in the synagogues, in other public venues, such as the Areopagus and the school of Tyrannus, and in private homes (Acts 5:42; 13:42; 14:1; 17:2, 17, 19; 18:4, 7; 19:9; 20:20). At times, instruction would take place in a natural setting, such as beside the river in Philippi or in the wilderness of Gaza (Acts 8:26; 16:13). Examples of the family setting may be found in Acts 16:1 and 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15.
 224. Acts 21:21; 26:1-28; 1 Timothy 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:11; 3:15; Titus 2:1-10.
 225. Acts 21:28.
 226. Acts 2:42; 18:25; 28:31; 2 Timothy 1:11. One of the qualifications of a bishop, for instance, was the ability to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). Similarly, a portion of the work of church elders was found in teaching (1 Timothy 5:17).
 227. Romans 15:14; Ephesians 6:4; Titus 2:3, 4.
 228. Acts 5:42; 13:1; 15:35; Romans 12:6-7; 1 Corinthians 12:28, 29; 1 Timothy 4:13; 5:17; James 3:1. Paul, for example, in describing Christ’s gifts to the church, clarifies that the ministry of pastor and teacher is given to the same individuals (Ephesians 4:11).
 229. Romans 2:20-22; 1 Corinthians 14:19; Galatians 6:6; Hebrews 5:12, 13; 1 Timothy 1:7; 2 John 7-10.
 230. Acts 5:25; 18:25; 28:31; 2 Timothy 2:2, 24.
 231. Acts 4:18; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:2. False teachers, by contrast, would teach merely what others wanted to hear (2 Timothy 4:3). They would subtly introduce heresies, or would teach to exploit others or for mere financial gain (1 Timothy 1, 6; Titus 1:11; 2 Peter 2:1, 3; Revelation 2:20).
 232. Acts 18:11; 1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 3:16; 4:3. Parents, for example, were to bring up their children “in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).
 233. 1 Timothy 4:10, 11; Revelation 14:6.
 234. Ephesians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:1; 1 Timothy 6:2.
 235. Acts 12:25; 15:37; 16:1-3; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 14:31; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 2 Timothy 1:13; 4:11.
 236. Acts 6; 18:2, 3; 20:34; Ephesians 4:28; Philippians 4:3; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6.
 237. Acts 2:42. The learning experience encouraged them to “to live self-

controlled, upright and godly lives” (Titus 2:12).

238. Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14; 11:24; 13:12; 17:6.
239. Isaiah 64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9. This setting was planned since “the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34, KJV) and prepared by Christ Himself (John 14:1-3).
 240. Hebrews 11:10, 16; 13:14; Revelation 21:1, 2.
 241. Its brilliance is “like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal” (Revelation 21:11). Its foundations are decorated with precious stones. Its gates are of pearl and its streets of gold, “pure as transparent glass” (Revelation 21:2, 19, 21).
 242. Psalm 23:6; John 14:2; Revelation 21:23. The city, however, does not contain a temple, “because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (Revelation 21:22).
 243. Isaiah 35:1; 55:13.
 244. Isaiah 11:6, 9; 32:18; 60:18; 65:25; 2 Peter 3:13.
 245. Isaiah 52:6.
 246. Revelation 14:4.
 247. Revelation 7:17; 21:3; 22:4, 17.
 248. Colossians 2:3.
 249. Revelation 5:9; 7:9.
 250. Psalm 24:3, 4; Matthew 5:8.
 251. Isaiah 60:21; Matthew 25:46; Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 22:15.
 252. Jude 24; Revelation 2:7, 17; 15:2; 21:27.
 253. Students in the schools of earth longed to see God face to face and to know Him more fully. Job, for example, asserted, “I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25-27). In the school of heaven that desire is fulfilled—they will see “the king in his beauty” (Isaiah 33:17). Like Enoch, the students will walk with God, and will “see him as he is” (1 John 3:2, see also Genesis 5:22-24; Revelation 3:4). Christ Himself will reveal to them “the knowledge of the Lord” and “the manifold wisdom of God” (Isaiah 11:9; Ephesians 3:10).
 254. Job 38; Psalm 119:89; Revelation 15:3. The overarching conclusion of their research will be, “You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything” (Nehemiah 9:6).
 255. Ephesians 2:6, 7. As the redeemed glimpse the depths of the love of God and new dimensions of the sacrifice made in their behalf, they exclaim, “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” (Revelation 5:12). “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever!” (Revelation 1:5, 6). For the students in heaven’s school, the character and acts of God are forever vindicated. They cry out with affirmation, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are his judgments” (Revelation 19:1, 2). “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (Revelation 7:10).
 256. Isaiah 65:21, 22.
 257. Psalm 87:7; Isaiah 14:7; 24:14; 35:10; 51:3; Revelation 15:2. These musical experiences, both vocal and instrumental, not only involve skilled performance but creative composition (Revelation 5:9; 14:2, 3; 15:2-4).
 258. In the school of heaven, service is not merely an event, but a way of life. “They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night” (Revelation 7:15). See also Psalm 103:21; Revelation 1:6; 22:3.
 259. This theme of worship and praise permeates the school and each of its activities (Psalm 103:21; 113:3; 145:10; 148:2; Isaiah 60:18; 61:11; Revelation 1:5, 6; 5:13). There are, however, special occasions of celebration (Revelation 19:6-9).
 260. 1 Corinthians 13:12.
 261. They partake of the leaves of the tree of life, which are “for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:2). They kneel together “before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name” (Ephesians 3:15).
 262. 1 Corinthians 6:2. See also Luke 22:29 and 30 and Revelation 20:4 to 6.
 263. “You are my witnesses,” declares the Lord” (Isaiah 43:12, italics supplied).
 264. Revelation 15:3, 4; also Psalm 29:9.
 265. Nahum 1:9, NKJV.
 266. Isaiah 35:10.
 267. Psalm 16:11; Matthew 25:21.
 268. Isaiah 51:3; 65:17, 18.
 269. Isaiah 49:10; 65:19; Revelation 7:16, 17; 21:4.
 270. John 10:28.
 271. Job 3:17.
 272. Luke 20:36.
 273. Malachi 4:2.

Scriptural Foundations for Academic Disciplines:

A Biblical Theme Approach

Through its grand themes, the Bible presents a foundation for learning in all disciplines.¹ Biblical themes are as applicable to professional training programs as to learning in the humanities, sciences, the arts, and technical/vocational areas. The purpose of this article is to introduce 12 grand biblical themes that provide relevant scriptural foundations for curriculum in Seventh-day Adventist

education. The themes introduced here can permeate the curriculum at all levels. Interweaving these themes with learning also offers the potential to strengthen the way in which Seventh-day Adventist education differentiates itself from other educational systems.

This article is divided into three sections. First, it explains how particular biblical themes were selected for consideration. Second, it summarizes each theme. Third, it provides examples of how these themes can be

applied in the teaching/learning process.

How the Themes Were Selected

Identifying biblical themes involved a process of scanning broad sections of Scripture looking for patterns of thought relating to a single content area.² Slowly, over time, a pattern began to emerge as I studied the implications for teaching and learning. Then in 2012, while waiting in an

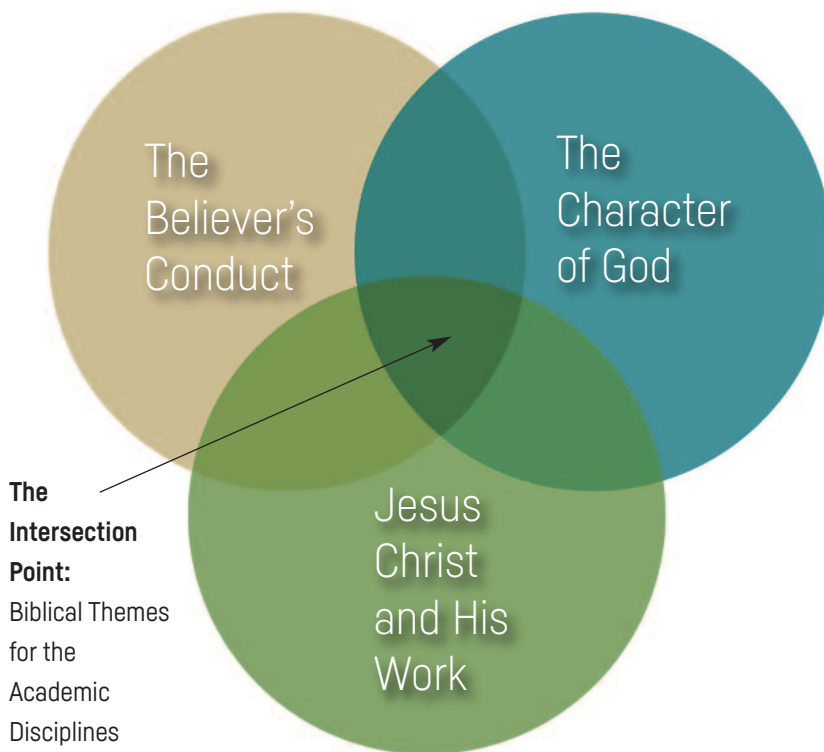
BY MICHAEL E. CAFFERKY

auditorium in Bloemfontein, South Africa, for my turn to give a presentation on the biblical foundations for learning, I experienced a conceptual “Ah hah!” moment as a pattern became apparent: Collectively, Bible writers appear to use some *themes in common* as they reflect on the character of God, the person and work of the Messiah Jesus Christ, and when giving guidelines for human conduct. (See Figure 1.)

- *The character of God.* Many times, the elements of God’s character are mentioned explicitly; other times, the Bible writers describe God’s character in action. The restoration of the image of God is a process of divine re-creation but involves the cooperation of persons in community who intend to imitate the character of God in all contexts of life.³ In addition to his explicit call for imitation, Paul presents this process as putting on “the new self,”⁴ a transformation process,⁵ letting the word of Christ dwell in us,⁶ and having Christ live in us.⁷ The process of renewal is described in other ways in Scripture, too: letting the law, the transcript of God’s character, restore us⁸; beholding God’s character and becoming changed.⁹ It is argued here that if the imitation of God’s character is relevant to humans, it must be relevant regardless of social context or of particular activities. It must also be broadly relevant to the curriculum in an educational institution.

- *The identity of Jesus Christ and His work.* The central figure of Scripture, it can be argued, is Jesus Christ. The clearest *visible* expression of God’s character is Jesus Christ, His identity, and His work.¹⁰ We are encouraged to develop a personal relationship with Him, but the Person with whom we have this relationship is not just any person. He is God incarnate, in action! To build a Christ-centered curriculum, elements of who Jesus is and what He has accomplished must be interwoven into the curriculum. As a group, the themes

Figure 1.



discussed are one way to keep Jesus central in curriculum planning since, collectively, they reveal who He is and what He is all about.

- *The believer’s conduct.* Theory must translate into practical action.¹¹ Scripture is not lacking in this regard, although it does not address human actions in every social context. But there are themes of Scripture that serve as signposts indicating the direction that actions should take.

These signposts, consistent with the character of God, can be emulated in action and are related to the identity of Jesus Christ.¹² Interestingly, most of the themes explored in this article are action-oriented themes in the Bible.

By surveying the Scripture record and applying these study criteria, the themes listed below can be observed *as common* to all three criteria.¹³

More than mere words that appear hundreds of times in Scripture, the

Great Controversy	Justice
Creation	Righteousness
Holiness	Truth (faithfulness in action)
Covenant	Wisdom
Shalom (flourishing life in all dimensions)	Lovingkindness (abiding loyalty)
Sabbath	Redemption

words carry a load of content that represent the warp and woof threads of the Bible's message. The rich, theological meaning of the concepts provides a biblical foundation for curriculum.

These themes are grounded in the writings of Moses, which are extended and further developed throughout the Bible. Moses provided the first content to the ideas, and other writers added richness and nuances by applying them to different situations. The themes are present in biblical narratives, historical accounts, teachings, poetry, the writings of the psalms, proverbs, and prophets, and in apocalyptic literature.

References to the ideas embedded in these themes appear hundreds of times in the Bible. Additionally, I have found more than 570 times where multiple themes appear *together* in clusters. The appearance of these themes in clusters occurs in at least 59 of the 66 books of the Bible. One example of four grand themes appearing together is found in Psalm 89:14 where King David provides a succinct description of how God's character is revealed in His way of governing: "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Loving-kindness and truth go before You" (NASB).¹⁴

In another example, King Solomon connects particular elements of God's character, namely His lovingkindness (from the Hebrew word *hesed*) and truth (from the Hebrew word *emeth*) with the success of an earthly political ruler, the king: "Loyalty [*hesed*] and truth [*emeth*] preserve the king, and he upholds his throne by righteousness [*hesed*]" (Proverbs 20:28). In this example, Solomon uses repetition to reinforce the point that loyalty and faithfulness are key qualities of a top-level leader. As will be illustrated below, this has potential for application in a variety of fields of study.

In the New Testament, we also find examples of themes presented in clusters. Here is one where Paul presents the identity of Jesus Christ in terms of themes that originate from

Old Testament writers: "But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30).

The conduct of believers is presented throughout Scripture and sometimes in clusters of grand themes. One familiar example of a cluster of themes appearing together and pointing the way for human behavior is found in Ephesians 6:13-15: "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

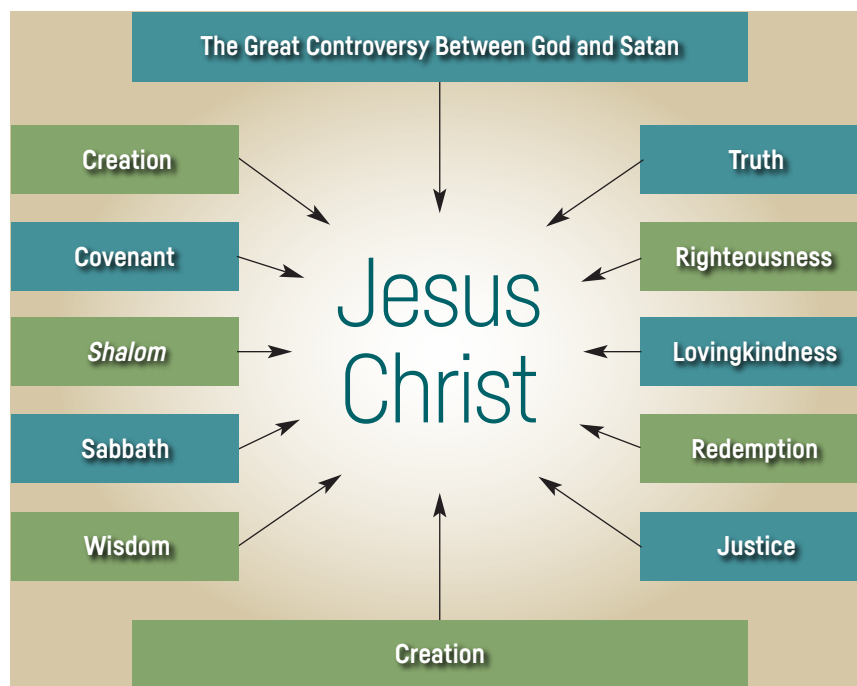
The grand themes considered here are the capsules carrying the central messages of the Bible. They are relevant to social relationships and our connection with the physical environment. They assume the validity of the created material world, the practical dimensions of life, and the economic dynamics in society. They apply to many pursuits of life, both

vocational and avocational.

To benefit from this introduction, the reader is encouraged to study each theme more deeply with the goal of more fully understanding the richly textured ideas that each theme contains. For some not trained in biblical studies, this may be a challenge. It can take time for the insights from these themes to take hold! Because of the many ways that each theme is used by various Scripture writers, the themes themselves defy oversimplification. There appears to be no substitute for the study required to become steeped in biblical thematic thinking.

Accordingly, because of space limitations, what follows is an abridged description of each theme. Scripture passages that mention a theme in connection with the character of God, the identity of Jesus Christ, and the conduct of the believer are given an endnote for each sub-heading.¹⁵ Thus, this is not a traditional proof-text approach, but rather a collection of biblical examples of where the Bible writers themselves employ one or more of these themes. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 2.



The Great Controversy¹⁶

On one side of the great cosmic conflict we find God and how He manages when His creatures disagree with His plan for a flourishing life. In this Great Controversy, God is the Life Giver and Sustainer of communities. He encourages freedom but not absolute autonomy, which would lead to chaos and anarchy. He desires for all humans a flourishing, abundant life. God is compassionate even to those who reject Him. He heals and reconciles. His authority is founded on character traits of wisdom, truth, righteousness, justice, lovingkindness, and redemption. He judges without bias, and provides no cause to discredit His authority.

We find on the other side of the conflict God's chief adversary, Satan. He deceives and oppresses. Using the negative politics of discredit, without cause other than his own ambition, he incites questions regarding God's character. He falsely claims that God doesn't tell the truth and insinuates that God's commands are too burdensome. Things that outfit us for our part in the cosmic struggle include several themes introduced here: truth, righteousness, faithfulness, *shalom*, and redemption.¹⁷

Creation¹⁸

The sanctity of life and the moral authority of God were established at Creation. Creation is the first event where humans were chosen to be a blessing to others. Everything that humans do in service to others involves something that came directly from the hand of Christ the Creator-Redeemer. The Creator gave humans the commission to work as rulers and servants. Through these dual roles, we can be co-workers with God in realizing the full potential of the earth's fruitfulness. Thus, the earth with its resources is not merely something to exploit for profit; the earth is holy, set apart for life-sustaining service to

The ultimate purpose of a covenant relationship is to promote a life of well-being in the community. A succinct description of ideal covenant relationships is given in the form of gracious guidelines for a flourishing life found in the Ten Commandments.

God. Throughout the Bible, the theme of creation is transformed into the theme of re-creation and restoration. Soon after Creation, we learn that restoration is needed. This restoration becomes one of the goals of God's plan of redemption and the great object of life.¹⁹ The Bible concludes when God creates a new heaven and earth after the final scenes of the cosmic conflict.

Holiness²⁰

Holiness in Scripture refers to a fundamental element of God's character. God is so far from sin and evil that He cannot tolerate it. His holiness drives Him to act with justice toward evil. Paradoxically, it is His holiness that infuses His love with actions of grace toward us. Faithfulness and trustworthiness to fulfill His promises also are expressions of His holiness. God's desire to be with people is so great that it drove Him to send His Son, Jesus Christ, who is a supreme expression of holiness.

Humans cannot of their own power attain absolute moral purity. People

are called holy only as they enter a relationship with God, who is holy.²¹ Accordingly, all God's people are holy, not because they are morally pure but because they respond to God's call to follow Him, to trust His faithfulness. The scriptural idea of holiness also encompasses the depth and totality of commitment to God. It refers to being set apart or consecrated for service to God.²² Holiness from this relationship will penetrate every endeavor of life. Believers have a role in working, creating, teaching, supervising, building, restoring, caring, buying, and selling in ways that demonstrate God's character. This requires managing the call to holiness, which paradoxically sets us apart from the world for a distinct service, but also calls us to the world for service.

Covenant Relationships²³

The ultimate purpose of a covenant relationship is to promote a life of well-being in the community. A succinct description of ideal covenant

relationships is given in the form of gracious guidelines for a flourishing life found in the Ten Commandments.²⁴ The most visible demonstration of the walk toward full well-being is that of Jesus Christ. Covenant relationships reveal the character of the participants. A covenant relationship is established so that those involved can be a blessing to others. Covenants are for nourishing interdependent relationships with others and with the wider community, not only for the present, but also for the long term. Covenants provide a means by which at least one participant can act in a redemptive way when the relationship is in need of reconciliation. A covenant relationship involves not just general, vague commitments but also specific commitments to particular actions. True obedience to the commandments comes not from the burdened sense of need to fulfill an arbitrary list of rules. In the Bible, walking in obedience to the commandments is a walk of freedom toward flourishing life, a walk guided by the restoration process and empowered by God's Spirit.

Shalom (Flourishing Life in All Dimensions)²⁵

This theme is sometimes expressed in the English translations of the Bible using the words *peace*, *welfare*, and similar terms. God's plan for humans at Creation was for them to experience complete well-being in all its dimensions: a close relationship with Him, social harmony with others, physical and mental health, as well as international peace and prosperity for the community. This means living not only to serve self-interests but also to serve the interests of others. This experience came to be called *shalom* (peace). After sin the covenant principles contained in the Ten Commandments are God's prescription for how to walk with God and with one another along the journey toward *shalom*.²⁶ The law is prophetic of God's promises of well-being. More than one Bible writer encourages us to

pursue the blessings of *shalom* that come from God.²⁷ Followers of God are called to extend the blessings of *shalom* to others. It is in serving others that the blessings accrue to ourselves. Even when one person or one organization cannot create well-being for an entire community, a person can create a taste of *shalom* for some.

Sabbath²⁸

Sabbath is not just a doctrine. The pinnacle of covenant relationships in the Bible is the Sabbath. The weekly Sabbath offers a taste of *shalom* to all who keep it. Sabbath is a brief, weekly return to an Eden-like existence. When Eden was disrupted by sin, the hidden potential of Sabbath was revealed: spending time with God and laying aside the burdens of economic pursuits. The Sabbath day enables humans to continually renounce human autonomy and acknowledge God's Lordship in our life. The weekly Sabbath is inseparable from and interdependent with work and the pursuit of *shalom*. One might even say that Sabbath might lose some of its meaning if on the other six days no work was done. Work loses some of its meaning when what the Sabbath stands for is ignored or rejected. Accordingly, we are called to foster both work to sustain human life and contentment in God's faithfulness. We take Sabbath principles with us wherever we go.

Sabbath is primarily about our living in a relationship with God resting from our daily work of being co-laborers with God in sustaining one another. It involves resting in the joy of God's great gifts at Creation and redemption, and resting in God's faithfulness in Christ on our behalf, which is sufficient for our salvation. Sabbath also involves resting in the hope that one day the *shalom* of Eden will be restored at the consummation of the Bible story.

Justice²⁹

We often reduce the idea of justice to a matter of fair play. The Great Controversy story's idea of justice is broader, encompassing all aspects of responsibilities to our fellow human beings and to God. In the Bible whenever a person fulfills his or her obligations, that person is behaving justly. Justice is the actions that a person takes to honor the rights of others. We pursue covenant relationships together, requiring that persons in authority treat those under their authority with fairness.

Even strangers should be allowed to participate in the benefits of justice. In the Bible, justice is an active distribution system. Not merely the domain of the official court system, justice must go throughout the land. It is to flow down from those in high authority toward those with low authority and continue like a life-giving stream until it reaches the most vulnerable and needy. Justice must nourish everyone in the community, including enemies and strangers. All followers of God are called to contribute to justice in the social groups with which they interact. We must use technology in ways that foster justice rather than taking advantage of others. The faithful courageously intervene to correct injustices.

Righteousness³⁰

It should be evident by now how much these themes overlap. Each presents a different facet of a unity of thought in the Bible. Accordingly, the theme of righteousness is sometimes intertwined with and used as a synonym for other themes such as justice, lovingkindness, and redemption. Righteousness means to be straight and firm or steel-like rather than slack.³¹ God is the source of righteousness. Humans are called upon to imitate God's behavior in community. God's actions show His faithfulness to His promises; these actions are the standard of righteousness. Righteous or unrighteous behavior is evaluated

by the faith community in terms of the Ten Commandments. Actions that promote justice are righteous. While humans are called upon to behave righteously with one another, true righteousness is an action-gift of God.

Truth (Faithfulness in Action)³²

At a superficial level, we think “truth” means telling the truth instead of being deceptive or embracing right rather than false doctrines. But the biblical idea of truth is not limited to the pursuit of the abstract idea of truthfulness of information, correct beliefs, or integrity of speech.³³ Truth also includes a more profound meaning that is important in every academic discipline. The Bible concept of truth means faithfulness of *action* in a relationship. Truth means that there is a close correspondence between our actions and what others expect from us in light of the principles of the covenant when we are tested by time and circumstances. In other words, truth means that we are who we say we are: faithful in covenant relationships.³⁴

In contemporary terms, truth involves living a trustworthy life without hypocrisy. Truth means ensuring that all our actions have lasting reliability and our actions are a reliable indicator of what we stand for in relationship to God’s character. In essence, advancing truth means advancing the cause of faithfulness to commitments in and around the community.

Wisdom³⁵

Wisdom means being firm and well-grounded—first in God’s faithfulness and second in the business of living life, celebrating all the good that God has given us and pursuing all that contributes to true *shalom*. Wisdom is a mediator of God’s blessings of *shalom*. Since *shalom* is designed as a

community experience, wisdom is for sharing! It involves lifelong learning in community.

The practical knowledge dimension of wisdom cannot be understood apart from its relationship to covenant and redemption. Humans on their own are limited in their ability to gather true wisdom for all of life. Wisdom, like *shalom*, encompasses all dimensions of life envisioned in covenant relationships. Wisdom is the ability to consider something diligently or closely and thereby gain insight. The wise person becomes adept at dealing with all things material not for their own sake but for the sake of pursuing *shalom*. Closely related to wisdom is the idea of careful discretion when applying knowledge to everyday life. Prudence, the sibling of wisdom, is also an action concept. Prudence is, among other things, the ability to keep oneself from being misled, an important dimension of participating in the pursuit of *shalom*.

Lovingkindness (Abiding Loyalty)³⁶

Of what value is a relationship to either party if the main emphasis is on following arbitrary rules? Not much in the long run. Without lovingkindness, covenant relations would disintegrate.

Like a finely cut diamond, biblical lovingkindness has many aspects. We cannot limit the biblical idea of love to merely a feeling of affection toward someone. While there is plenty of evidence in the Bible that God feels compassion toward humans, the central idea of biblical lovingkindness is abiding loyalty, a bond of kinship stronger than any other connection. Like the theme of truth, *lovingkindness* is an action word. We show loyalty in action. When David observed God’s action toward his people, he exclaimed that the whole earth was full of God’s abiding loyalty. One reason that the whole earth is full of God’s lovingkindness is that justice is allowed to move on its pathway throughout the community. If we deeply desire the experience of *shalom*, we will pursue abiding loyalty in our relationships.³⁷

Redemption³⁸

Redemption in the Bible story means to act on this kinship loyalty bond as a kinsman to buy back, ransom, liberate, rescue or save.³⁹ Through His actions of redemption God provided a means of reconciliation and transformation. Transformation is possible only through the faithfulness and the power of God. When acting for redemption, God came close to those needing a restored relationship. He encourages and empowers rather than coerces. Redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ is not limited just to spiritual forgiveness of sins; it includes the whole earth.⁴⁰ Ultimately, redemption involves the process (and result) of completely restoring all dimensions of *shalom* on a new earth. In our sphere we are commissioned to be agents of redemption by showing God’s power in our lives through actions and by sharing with others the gospel.

While the themes can be comprehended individually, the full understanding of each requires understanding the others. Scripture themes presented here are interrelated, interwoven, and interdependent. Covenant is interrelated with lovingkindness, truth, wisdom and *shalom*. In wisdom we see a close connection with covenant. Justice is connected with *shalom*, covenant, and lovingkindness. In Sabbath and creation we find elements of *shalom*. The Great Controversy theme intersects with the other themes. Each theme deserves a complete exploration of its richness in order to see how it might be useful in any particular part of the curriculum.

Using the Themes in the Classroom

Biblical themes are a valid source for curriculum design in an educational program that seeks to be founded on Scripture. The next section of this article provides a series of



examples of how biblical themes can be interwoven through all traditional elements of the curriculum, including learning goals, course content, teaching/learning methods, and assessment.

• **Learning goals.** Incorporating a biblical theme as one of the learning goals might be a natural starting place when considering biblical themes as a foundation for learning. For example,

the biblical theme of faithfulness (often translated into English in the Bible as “truth”) might be incorporated in the following learning goal in a literature course (or a degree program): “Students will be able to describe how they understand the significance of _____ (identify the biblical theme) in life experience

as represented by selected works of literature.” Such a learning goal can be implemented at various levels: from one unit of study, one course, or one year, to larger-scale applications, spread over multiple years, for a whole degree program.

With this learning goal guiding the teaching-learning process, students and instructors can collaboratively explore multiple passages of Scripture in which the concept of truth is central. Over time, they can then collect and synthesize their learning about the theme as one aspect of God’s character, as a key element of the work of Jesus Christ, and as an eternal truth; they can then discuss how these themes, when put into action, foster flourishing life together in community. When difficulties arise with the practical implementation of the concept, this will provide students and instructors with an opportunity to develop careful thinking skills.

• **Course content.** There is insufficient time to teach everything about every subject relevant to every grade level and degree program. As instructors, we make trade-off-prone choices when selecting content to achieve learning goals. Several questions that will help the instructor identify the basis of the course are these: *Which biblical themes are important in the context of what my students are learning? What content, if incorporated, would provide a natural bridge to help students establish their learning on a scriptural foundation? What content, viewed as important by experts in the field, needs to be reviewed in light of one or more biblical themes?*

For example, in a business-degree program where applied economics is taught, the dominant secular perspective needs to be explored in the context of a biblical view: Is it ever appropriate for a firm to exist entirely for the purpose of maximizing economic value for shareholders? Here, for the instructor who wishes to offer a biblical foundation for students, the traditional egoist

perspective in business finance can be contrasted with the biblical themes of *shalom*, *truth*, *covenant*, *wisdom*, and other values. The instructor can lead students in a discussion of the ethical, legal, and social complexities, the competing goals that exist when the needs of shareholders and the needs of others are considered in light of the biblical principles of community flourishing.

The bigger purpose of a field of study or a profession can be explored in terms of one or more biblical themes. Teachers and students thus have an opportunity to explore the implications of the themes for a variety of vocational activities. For example, the theme of wisdom has potential application in terms of purpose in the arts, sciences, humanities, and professions. The purpose of a profession can be seen as part of a social institution that takes responsibility for gathering and preserving marketplace wisdom that contributes to faithful, loyal relationships. As the profession contributes to faithfulness and loyalty, it also fosters human flourishing.

The Bible is not an encyclopedia of knowledge for all academic disciplines. It is difficult to teach contemporary course content directly from Scripture for some subject content such as mathematics, biochemistry, physics, social work, and many other disciplines. However, biblical themes can be used as the deep frameworks within which to understand the significance of discipline-specific content.

For example, the five senses (hearing, sight, touch, smell, and taste) can be approached more broadly than the way they might be traditionally addressed in an anatomy and physiology course. The human hand and eye, each by itself a wonder of creation, are both functional primarily in a social context. Each has the potential for nurturing covenant relationships or in other ways con-

Direct application of the rich concepts embedded in biblical themes can be made in some cases. The themes of loyalty and faithfulness provide an opportunity to explore with students why these are so important in the work of a manager, accountant, physician, elementary teacher, nurse, electrician, therapist, pilot, researcher, and scores of other vocations.

tributing to flourishing life.

Accordingly, addressing the nature of covenant relationships from the biblical point of view and how the human anatomy is designed to work with God's plan for flourishing offers the student a deep foundation for studying the technical elements of the human body. Humans were designed by God to contribute together for flourishing. Grounding the class content in the biblical perspective offers a natural opportunity for explicit worship to the Creator in the context of a life-science course.

Direct application of the rich concepts embedded in biblical themes can be made in some cases. The themes of loyalty and faithfulness provide an opportunity to explore with students why these are so important in the work of a manager, accountant, physician, elementary teacher, nurse, electrician, therapist, pilot, researcher, and scores of other vocations. Reflective judgment and careful thinking can be enhanced

as the students and instructor explore various ways that loyalty and faithfulness are expressed by leaders as well as the tensions that leaders face when there are multiple loyalties at stake or when contingencies arise that make it difficult to be faithful to one's promises. One of the most obvious places for direct application of biblical themes is in considering the ethical behavior related to a particular field of study or professional service into which students are preparing to enter.

• **Teaching-learning methods.**

Learning can be promoted by using scriptural themes (and in some cases, the narratives in which they are embedded) as examples of course content. Students can be asked to think of Bible stories that *prima facie* illustrate an element of the course content.

Another use of biblical themes:

helping students gain a deeper understanding of the person and work of Jesus Christ, which can result in a deeper commitment and, perhaps, more consistency of lifestyle. For example, we can see the wisdom of Jesus as He answers the tricky questions posed by scribes and Pharisees, and from this learn lessons for handling our own relationships with others. But, at a deeper level, understanding the nuances of the biblical concept of wisdom (when considering its many uses across various Bible writers) can lead us to more unreservedly worship Jesus Christ, who embodies the Wisdom of God in the particular ways that He designed creation, the richness of the wisdom of God in the design of all Ten Commandments, which contribute to a flourishing life, and the encompassing mercy of God in sending Jesus Christ to be the fulfillment of the great plan of salvation.

When the deeper significance of a biblical theme surfaces in the classroom and points in an obvious way to the work of Jesus Christ, this can spark a time of corporate worship. If done multiple times throughout a course and then spread throughout the curriculum in a degree program, students will understand that worship is not limited to religious activities performed in a church building, but rather something that can be experienced throughout the human lifetime.

Learning experiences can incorporate biblical themes in a variety of ways. The instructor might lead in discussions or debates where an eternal truth embedded in one of the biblical themes is a central concern. Students can write a personal reflection paper in which they consider the personal implications of both course content and the essence of a biblical theme for their life in a specific context. A term paper assignment can ask students to reflect on the implications of one of the themes for society as a whole or to provide examples of how a particular biblical theme functions in a given profession

or other human activity relevant to the course. When integrative cases are assigned to help students pull together a variety of perspectives on a real-world situation, one or more biblical themes can be brought into the discussion to help them explore how faith is lived in the context of that particular case.

• **Assessment.** Through assessment, we signal to students what is important. If the biblical perspective is left out of assessment, what signal is being given? Assessment ties together the learning goals, the course content, and the teaching-learning activities. For example, using an objective assessment device, the instructor can evaluate how well students understand the content of one or more particular biblical themes relevant to the particular course. Or students can be asked to describe the significance of a particular theme in terms of the course content. Evaluation of personal commitment to the central ideas embedded in one or more biblical themes might be an appropriate assessment of an affective learning goal in some courses. Or in an essay exam or term paper, the instructor might evaluate students' ability to synthesize complex thinking regarding one or more eternal truths relevant to the big questions in the field of study.

As scriptural thinking saturates the minds of administrators, teachers, and students, it will contribute to the teaching and learning process. These themes can form the basis of a personal philosophy of teaching and learning, allowing the teacher, student, or administrator to shape a personal worldview using the tapestry of biblical themes.

The usefulness of biblical themes is not limited to addressing theoretical questions. These themes can elevate the thoughts and emotions, unlock the

imagination, and enhance critical thinking. Many of the themes are action oriented, which provides the scholar with the opportunity to explore their implications for ethical conduct. The themes may also be useful to evaluate contemporary theories and shape a research agenda.

Additional Thoughts to Consider When Applying the Themes

From an education point of view, these themes collectively apply to a variety of academic disciplines and educational endeavors. When even one of these themes is used as the foundation for curriculum, the instructor can be assured that it has roots in the character of God and the identity of Jesus Christ as well as direct implications for our conduct. These themes seem relevant for curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. They are relevant to classroom instruction, student assignments, internships, student clubs and organizations, student employment on campus, and study tours. They are relevant to the work of Boards of Trustees and administrative teams charged with oversight responsibilities. They can potentially comprise the core of the biblical worldview for any human profession or endeavor.

Each theme may not be readily applicable for every course, at all grade levels; however, as a collection, they are broadly useful. Further, the richness of some of the themes may not be as intellectually accessible to younger students as they might be for graduate students. However, it is possible to teach the idea of loyalty to 1st graders just as easily as to teach the same concept to secondary-level or postgraduate students. In graduate school, the deeper nuances of thought and application of what loyalty means in complex relationships might be more appropriately explored, since the students are more likely to be ready for such dialogue.

Conclusion

Revising the educational curricula using these and other biblical themes contributes to the great object of education: the restoration of the image of God in humans.⁴¹ Whether integrated into the multiple subjects of an elementary school curriculum, throughout an undergraduate program, or across multiple years of study in one subject area, students and faculty alike will learn to see the deep implications of these themes. The more extensively these themes permeate the curriculum, the more power they will have.

Practically, there are enough of these biblical themes to share throughout the curriculum at all levels. As instructors become captivated by the significance of the themes and the deeper thinking each represents, they may find new energy with which to approach the development of a biblical foundation. The great object of education does not end in graduation from college or graduate studies. As students and faculty engage these themes in their formal studies, they lay the groundwork for a lifetime of learning experiences rooted in Scripture. ✍

This article has been peer reviewed.



Michael E. Cafferky, M.Div., M.P.H., D.B.A., is Professor of Business and Management at Southern Adventist University in

Collegedale, Tennessee, where he has taught for 13 years. With more than 20 years of experience in the health-care industry, he has held middle- and senior-management positions such as a Director, COO, CFO, and interim CEO. He completed a Doctor of Business

Administration at Anderson University, Falls School of Business, in Anderson, Indiana. During the fall semester, 2011, as part of his sabbatical, he spent five weeks at Cambridge University, Cambridge, England, studying faith and business issues. He is the author of hundreds of articles and six books including Business Ethics in Biblical Perspective: A Comprehensive Introduction (Westmont, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2015).

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This article asserts that the themes introduced here are among the grand, noble themes of Scripture. Other themes are useful, too. Regarding the themes of Scripture, Ellen White says, "The subjects treated upon in the word of God, the dignified simplicity of its utterance, the noble themes which it presents to the mind, develop faculties in man which cannot otherwise be developed. In the Bible, a boundless field is opened for the imagination. The student will come from a contemplation of its grand themes, from association of its lofty imagery, more pure and elevated in thought and feeling. . . . These truths will do a mighty work" *Christian Education* (Battle Creek, Mich.: International Tract Society, 1894), 189.
2. Applied economics and business. In addition to word studies, concept studies, study of biblical narratives and many passages, the author also read the scholarly biblical literature regarding the biblical themes that emerged. This study added a depth of understanding to the conceptual frameworks embodied in these themes.
3. Ephesians 5:1.
4. Ephesians 4:24-32; Colossians 3:10.
5. 2 Corinthians 3:18.
6. Colossians 3:16.
7. Galatians 2:20; Philippians 1:20.
8. Deuteronomy 6:6; Psalm 19:7.
9. Hebrews 12:2.
10. John 12:45; 14:9; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3; 1 John 5:20.
11. Matthews 7:21; Luke 6:46; 11:28; Colossians 3:17; James 1:22; 4:17.
12. Additionally, the author has found textual evidence that in one way or another supports the claim that all but one of the themes presented here (Sabbath) are associated with the Holy Spirit.
13. These are not the only themes of Scripture relevant to teaching and learning. They seem to be the broad themes that encompass many others.
14. Unless stated otherwise, all Scripture passages quoted here are from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB), Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973,

1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. www.Lockman.org.

15. The author recognizes that a body of biblical studies and theological literature is available supporting each of the themes presented here. The purpose of this article is not to provide a comprehensive literature review, but rather to present direct evidence in the biblical record of the presence of these themes mentioned in the Bible in terms of the character of God, the identity of Jesus Christ, and the conduct of the believer. A summary of some of the scholarly literature can be found in several works including the footnotes found in the author's book: Michael E. Cafferky, *Business Ethics in Biblical Perspective: A Comprehensive Introduction* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2015)

16. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Genesis 3:15; Matthew 10:1; 13:37-39; Mark 3:14, 15; John 12:31, 32; 16:8-11; 1 John 3:8. *The character of God*: Exodus 34:6, 7; Ephesians 3:8-11; Colossians 1:15-20; 1 Peter 1:18-21; Revelation 16:7; 19:11; *The believer's conduct*: 1 Corinthians 4:9; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5; Ephesians 6:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8; 1 Peter 5:8, 9; 1 John 3:10-14; Revelation 14:12.

17. Ephesians 6:12-17.

18. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: John 1:3; Hebrews 1:1, 2; Revelation 4:11; *The character of God*: Psalm 19:1-6; 104:24; John 1:3; Acts 17:24-26; Romans 1:18-20; *The believer's conduct*: Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15; Psalm 8:3-6; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 5:17; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:10; 1 Timothy 4:4.

19. Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif., 1903), 15, 16.

20. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Isaiah 53:9; Luke 1:35; Acts 3:14; 4:27; Romans 1:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; 2:21, 22; Hebrews 7:26; 1 John 3:5; *The character of God*: Exodus 15:11; 1 Samuel 2:2; Psalm 77:13; 89:18; Isaiah 5:16; 43:15; John 17:11; Revelation 15:4; *The believer's conduct*: Deuteronomy 28:9; Psalm 15:1-5; 34:14; Proverbs 9:10; 1 Peter 3:11; 2 Timothy 2:22; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:15, 16; 2:21, 22; 2 Peter 3:11.

21. Leviticus 20:26; Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 26:19.

22. Leviticus 18:3; 20:26; Numbers 23:9.

23. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Deuteronomy 4:13; Matthew 22:36-40; John 17:2; Malachi 3:1; *The character of God*: Deuteronomy 7:9; Psalm 111:9; 119:142; Isaiah 54:10; Jeremiah 32:40; *The believer's conduct*: Deuteronomy 6:6; 7:9; Psalm 19:7; Jeremiah

31:33; 2 Corinthians 3:4-6; Galatians 5:14; Hebrew 10:16; Revelation 14:12.

24. Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:1-22. Scripture summaries of the Ten Commandments in other places: Psalm 15, Isaiah 33:14, 15; 56:1, Micah 6:8; Matthew 5-7; 22:37-40; Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20, Romans 13:8-10.

25. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Isaiah 9:6, 7; 53:5; Luke 1:79; 2:14; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 1:20; *The character of God*: Psalm 35:27; Isaiah 54:10; Ezekiel 37:26; Romans 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Hebrews 13:20; Revelation 6:4; *The believer's conduct*: Psalm 29:11; 34:14; Proverbs 16:7; Isaiah 48:18; Jeremiah 29:7; Romans 14:17; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Colossians 3:15; Galatians 5:22; Philippians 4:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Peter 3:11, 14.

26. Psalm 1:1-3; 34:6-10; 85:9-13; 119:1; Romans 8:4; 2 John 1:6.

27. Psalm 34:14; 122:6; Isaiah 32:17; Romans 6:12-14; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Galatians 5:22; Philippians 4:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Peter 3:11.

28. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Mark 2:27, 28; *The character of God*: Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15; *The believer's conduct*: Exodus 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Mark 2:27, 28.

29. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Psalm 89:14; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Jeremiah 23:5; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 12:14-21; *The character of God*: Genesis 18:25; Deuteronomy 10:18; 32:41; Psalm 19:9; 33:5; 89:14; Proverbs 16:11; Isaiah 5:16; *The believer's*

conduct: Deuteronomy 16:18-20; Psalm 25:9; 82:3, 4; 106:3; Proverbs 2:6-9; 8:20, 21; 21:3; Ecclesiastes 5:8; Isaiah 10:1, 2; Amos 5:24.

30. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Psalm 89:14; Jeremiah 23:5; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Romans 1:16, 17; *The character of God*: Psalm 7:9; 19:9; 33:5; 145:17; Isaiah 5:16; 9:6, 7; Romans 3:21-26; 2 Peter 3:13; *The believer's conduct*: Psalm 15:1, 2; 106:3; Ezekiel 45:10; Matthew 6:33; Romans 3:21-26; 14:17; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 6:12-17; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 John 3:10-14.

31. Exodus 9:27; Deuteronomy 32:3, 4; Psalm 15; 24; 31:1; 36:10; 37; 40:10; 71:2; 88:10; 89:14; 112; 145:17; Isaiah 46:13; 51:5-8; Jeremiah 9:24; Matthew 5:20; 6:1; Luke 1:6; 23:47; John 16:8-10; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Peter 3:10-12.

32. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: 1 Kings 2:4; John 1:14, 17; 14:6; 2 Corinthians 13:8; Ephesians 4:21; 1 John 1:6; 2 Peter 2:1-3; *The character of God*: Exodus 34:6; Psalm 19:9; 57:10; 86:15; 89:14; 111:7, 8; 117:2; 119:142; *The believer's conduct*: Psalm 15:1, 2; 51:6; Proverbs 3:3; 23:23; John 16:13; 17:17; Galatians 5:22; 1 John 1:6; 5:20; 3 John 1:8.

33. Genesis 42:16; Exodus 18:21; Joshua 24:14; 1 Samuel 12:24; 1 Kings 22:16; Proverbs 3:3.

34. Proverbs 20:6. When the prophet Zechariah predicted the fulfillment of all the hopes and dreams for God's work of bringing *shalom*, he described the experience as truth. See Zechariah 8:3-19.

35. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30; Proverbs 8:22-30; Luke 2:40, 52; Colossians 2:3; *The character of God*:

Psalm 104:24; Proverbs 2:6-9; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Ephesians 3:8-11; *The believer's conduct*: Psalm 19:7; 51:6; Proverbs 3:13; 23:23; Jeremiah 9:23, 24; Romans 12:16; Colossians 1:28; Revelation 13:18.

36. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Psalm 33:5; 89:14; John 1:14; 15:13; Romans 8:39; Ephesians 5:2; *The character of God*: Exodus 34:6; Deuteronomy 7:9; Psalm 89:14; 86:15; 117:2; 2 Corinthians 13:11; 1 John 4:8-10; *The believer's conduct*: Micah 6:8; John 13:35; 1 Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:14, 22; Colossians 3:14; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 John 3:10-14.

37. Proverbs 3:3; Hosea 12:6; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 7:9.

38. Examples of biblical support for this theme: *Jesus Christ and His work*: Mark 10:45; Romans 3:24; 5:10-11; 8:29; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; 2:16; 3:8-11; Colossians 1:20; 1 Peter 1:18-21; Hebrews 9:12. *The character of God*: Job 19:25; Psalm 7:10; 18:2; 34:18; 111:9; 79:9; Isaiah 45:15; 48:17; Jeremiah 50:34; Habakkuk 3:18; Ephesians 1:13, 14; Titus 3:4, 5; *The believer's conduct*: Isaiah 1:27; Acts 4:12; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Ephesians 6:12-17; 1 Peter 1:18-21.

39. Exodus 6:6; Leviticus 25:48, 49; 2 Samuel 4:9; Ruth 3:13; Job 6:23; Psalm 25:22; 31:5; 69:18; 72:14; 111:9; 119:154; 130:3; Lamentations 3:58; Luke 1:68; Romans 3:24; Galatians 4:5; Titus 2:14.

40. Romans 8:19-22.

41. White, *Education*, 125.

DEAR SUBSCRIBER,

THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION® wants your input! Kindly take a few minutes to complete our 2016 Reader Satisfaction Survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/jae2016>. We want to know what you think so that we may serve you, our readers. Enter the link into your browser, read the brief introduction, and then select "Start." Your anonymity will be preserved, and no identifying information will be collected. We look forward to hearing from you!

Thank you in advance for your valuable feedback.

JAE Editorial Staff

A Biblical Foundation Course Design Model That Works:

Teaching Millennials in Higher Education

Millennial students¹ have different characteristics than previous generations,² and those coming to Adventist institutions of higher learning are compelling the institutions to change. Based on conversations with a cross-section of Seventh-day Adventist students attending the denomination's colleges and universities, the authors learned that these millennials are looking to be engaged, and they want our Adventist biblical worldview to be prevalent throughout *all* their courses. When they graduate, Adventist millennials want to be ready to meet the world head on, with their biblical worldview developed. They, like other millennials, want to come away with an understanding of how the Scriptures apply to their vocation and calling.³

Establishing a Biblical Worldview

Establishing a biblical worldview in *all* courses is of utmost importance in Adventist institutions of higher education, especially when everyone has access to the wealth of information found on the Internet today. For example, many top-tier universities offer Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for free,⁴ allowing individuals to earn certificates of mastery and completion that can be used to document personal and professional growth. Courses taken at Adventist colleges and universities, whether online or in a physical classroom, need to be different from what students can find online. Courses should be designed to provide students with a uniquely Adventist perspective, structured on a biblical foundation.

BY CYNTHIA M. GETTYS and ELAINE D. PLEMONS

Joshua gave the Israelites a clear choice similar to the choice professors are given: “Choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood” (i.e., a traditional approach, teaching the way we were taught), “or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell:” (i.e., a contemporary approach, teaching the way things are taught in other institutions) “but as for me and my house” (classroom), “we will serve the Lord”⁵ (i.e., follow the divine plan for education built on the foundation of Scripture, committed to service, with a view of eternity).

The importance of this choice is highlighted in the book *Total Truth*. Author Nancy Pearcey warns professors about what happens when one hasn’t developed a biblical approach for delivering the course content:

“The danger is that if Christians don’t *consciously* develop a Biblical approach to the (academic) subject, then we will *unconsciously* absorb some other philosophical approach. A set of ideas for interpreting the world is like a philosophical toolbox, stuffed with terms and concepts. If Christians do not develop their own tools of analysis, then when some issue comes up that they want to understand, they’ll reach over and borrow *someone else’s* tools—whatever concepts are generally accepted in their professional field or in the culture at large. ... *‘The tools shape the user.’*”⁶

An extensive search of the literature provided no course design model with a biblical foundation and an Adventist perspective for use within Adventist institutions of higher education. Therefore, the authors chose to develop a model, based on respected research-based techniques, beginning with a clearly identified biblical concept as its foundation. The next section describes seven steps for designing a course using the Biblical Foundation Course Design Model created by the authors.

Steps to the Biblical Foundation Course Design Model

Step 1: Create a Course Concept Map. The professor should begin the process by “beginning with the end in mind”⁷ through specific reflection on the following questions: “What is the essential overarching concept of my course?” “How is this concept a truth about God?” and “What Biblical Examples (BEs) of this concept can be shared meaningfully throughout this course?” The answers to these questions are used to begin the development of the Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map (BFCCM), a visual representation of the course’s biblical foundation and its connection to course content. The map streamlines the professor’s thinking and outlines the biblical course concept and its connection to BEs, the academic knowledge and processes of the course, along with assessments that will be used to measure the student’s grasp of the content. Because the BFCCM is a visual representation of all essential elements of the course design, it becomes an important part of the course syllabus.

To start creating the Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map, the professor identifies two to three biblical concepts that could represent the essence of the course. See Table 1 for a partial list of biblical concepts that were collected by professors. Next, the professor should spend time in Bible study, prayer, and reflection on the identified biblical concepts, asking God to help determine which *one* biblical concept will best represent the truth of God within the content knowledge of his or her course.

The professor continues the process by writing the *defining sentence* using the selected biblical course concept word and describing its connection to the course’s academic content in one sentence. For example, Linda Crumley, professor of

Table 1. Biblical Course Concepts

Biblical Course Concepts Identified by Professors					
Abundance	Commitment	Empowerment	Gratitude	Living	Redemption
Acceptance	Communication	Environments	Growth	Love	Reflection
Accountability	Compassion	Equality	Harmony	Loyalty	Relationships
Adaptation	Connection	Eternity	Heroism	Morals	Renewal
Adjustment	Cooperation	Ethics	Hierarchy	Nationalism	Restoration
Alignment	Coping	Excellence	Honor	Nature	Rhythm
Ambition	Courage	Experience	Hope	Order	Self-Awareness
Appreciation	Creativity	Fairness	Humor	Organization	Self-Worth
Balance	Culture	Faith	Identity	Overcoming	Strength
Beauty	Death/Dying	Family	Individuality	Patterns	Systems
Belonging	Democracy	Feelings	Intentionality	Peace	Tradition
Brotherhood	Dependency	Forgiveness	Interaction	Perspective	Transformation
Caring	Design	Free Will	Interdependence	Power	Trust
Change	Desire	Freedom	Justice	Reality	Truth
Character	Discovery	Friendship	Knowledge	Rebellion	Unity
Choice	Diversity	Fulfillment	Leadership	Rebirth	Values
Circle of Life	Emotions	Grace	Liberty	Reconstruction	Will

COMM 397: Communication Research at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee,⁸ identified “Discovery” as the biblical course concept because she identified the biblical basis for her course as follows: “God reveals many things to us.” Dr. Crumley then wrote her defining sentence: “Through **Discovery** we seek to discover what God wants to reveal,” from Deuteronomy 29:29.

She placed the biblical course concept and the defining sentence in a green diamond shape in the center of the Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map. Figure 1 shows the beginning of the Course Concept Map for COMM 397: Communication Research.

Figure 1.
Biblical Course Concepts and Defining Sentence for COMM 397: Communication Research



Next, the professor identifies Biblical Examples (BEs), which include biblical teachings and specific Bible stories, with the reference texts, that relate to the biblical course concept and defining sentence.

Dr. Crumley identified six BEs for her course:

1. Deuteronomy 29:29—God reveals what He wants us to know.
2. Isaiah 28:23-29—Choose the right method for the job.
3. Isaiah 48:6—Be open to something new.
4. 1 Corinthians 14:40—Let all things be done decently and in order.
5. Nehemiah 8:8—Translate to understand.
6. Numbers 1—Take a census (a procedural format).

The professor placed each of the BEs in a separate purple circle and connected, with arrows, the biblical course concept to each of the BEs on the Course Concept Map. Figure 2 shows the BEs added to the Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map for COMM 397. (Note that, should this course be taught by other professors, they may see the purpose of the course differently and find a different biblical concept and/or

additional or different BEs.)

The Biblical Foundation Course Design Model, like Stage 1 of McTighe and Wiggins’ popular Understanding by Design Model,⁹ emphasizes the identification of the desired end results for the course content knowledge. The professor does this by determining what declarative (DK) and procedural knowledge (PK) students need to know to demonstrate understanding of the course content. These DKs and PKs will answer the question, “Five years after taking this course, what should students know and be able to do?” Some professors will add state of attitudes and values, in addition to the DKs and PKs. Dr. Crumley identified three DK statements and three PK statements for her course. On her Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map, she placed each DK in an orange rectangle and each PK in a blue hexagon and added them to the map. Most professors do not have an identical number of DKs and PKs. However, the professor should limit the total number of combined DKs and PKs to no more than eight well-structured statements to ensure clear alignment to the learning outcomes.

The professor now reviews the BEs already identified and determines which one(s) connect best with each DK or PK. The BEs are usually placed on the Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map close to the DK or PK where they best connect, and an arrow is drawn connecting them. Figure 3 shows the Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map with the DKs and PKs added for COMM 397.

Finally, to complete the BFCCM, the professor determines what kinds of assessments best measure student understand-

Figure 2.
Biblical Examples Tied to Biblical Course Concept for COMM 397: Communication Research

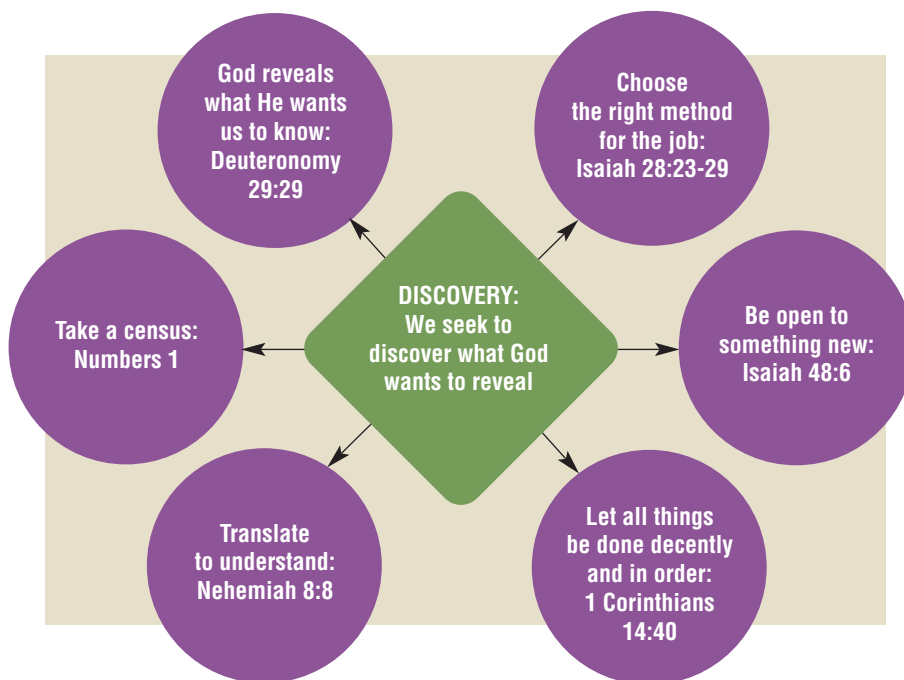


Figure 3.
DKs and PKs Added to Course Concept Map for
COMM 397: Communication Research



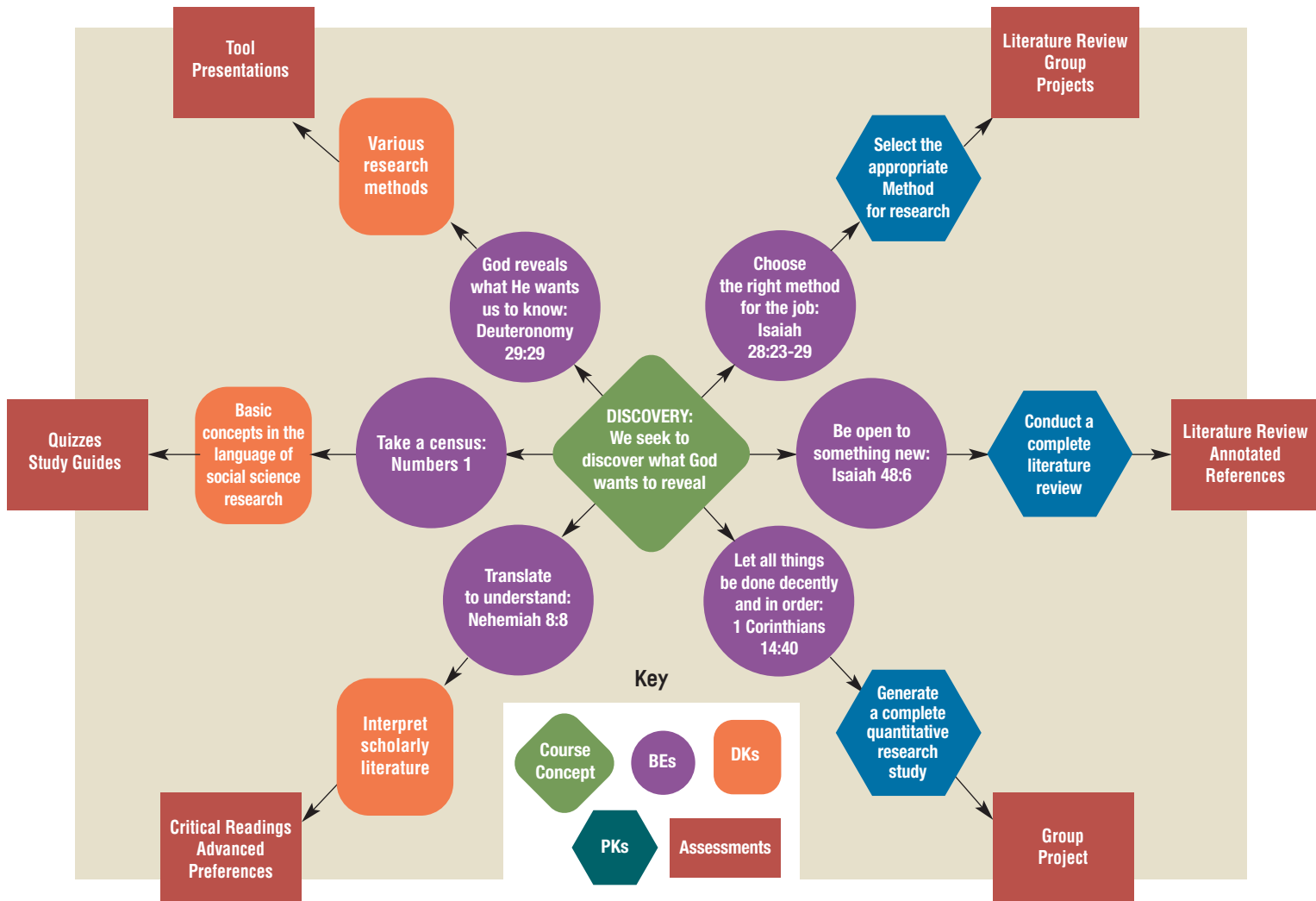
ing of each DK and PK. For millennials, real-world activities or projects should be used whenever possible. The professor places the assessments in red rectangles and connects each to the appropriate DK or PK.

In COMM 397, Dr. Crumley chose to use Tool Presentations such as Prezi or Keynote for iCloud, Literature Reviews, Study Guides, Annotated References, Choral Readings, and a Group Project, along with tests, as the assessments for her course. She did not rely solely on quizzes and tests, which are low-level assessments, and should not be the only type of assessment used. (It is important to note that in Step 5 of the Biblical Foundation Course Design Model, the professor will write an expanded Assessment Plan [AP] that will incorporate more information for the assessment activities identified here.)

The completed Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map for COMM 397 (see next page) shows the biblical course concept and the defining sentence connected to the BEs, the BEs connected to the DKs and PKs, and the DKs and PKs connected to their corresponding assessments.

Step 2: Write the Learning Outcomes (LOs). LOs describe in sentence form what students will be able to demonstrate in terms of knowledge and procedures upon finishing the course. The LOs build on the DKs and PKs identified in the Concept Map of Step One and are designed to intentionally show the progression of the learning process to move students toward higher-order thinking as represented by the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy.¹⁰ The LOs will be recorded in the course syllabus so students understand what will be ex-

Figure 4.
Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map for
COMM 397: Communication Research



pected of them as they complete the course.

The professor should write one Learning Objective for each DK and PK. When writing the LOs, the professor must remember to focus on student learning and state the LOs in clear, measurable, and observable terms. Vague words such as *understand*, *know*, and *become familiar with* are difficult to measure and should be avoided. Instead, instructors should choose action verbs from the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, such as *perform*, *identify*, *describe*, *explain*, and *demonstrate*.¹¹ Foundational courses, or General Education courses, will use more verbs from the lower levels of the taxonomy—*remember*, *understand*, *apply*—while upper-division and graduate courses will draw more from the higher levels—*analyze*, *evaluate*, *create*.

Table 2 shows the LOs for COMM 397. Remember, there is a *one-to-one* correlation between each outcome and a DK or PK; and each LO should begin with an active verb from the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. LOs should be listed after

Table 2. Learning Outcomes for COMM 397: Communication Research

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Define the basic concepts in the language of social science research. (Remember)
2. Interpret scholarly literature. (Understand)
3. Examine various research methods/tools. (Analyze)
4. Conduct a complete literature review. (Evaluate)
5. Apply the appropriate method for your research study. (Apply)
6. Generate a complete quantitative research study. (Create)

the sentence stem, “Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to” The taxonomy category is listed in parenthesis after the LO.

Step 3: Select Active Teaching and Learning Activities. Active Teaching and Learning Activities (T/LAs) feature a wide range of strategies but with the commonality of “involving students in *doing* things and thinking about the things they are doing,” according to Bonwell and Eison’s research.¹² Active T/LAs should be identified and used to engage students—a specific need of millennial students.¹³ Professors must identify the significant DKs and PKs of the content and develop activities that present opportunities for students to apply the thinking skills used by professionals in the discipline. These active teaching and learning activities replace lecturing for the entire class period; and many research studies indicate they lead to greater academic achievement among all adult learners, including millennials.

The major characteristics associated with active learning, as defined by researchers, include the following: increased student motivation, especially for adult learners; reciprocal feedback between student and professor; and student involvement in higher-order thinking (analyzing, evaluating, and creating). The professor should plan to introduce each Learning Objective by incorporating several active teaching and learning techniques in his or her daily plans.

Active learning techniques range from simple (i.e. periodic pauses, minute paper,¹⁴ or think-pair-share¹⁵) to complex (i.e., simulation, problem-based learning, and/or service learning), which involve more preparation and classroom time. Detailed strategies and more information on the benefits of active teaching and learning techniques can be found by visiting the following links:

- <http://cei.umn.edu/support-services/making-active-learning-work>.¹⁶
- http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/TeachingAndLearningResources/CourseDesign/Assessment/content/101_Tips.pdf.¹⁷

Active T/LAs release both the professor and the student from covering every page in a textbook and move the textbook to its rightful place in the course—a resource. These activities also allow professors time to bring in the biblical connections and Adventist beliefs identified in the first step of this Course Design Model. Students need to see the connections between the biblical course concept, BEs, and the DKs and PKs and the class activities and assignments.

Step 4: Plan for Feedback. Designing a Feedback Plan (FP) is the fourth step in the Biblical Foundation Course Design Model, which should become part of the course syllabus. The FP has two parts: first, it outlines how the professor will *ask* for feedback *from the students*; and second, how the professor will *give* feedback *to the students*. Without a Feedback Plan, most assignments are often seen as busy work by students. The absence of prompt, useful feedback reduces interest in

learning. When professors provide prompt feedback *to the students*, followed by a discussion of incorrect responses, they are implementing one of the most powerful predictors of positive student outcomes. Research on the study of the human brain indicates that humans are biologically wired to seek and use feedback.¹⁸

The professor should provide student feedback within 24 to 48 hours¹⁹ to intentionally “close the assessment loop” for most assignments. Ideally, this closure allows students to utilize the professor’s input to improve their learning in subsequent class activities and assignments.²⁰ For major assignments that require more time, professors should state the expected return date in the syllabus and remind the students of this when the assignment is collected.

Feedback *from students* is often overlooked by professors. One quick technique, The Minute Paper,²¹ can be used by professors to obtain student feedback. The professor asks students to write in class for one minute and answer one question similar to this: “What was the most important thing you learned during this class?” “What important question remains unanswered?” Or “Give an example that relates to the topic of the day.”

Step 5: Plan for Assessment. The Assessment Plan (AP) itself should be approached in a way that reflects a biblical worldview. Evaluation has a spiritual significance, as we are reminded in Deuteronomy, “The LORD your God is testing you.”²² The primary purpose of evaluation is for students to know how to discard error and retain truth, “But test them all; hold on to what is good.”²³ Professors, too, must keep in mind that they themselves will be judged by the manner in which they evaluate, “For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”²⁴

In order for professors to make assessment a valuable learning tool, learners need to know, upfront, what to expect and when to expect it. They also desire options; variety in assessment options that target different learning styles is appreciated by millennial learners because it presents a more accurate representation of the learning taking place. Therefore, a formal AP should be written and placed in the syllabus outlining what types of assessment, including formative and summative, will be part of the course; when will the assessments take place; and how the assessments will be evaluated. The AP should also include rubrics or checklists for all major assignments and the grading scale that will be used in the course.

Step 6: Check for Alignment. An important element of the Biblical Foundation Course Design Model is alignment. All components of the model should be checked to make sure they align with one another. The professor should remember the following:

- The course’s biblical foundation of faith and learning should be represented by the biblical course concept and

defining sentence, which should be naturally connected through the biblical examples (BEs) to a declarative knowledge (DK) and/or procedural knowledge (PK).

- There should be at least one assignment, active teaching and learning activities (T/LA), and assessment for every learning outcome (LO).

- Critical LOs need to be revisited often throughout the semester and may need several assignments, active T/LAs, and assessments.

- Every T/LA should align to a DK or PK; and every DK and PK should align to a LO; and every LO should be assessed.

Step 7: Prepare a Detailed Syllabus. Finally, in culmination of the newly designed course, the professor produces a detailed syllabus that reflects both the requirements of the college or university and keeps in mind the preferences of all students.²⁵ Professors should do the following:

- Write a paragraph describing the biblical foundation connection to the course content knowledge.

- Include the newly designed elements illustrating the course's biblical foundation, such as the Biblical Foundation Course Concept Map, LOs, and the FP and AP, which includes assignment options and the course calendar.

- List the ways students should contact them, if needed, outside of class time including regular and electronic "office hours."

- Give hours and contact information for additional help possibilities such as the IT/IS or Learning Management System Help Desk(s), library resources, research and writing center help, and/or tutors and lab assistants, etc.

- Provide copies of required policies from the institution such as those relating to (1) students with disabilities, and (2) academic honesty (plagiarism).

- Make sure directions for completing all the assignments listed in the course calendar are described in detail, and rubrics or checklists are provided for major assignments.

For additional information on each step, see: http://www.southern.edu/administration/cte/Docs/Biblical_Foundations_Course_Design_Steps.pdf.

Conclusion

Generational differences will continue throughout time. Therefore, higher education must also change to meet the specific needs of each group enrolled in the institution. In developing the Biblical Foundation Course Design Model, the authors felt convinced that all professors would be able to teach from a uniquely Adventist biblical foundation, as well as meet the distinctive needs of the millennial generation. Under this model, every course taught at a Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher education will differ significantly from similar courses taught at secular or other Christian institutions. Furthermore, when this model is followed, professors will be better prepared to lead students into a deeper understanding of a faith-based biblical worldview and educate students to think biblically rather than

humanistically. The final outcome should produce students who are capable of incorporating the Adventist biblical worldview into real-world occupational settings, and who are better able to make a difference for Him through their calling and vocation. ✍

This article has been peer reviewed.



Cynthia Gettys, Ph.D., is the founding Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Biblical Foundations of Faith and Learning at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee. She received her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Dr. Gettys has taught at all levels of education—elementary through the doctoral level—and served as Vice President for Education in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference. She has made numerous presentations at national and international higher education conferences; and she previously published in ASCD's *Educational Leadership*, *The Journal of Adventist Education*, as well as contributed to numerous articles and books, including a chapter written for *Peril and Promise: Adventist Education at the Crossroads*. (Riverside, Calif.: Center for K-12 Research on Adventist Education, 2012), She is the editor of and an author for the *Journal of Biblical Foundations of Faith and Learning*.



Elaine Plemons, M.A., has had 40 years of educational work in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. As a leader in curriculum design, technology, and faculty development, she has worked as an elementary teacher, conference associate superintendent, university professor, and dean of academic technology and faculty development in addition to serving as the founding coordinator of the AE21 Distributed Education Project for the North American Division and as the chief operating officer of Echelon, a for-profit e-commerce site to provide continuing education for medical professionals, owned by Adventist University of Health Sciences. She has authored several articles for *The Journal of Adventist Education* and is published in the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Biblical Foundations of Faith and Learning*. Mrs. Plemons has been an invited speaker to numerous conventions and conferences, including the principals conference in the South Pacific Division and at the first teachers convention for Adventist teachers in Moscow, Russia. Currently, she is the Associate Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Biblical Foundations of Faith and Learning at Southern Adventist University and serves on the board of the Southern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Neil Howe and William Strauss, authors of the best-seller *Millennials Rising: The Next Generation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), provided the first comprehensive look at this specific generation and defined millennials as those born between 1982 and 2004. This group includes the wide range of students (traditional and non-traditional) enrolled in higher education in face-to-face and online classrooms globally.

2. Paula Gleason, "Meeting the Needs of Millennial Students," *In Touch Newsletter* 16:1 (Winter 2008) Student Services, California State University, Long Beach: http://web.csulb.edu/divisions/students2/intouch/archives/2007-08/vol16_no1/01.htm. Unless otherwise indicated, all Websites in the endnotes were accessed in July 2016.

3. Rick Ostrander Interview with David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, "Developing Good Faith," *Advance* (Washington, D.C.: Counsel for Christian Colleges and Universities, Spring 2016): 54, 55: https://issuu.com/cccu/docs/16_springadvance_web/55.

4. Open Culture, "MOOCs From Great Universities (Many With Certificates)" (2016): http://www.openculture.com/free_certificate_courses.

5. Joshua 24:15, King James Version.

6. Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity From Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2005), 44.

7. Stephen Covey, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), 95-144.

8. Name and course materials used with permission.

9. Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins, *Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-quality Units* (Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2011).

10. Loren Anderson, *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Complete Edition* (New York: Worth Publishers, 2010).

11. Ibid.

12. Charles Bonwell and James Eison, "Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom," in *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1* (Washington, D.C.: George Washington University, 1991), 19.

13. Jeff Nevid, "Teaching the Millennials," *Observer* 24:5 (May/June 2011), Association for Psychological Sciences: <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/2011/may-june-11/teaching-the-millennials.html>. Accessed July 26, 2016.

14. See "Minute Paper," in Office of Graduate Studies, University of Nebraska for a description of how to use: <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/teaching/minute>. The Minute Paper is a classroom assessment technique made popular by Thomas A. Angelo and K. Patricia Cross in their well-known resource *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993).

15. See Think-Pair-Share: <http://archive.wceruw.org/cl1/CL/doing-cl/thinkps.htm> and <http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/interactive/tpshare.html> for more about this cooperative learning strategy.

16. "What Is Active Learning?" in *University of Minnesota, Center for Teaching and Learning*: <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teach-learn/tutorials/active/what/index.html>.

17. "Interactive Techniques" In *Teaching and Learning Resources*, University of Central Florida, Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning: <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/TeachingAndLearn>

[ingResources/CourseDesign/Assessment/content/101_Tips.pdf](http://Resources/CourseDesign/Assessment/content/101_Tips.pdf).

18. James Zull, *From Brain to Mind* (Sterling, Va.: Stylus Publishing, 2011).

19. John McCarthy, "Timely Feedback: Now or Never," *Edutopia* (January 2016): <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/timely-feedback-now-or-never-john-mccarthy>; Grant Wiggins, "Seven Keys to Effective Feedback," *Educational Leadership* 70:1 (September 2012):10-16: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept12/vol70/num01/Seven-Keys-to-Effective-Feedback.aspx>.

20. James Nichols and Karen Nichols, *A Road Map for Improvement of Student Learning and Support Services Through Assessment* (Flemington, N.J.: Agathon Press, 2005).

21. "Minute Paper," in Office of Graduate Studies, University of Nebraska.

22. Deuteronomy 13:3. New International Version (NIV). Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

23. 1 Thessalonians 5:21, NIV.

24. Matthew 7:2, NIV.

25. Students enrolled in Adventist colleges and universities worldwide represent a global community. Several studies have sought to discover whether Millennials from different parts of the world share the same needs and concerns. The 2015 IRIS Millennials Survey (translated into more than 10 different languages) interviewed 23,000 students from 23 different countries: <http://irismillennials.com/articles/2015-survey/>; Universum Global conducted the first large-scale study of Millennials' attitudes, actions, and how these varied worldwide. They surveyed 16,637 people in 43 countries across Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and North America. Respondents were between the ages of 18 and 30 years old. The data are shared in a six-part report, "Understanding a Misunderstood Generation": <http://universumglobal.com/millennials/>.

World History
Bible 10
Algebra
Spanish
Chemistry

Find quality high school course content, edited by professional educators at

 circle.adventist.org



George T. Javor

Teaching Biology in the

LIGHT OF CREATION

Biology, the study of life and of living organisms, is one of the most exciting subjects in the sciences. Here, among other things, the student learns how cells and organisms function on the molecular, cellular, and ecological levels of organization. This knowledge is foundational for all health sciences and for nutrition.

However, biology taught in secular settings has become “evolution in action,” the epicenter of materialism, which posits that “physical matter is the only reality and all beings, processes and phenomena can be explained as manifestations of matter.”¹ It is now the orthodox tenet of biology that evolution is the engine that propels the emergence of new species. The title of the famous article by Theodosius Dobzhansky, “Nothing in Biology Makes Sense, Except in the Light of Evolution,”² has been repeated so many times that it has

become dogma for biology teachers. Standard biology textbooks use such logic to explain the existence and functioning of organisms. Predictably, biology teachers in Adventist schools are challenged to present their subject from the creationist perspective.

Fortunately, creationist biology teachers deal with the vast ocean of biological phenomena, which handily support the biblical account of origins. This article first points out nine such facts in an attempt to stimulate each teacher to develop his or her store of creation-friendly lessons. Ideally, the student will learn that “Nothing in Biology Makes Sense, Except in the Light of Creation.”³

The second part of this article describes the writer’s journey toward a reformulation of creationism in response to the thought-provoking comments on the topic by the Spirit of Prophecy. An invitation is extended to colleagues to consider a new term, “Superintended Creationism,” which confesses an absolute requirement for the created world of God’s sustaining power.

Topics Supported by Creationist Interpretations

From the vast array of subject matter in biology or biochemistry, nine topics are selected that easily lend themselves to creationist interpretation:

1. No living thing can survive by itself. Organisms in the ecosystem depend on other living entities for survival. Figure 1 highlights some of the interdependence of all organisms. Humans and animals breathe oxygen produced by plants through photosynthesis. Plants, on the other hand, require nitrogen for their growth, which they receive with the help of special nitrogen-fixing microorganisms. Plants and microorganisms also require carbon dioxide, the product of aerobic respiration of a variety of organisms, including plants at night. Even the most self-reliant photosynthetic, nitrogen-fixing, and autolithotrophic microorganisms depend on a source for atmospheric

carbon dioxide.⁴ While photosynthesis is not the only source of oxygen, as photolysis of nitrous oxide and water in the upper atmosphere by ultraviolet light also yields oxygen, and some atmospheric carbon dioxide also comes from volcanic outgassing, respiration and photosynthesis are by orders of magnitude, the most important atmospheric sources of oxygen and carbon dioxide.⁵ Figure 1 also points to (intestinal) microorganisms in producing vitamins for our use.⁶

2. The biodegradability of all naturally made organic substances. Biologists are not aware of any naturally occurring organic substance that is not metabolizable. If naturally made organic substances were not biodegrad-

able, there would be large deposits of unusable organic matter everywhere, cluttering up nature and eventually causing severe shortages of the all-important carbon. One of the largest oil spills in history, occurring in April of 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico,⁷ leaked an estimated 210 million gallons of crude oil and resulted in a catastrophic environmental disaster. Its negative impact is still felt in the region. One consequence of this event, however, was a dramatic increase of the levels of aquatic microorganisms that metabolize oil and gas.⁸ The Creator made provisions even for this manmade catastrophe. He does not tolerate waste. However, when humans pollute the environment with manmade, non-

biodegradable objects, we undermine and counteract His design.

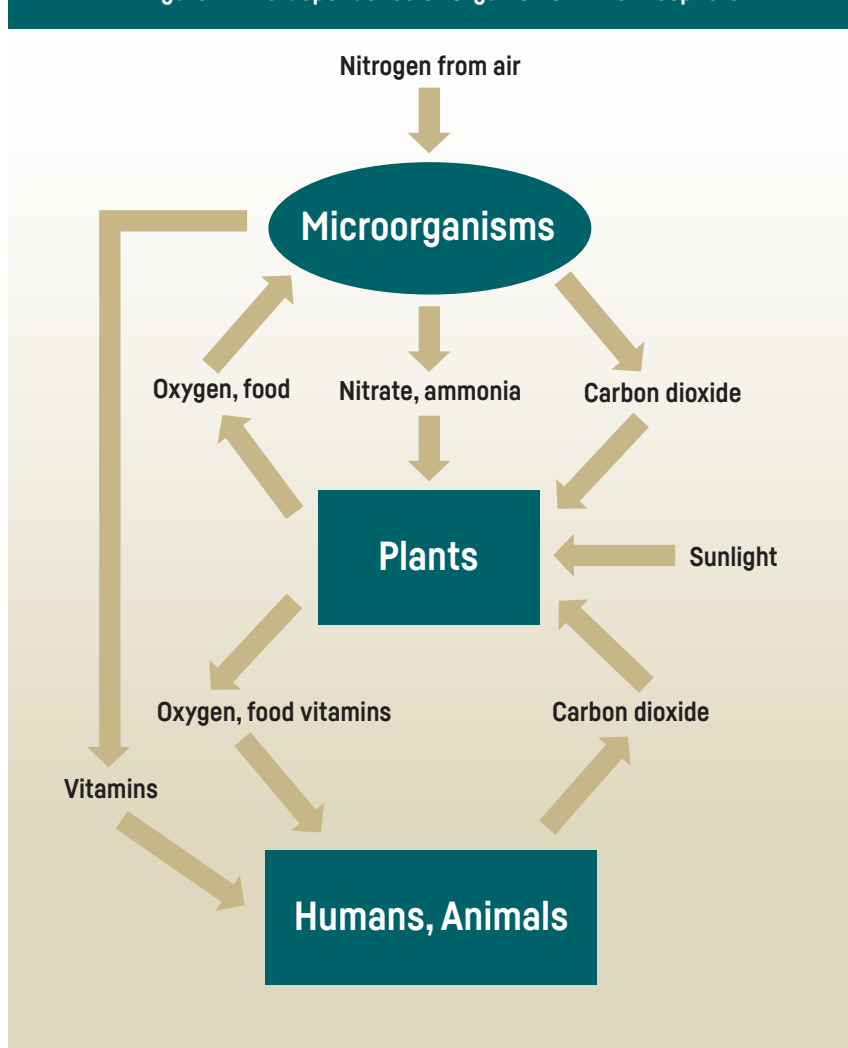
3. Enzymes catalyze essentially every chemical reaction in living matter. Many substances in living matter have the potential of chemically interacting with one another, yielding compounds that would be useless or even toxic. Such interactions could undermine live processes. Enzymes speed up biologically useful chemical reactions by orders of magnitude over spontaneous, random chemical events in cells ensuring orderly metabolism. Thus, substances in living matter are ushered along predetermined metabolic pathways as they accomplish growth, movement, metabolism, and replication. In the study of metabolism we see how the Creator optimizes the workings of living matter.

4. The universal existence of turnover of matter in organisms.

Biodegradative pathways are in complete synchrony with biosynthetic pathways. If either system is out of balance, the organism perishes. Even though cells expend considerable energy to build protein molecules, we now know that proteins are periodically degraded. For example, hemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying protein of blood cells, is degraded in about 120 days. Scientists eventually came to understand the important reason for the turnover of proteins. During normal metabolism, protein molecules become damaged by their interaction with free radicals of oxygen, rendering them ineffective and even toxic. Turnover ensures that there are no worn-out, oxidatively damaged components in living matter. Everything is “factory fresh.”⁹

5. The existence of apoptosis, the programmed self-destruction of entire cells, in order to promote the orderly development of tissues in plants and animals, as well as to preserve the health of the tissues. Just as worn-out molecules are degraded, old cells from the tissue are also degraded. In the course of seven to 10 years, every cell in our bodies, except for the brain cells, is replaced. Imagine the dire consequences of a failure of control-

Figure 1. Interdependence of Organisms in the Biosphere



ling apoptosis or trying to establish it by trial and error.

6. The existence of topoisomerase II enzymes, which, during replication, cut both strands of DNA while holding onto the strands. During replication, it is necessary to separate the two strands of the genetic material. But at the replicating fork, the point of strand separation, there is a tightening of the yet unseparated strands of DNA. Without the cutting of DNA strands to relieve the tension, DNA replication would come to a halt. When the topoisomerase II enzyme cuts both strands of the DNA temporarily, all that stands between life and death of the cell is the tight grip of the enzyme on each DNA strand. Thus, at every replication cycle, the cell is pushed to the edge of death. Imagine the difficulty of such an enzyme coming into existence by trial and error.

7. The mechanism of the peptidyl transferase reaction on ribosomes, which creates the peptide bonds of proteins, is identical (in the reverse direction) to that of the protein-degrading enzyme chymotrypsin. Ribosomes are the sites of protein synthesis in cells. They are large sub-cellular complexes, composed of several molecules of ribonucleic acid and more than 50 proteins. For many years, scientists did not know which of the more than 50 proteins of the bacterial ribosome catalyzed the formation of peptide bonds.¹⁰ Then, after the three-dimensional structures of ribosomes were determined, it was discovered that the ribosome's catalytic center is not on any of its proteins but at a special location on one or more of its ribonucleic acid segments.¹¹ The process of peptide bond formation turned out to be identical to the exact reverse of the way peptide bonds are broken up.¹² The surprising thing is that in ribosomes, nucleotide bases are doing the same work as amino acid residues of the protein chymotrypsin.

This illustrates the elegance of the

Because of the great abundance of living forms, the reality of existence in a biosphere among millions of different organisms is frequently taken for granted. The level of sophistication in the design and functioning required even for the simplest of organisms, bacteria, is seldom appreciated. Our considerable knowledge of biology and technical capacities are inadequate to manufacture a live bacterium. Nor can we restore to life a dead cell. The great advances in life sciences are all about discovering how everything works. Students deserve to be taught that the very existence of life is incontrovertible evidence of the Creator's existence.

Creator's genius of solving biochemical problems. In this instance, the formation (and degradation) of peptide links are catalyzed by selected amino acid residues in the enzyme chymotrypsin and by purine and pyrimidine residues in ribosomes.

8. The absolute avoidance of equilibrium in the hundreds to thousands of chemical reactions in living matter, in spite of the fact that every reaction is pushed vigorously toward equilibrium by an enzyme. Every chemical reaction has a beginning, a middle, and an end. All isolated (or closed) chemical reactions reach a state of equilibrium, where no further net chemical change happens. Life, on the other hand, depends on continuous

chemical changes in cells. In living matter, most chemical reactions participate in metabolic pathways where reactions are in open systems, where there is a steady supply of reactants and removal of products. If, for whatever reason, this stops, and chemical reactions reach their equilibria, the cell dies.

The Le Chatelier's Principle in chemistry states that once a chemical reaction reaches its equilibrium, it will not revert to a non-equilibrium state spontaneously. Chemical evolutionary scenarios all postulate that life happened spontaneously by the step-wise development of enzymes (protein or

RNA molecules), which promote single chemical steps. Therefore, even if all of these postulates were true, they would only result in a collection of isolated chemical reactions, all in states of equilibria.

In order to form living cells, all of the chemical reactions in cells would have to be present simultaneously, linked in states of non-equilibria; however, the Le Chatelier's principle forbids the spontaneous conversion of chemical reactions from states of equilibria to states on non-equilibria. Therefore, all claims that suggest a spontaneous emergence of a living cell under any conditions are an impossibility!

9. We cannot reverse death or create life in the laboratory. Because of the great abundance of living forms, the reality of existence in a biosphere among millions of different organisms is frequently taken for granted. The level of sophistication in the design and functioning required even for the simplest of organisms, bacteria, is seldom appreciated. Our considerable knowledge of biology and technical capacities are inadequate to manufacture a live bacterium. Nor can we restore to life a dead cell. The great advances in life sciences are all about discovering how everything works. Students deserve to be taught that the very existence of life is incontrovertible evidence of the Creator's existence.

A Personal Journey

In my 37 years of teaching chemistry, biochemistry, and microbiology in the Adventist school system, I emphasized God's creatorship, giving the Lord full credit for designing and implementing all of biology. I thought that this was the needed counterweight to the prevailing evolutionary concepts that were in vogue at that time. I did not realize the unstated implication of my logic, namely: God created this world and the biosphere as an extremely complicated and efficient machine, which once started, operates on its own. Aside from origins, I was

teaching a **materialistic version of creationism**. With regard to how things worked in biology, there was little difference between a materialist and me. I was aware of statements by Ellen G. White, such as this:

"It is supposed that matter is placed in certain relations and left to act from fixed laws with which God himself cannot interfere; that nature is endowed with certain properties and placed subject to laws, and is then left to itself to obey these laws and perform the work originally commanded. This is false science; there is nothing in the word of God to sustain it. God does not annul His laws but He is continually working through them, using them as His instruments. They are not self-working. God is perpetually at work in nature. . . . It is not by an original power inherent in nature that year by year the earth yields its bounties and continues its march around the sun. . . . It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears and every flower blooms. . . . In God we live and move and have our being."¹³

Yet, I did not know what to do with the notion of the Lord being continually involved with the routine operation of nature. In an essay published in 2000, I wrote:

"These and other similar passages in the writings of Ellen White suggest the Lord's intimate engagement in the operation of our world. But science and scientists, including this writer, are clueless to deal with such a concept. To us matter behaves in a perfectly predictable manner, obeying the fundamental laws of gravity, attractions between positive and negative charges, etc. Chemical properties of each element depend on the configuration of its valence electrons. Biochemical properties of living matter are understood, based on the characteristics of proteins, nucleic acids, carbohydrates and lipids.

"While it may be suggested that the Lord works precisely through these and other laws of nature, it is an unsatisfactory solution, because it is not testable.

"Moreover, it renders the Lord directly responsible for every undesirable physical event in the world. If the Lord directly pushes atoms and molecules around, then He would surely stop doing it when it comes to an explosion by a suicide bomber!

"Accepting the Creatorship of the Lord does imply that all matter proceeded from Him, and that the Lord is aware of every atom in the Universe. But it does not necessarily follow that the Lord micro manages the Universe through actively superintending every chemical change. I am more comfortable letting the mystery of the nature of the Lord's involvement with our world linger until we enroll in a university on the earth made new."¹⁴

As creation scientists, we should be less smug about our understanding of the relationship between the Creator and His creation. In the past several years, little has been done to advance this topic; yet, it continues to be one for which many science teachers (and presumably students and even their parents) struggle to find answers. What if the Lord's involvement in nature is much more robust than previously imagined? What if all the laws of physics, chemistry, and biochemistry, which govern the behavior of matter, were dependent on the continual expression of the Creator's power? In this paradigm, the Creator would not be micromanaging every chemical transformation in nature; rather, His power would be required for the continual existence of subatomic particles, for the phenomenon of gravity, magnetic forces, positive and negative charges, etc.

This view of reality affirms that nothing in the created universe is truly independent of the Creator. All created entities, animate and inanimate, owe their origins and continued existence, nanosecond by nanosecond, to maintenance by the Creator. His power un-

derwrites all of the known laws that science has identified. In my opinion, the Lord does not micromanage all chemical reactions in nature. Rather, His power expressed continuously is an absolute requirement for the machinery of life to function. The Creator and His creation are separate entities, but nothing exists without being sustained by the Creator, as described in Hebrews 1:1-3. The most graphic biblical text in support of the Creator's intimate sustaining power comes from an unlikely source, one of Job's "friends": "If it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all humanity would perish together and mankind would return to dust" (NIV).¹⁵

Superintended Creationism

I am suggesting that we call this concept **superintended creationism** to emphasize the Creator's continued sustenance of creation. It removes the possibility that matter on its own would organize itself into planets, stars, and galaxies in space. It negates the chemical evolutionary doctrine that life arose spontaneously on a hypothetical primordial Earth and eliminates any notion of the evolutionary "tree of life," which purports to show the evolutionary linkages of all organisms.

Superintended creationism moves the doctrine of creation from the past to the present, in that we continually are mindful of the Creator's sustaining power in our lives. Sabbath keeping is not just about the past, but also about the present and the future. We are safe from destruction in the hands of our caring Creator!

To be sure, the Lord "causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (NIV).¹⁶ God underwrites the existence of evil with the hope that some will turn from their

destructive ways. This fact alone ensures that current conditions will not last indefinitely. The tide of evil washing over the world must pain the Lord greatly.

The many-faceted implications of superintended creationism remain to be identified. The immediate task for Christian teachers of biology is to teach their students not to view ecosystems, organisms, cells, or enzymes ONLY as highly sophisticated machines (which they are), but rather as precious expressions of the Creator's sustaining love. ✍

This article has been peer reviewed.

George T. Javor, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry at the School of Medicine, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California. He holds a B.S. in chemistry from Brown University, a Ph.D. in biochemistry from Columbia University, New York, and has completed postdoctoral studies at Rockefeller University. In addition to his most recent book, *A Scientist Celebrates Creation (Fort Oglethorpe, Ga.: TEACH Services, Inc., 2012)*, Dr. Javor has published more than 40 technical papers and abstracts in the area of biochemistry and a similar number of articles on science and the Bible.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.: G&C Merriam Company, 1973).
2. Theodosius Dobzhansky, "Nothing in Biology Makes Sense Except in the Light of Evolution," *The American Biology Teacher* 35:3 (March 1973):125-129.
3. George T. Javor, "Nothing in Biology Makes Sense Except in the Light of Creation," in George T. Javor, *A Scientist Celebrates Creation* (Ringgold, Ga.: TEACH Services Inc., 2012), 50-60.
4. Nathan S. Garcia, Fei-Xue Fu, and David A. Hutchins, "Colimitation of the Unicellular Photosynthetic Diazotroph *Crocosphaera watsonii* by Phosphorous, Light, and Carbon Dioxide," *Limnology and*

Oceanography 58:4 (July 2013):1,501-1,512. doi: 10.4319/lo.2013.58.4.1501.

5. J. C. G. Walker, *The Oxygen Cycle in the Natural Environment and the Biogeochemical Cycles* (Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany: Springer-Verlag, 1980).

6. J. M. Conly et al., "The Contribution of Vitamin K2 (menaquinones) Produced by the Intestinal Microflora to Human Nutritional Requirement for Vitamin K," *American Journal of Gastroenterology* 89:6 (June 1994):915-923; Chik H. Pai and Herman C. Lichstein, "The Biosynthesis of Biotin in Microorganisms: The Physiology of Biotin Synthesis in *Escherichia coli*," *Biochimica et Biophysica Acta* 100:1 (April 1965):28-35.

7. Smithsonian, National Museum of Natural History, "The Gulf Oil Spill": <http://ocean.si.edu/gulf-oil-spill>. Accessed July 5, 2016.

8. Eric A. Dubinsky et al., "Succession of Hydrocarbon-degrading Bacteria in the Aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico," *Environmental Science & Technology* 47 (August 2013):10,860-10,867.

9. George T. Javor, "The Bible and Microbiology." A paper presented at the Institute for Christian Teaching's Second Symposium on the Bible and Adventist Scholarship, Juan Dolio, Dominican Republic, March 15-20, 2004: http://fae.adventist.org/essays/31Bcc_183-210.htm.

10. Albert G. Moat, John W. Foster, and Michael P. Spector, *Microbial Physiology*, 4th ed. (New York: J. Wiley and Sons, 2002), 63.

11. Donald Voet and Judith G. Voet, *Biochemistry* (New York: J. Wiley and Sons, 2004), 1329-1330.

12. Moat, Foster, and Spector, *Microbial Physiology*, 522, 523.

13. Ellen G. White, "The Laws of Nature," *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1948), vol. 8, 259-261.

14. Javor, "The Bible and Microbiology."

15. Job 34:14, 15. Texts in this article marked NIV are quoted from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

16. Matthew 5:45.



Yanina C. Jimenez

Flexible and Alternative Seating in Classrooms

Much about schooling has changed since the 1800s. The curricula, seating configurations, and discipline methods have changed; and so have books, technology, and many other resources. Unfortunately, one thing has not changed: the amount of time young students are required to sit in the same chair.

Just imagine, during the school year, being seated for about seven hours on a hard chair every single day. Imagine being 7 years old and being told to remain seated and still while doing your work! While for generations students have been expected to do this, current research in the areas of movement and learning shows that children need *and* deserve flexible and alternative seating in an environment where they spend almost the whole day five days a week.

Recent reports on the dangers of sitting for long periods of time¹ com-

bined with readings from *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* about the need to preserve mental strength and exercise all organs while studying² led me to consider how I might integrate flexible seating options for my students. I truly believe that in educating young people, teachers need to combine physical and mental activity.³ So I decided to join the many teachers globally who are changing the way children learn at school.

As a teacher, I believe that providing flexible, soft seating alternatives for children will enable them to move, release their energy, and feel happier and more comfortable while doing their work. Now, just imagine that stu-

dents come to school knowing that they will be learning in a movement-friendly environment. They need and deserve to feel at home. After all, school IS their second home!

Students Are Sitting Too Much

Too many hours of sitting is dangerous to children's health. Health experts and children's advocates recommend that teachers and parents become more aware of how much time children spend each day in a seated position. Most students spend between six and eight hours per day





sitting in various classrooms. And some only have a few minutes of physical activity, such as recess and physical education, built into their school curriculum.⁴ If children and young adults don't move often during the day, their risk for diseases such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease, and other metabolic diseases increases.⁵ Merely exercising at recess or during physical education does not prevent the physiological changes that occur as a result of prolonged sitting.⁶

Visualize a typical classroom. What are students doing? Sitting. James Levine,⁷ co-director of the Mayo Clinic and the Arizona State University Obesity Initiative and author of the book *Get Up! Why Your Chair Is Killing You and What You Can Do About It*, studies how prolonged sitting affects health. His research shows several changes take place in one's physiology—within the muscles and cells—after sitting for a long time. He summarized his findings by saying: "Inactivity—sitting—is *not* supposed to be a way of life."⁸

The Solution

The solution seems to be less sitting and more moving overall. Rethinking the classroom environment and providing flexible and alternative seating options are ways to address the problem. Teachers can start by having students simply stand rather than sit whenever they have the chance or think about ways to walk while they work. The impact of movement—even leisurely movement—can be profound.⁹

Movement can boost the learning process. Eric Jensen's article "Moving With the Brain in Mind"¹⁰ provides a strong rationale for keeping classrooms active. Brain research also confirms that physical activity—moving, stretching, and walking—can actually enhance the learning process. Jensen protests against the sedentary classroom style and suggests a better way to spend the long days in our class-

rooms, not only for students, but also for teachers. He says, "Teachers need to engage students in a greater variety of postures, including walking, lying down, moving, leaning against a wall or desk, perching, or even squatting."¹¹ A slanted desk ensures less fatigue, better concentration, and less eye strain. Students experience less painful electromyogram activity in the lower back when they use slanted work surfaces instead of flat ones.¹²

Teachers should encourage children to stand up and move around at least every hour. A stroll around the classroom can help them retain information¹³ and better regulate their moods.¹⁴

Alternative seating provides students with opportunities to move, yet remain on task. Studies in areas such as non-exercise activity thermogenesis (energy expended in activities such as fidgeting, typing, or anything that does not include sleeping, eating, or sports-like activities) demonstrate that reimagining classroom spaces can provide ways of keeping children moving and make teacher-student interaction easier.¹⁵

When Kayla Delzer decided to renovate her classroom, even before she purchased a single item, she thought about why she was taking this step. She says, "If we truly want to prepare our students for the real world, we need to put them in responsive, dynamic environments that reflect life outside of a traditional classroom. And what's that life outside like? Full of choices." Delzer remembers "ditching her desks" to avoid "the cemetery effect."¹⁶ She cleared out tables, her desk, several chairs, and file cabinets, and explored ways to redesign her classroom. The result was a flexible seating plan and more open floor spaces to accommodate whole- and small-group instruction; stand-and-work tables; crate seats, stability ball chairs, core disks, and pillows. Her students now use work bins and supply baskets to store folders, math journals, and other personal items.

In Delzer's classroom, students de-

cide where they will work each day and can switch places based on their required tasks. She plans carefully to ensure sufficient seating options to accommodate her students' needs. At the beginning of the year, her students spend an entire day exploring the various seating choices. After that, she lets them self-select their seating daily. She says: "One big note: Students know I always reserve the right to move them. . . . They know the work isn't optional, but choosing where they work is."¹⁷

What Flexible Seating Looks Like

Flexible and alternative seating can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Teachers must ensure that the students' postures and movements do not impede their learning or that of their peers. Seating options include the following:

- on the floor (carpeted or tiled);
- on/under a blanket, pillow, or lap-sized bean bag;
- on a couch or futon;
- on various types of chairs including easy chairs (low and high back), Papasan chairs, traditional wood chairs, raised chairs, chairs on wheels that spin, chairs that feel like they may tip (but don't), chairs that are padded on the seat and/or the back, stools (with or without back support), stools that move up and down, and scoop rocker chairs;
- on large bouncy balls;
- standing; or even
- lying down on their stomachs or backs!¹⁸

Preparing for Implementation

Implementing flexible seating arrangements in classrooms should be a team effort between teachers and administrators. Parents should be notified early that this approach will be implemented on a given classroom or schoolwide. This can be done through letters, newsletters, open houses, or

during parent-teacher meetings.¹⁹

To ensure that classroom procedures are consistent, teachers should take time to discuss, establish, and practice procedures and rules for appropriate classroom movement. For example, what classroom signals will be used to minimize noise or off-task movement? What should students do if they complete their assignment early? What are the procedures for rearranging furniture? Consistently modeling and engaging students in discussions about classroom procedures will help to ensure that the flexible seating arrangement is successful.²⁰

One teacher noted that in a flexible seating plan, students took fewer unnecessary trips to the bathroom and water fountains, and readily moved when they needed to remain focused. Being able to move away from other students who may have been distracting or bothering them resulted in a lower incidence of quarreling and off-task behavior.²¹ For flexible seating to produce this type of result, attention must be given to classroom-management procedures.

Flexible Seating in My Classroom: Reactions From Parents and Students

After securing support from my school administration, I began by communicating with parents through e-mails and letters that described my desire to incorporate flexible seating into my classroom. Their support was overwhelming. Although my students were unfamiliar with the term “flexible seating,” as I described the arrangement and the reasons for the change, they were thrilled. Together, we started looking at pictures of seating options and brainstorming ideas for new decorations. We reflected about our sedentary habits and how flexible seating could help us better concentrate and relax while doing our work. My students participated in the fundraisers for the project, which gave them a sense of ownership. I also in-

involved them in the decision-making and executive-functioning process.

Implementing New Seating Arrangements

Assembling the equipment was a team effort (my family, students, and other volunteers). We logged many hours planning, trying the new equipment, moving things around, improving the appearance of the classroom, writing thank-you notes to those who supported our fundraising, doing presentations for visitors, and demonstrating how flexible seating works.

After all the equipment was in place, we needed to decide how to use it, so we came up with the plan of rotations. Every student had the oppor-

tunity to claim the same seat twice every week. They also could choose to lie on their stomach or their back in designated areas of the classroom whenever they felt like it, as long as that choice was helpful to their school work. They knew they could choose where to sit to feel more comfortable or relaxed, but that the teacher could change their spots(s) if they became distracted while doing their work. I am proud to say that I have *trusted* my students, and they have lived up to my expectations.

Observations About Student Behavior

Over the past year, I have observed that my students in the new seating

Flexible Seating and Student-centered Classroom Redesign

Kayla Delzer presents several tips for successfully implementing flexible and alternative seating, including ideas for redesigning on a budget, classroom management, and best practices: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/flexible-seating-student-centered-classroom-kayla-delzer>.

Flexible Classrooms: Providing the Learning Environment That Kids Need

Administrators from Albemarle County Public Schools [Virginia] describe steps for implementation and how flexible seating helped increase engagement and participation: <http://www.edutopia.org/practice/flexible-classrooms-providing-learning-environment-kids-need>.

Rethinking the Classroom: Spaces Designed for Active and Engaged Learning and Teaching

Helpful suggestions for rethinking classroom design at the college and university level, including implementing flexible and alternative seating: <http://www.hermanmiller.com/research/solution-essays/rethinking-the-classroom.html>.

Design Tips for a Student-centered Classroom

Sarah McKibben’s article in Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development’s *Education Update* titled “Get Rid of Rows! and Other Tips for a Student-Centered Classroom” identifies six first steps for redesigning the classroom: http://www.ascd.org/publications/newsletters/education_update/jul16/vol58/num07/Get_Rid_of_Rows!_and_Other_Tips_for_a_Student-Centered_Classroom.aspx.

arrangement learned to act responsibly whether working individually or collectively. They became more aware of their own learning styles and of the spot(s) that would guarantee them deeper concentration, according to the type of work they had been assigned. I noticed that my class became quieter and more focused on their work. They had the opportunity to become more relaxed and thus maintained better focus with the flexible seating arrangement. They didn't have to move out of their place as much as they used to, since they could move in place instead. This helped everybody to better focus while enjoying more tranquility in the classroom.

Although this project did not directly target student learning, it certainly impacted it. I have observed improved student attitudes toward school, the classroom environment, belongings in the classroom, school work, team spirit, classmates, teamwork, and the teacher! Future plans include studying the effects of flexible and alternative seating on learning outcomes.

Although the world is changing, many classrooms remain much the same. Year after year, students experience the same learning environments. Rethinking how we use classroom space is one way to help students exercise choice and control over their own learning. ✍

Yanina C. Jimenez, B.S., teaches Grades 1-4 at Downers Grove Adventist School, Downers Grove, Illinois. She earned her bachelor's degree in education from Universidad Adventista del Plata (River Plate Adventist University) in Entre Rios, Argentina, and is currently finishing a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Visit her blogs for more information, ideas, and resources for teachers who are interested in starting a flexible classroom: <https://flexibleseatinginclassrooms.wordpress.com/> and <https://wecelebratelearning.wordpress.com/>. Her e-mail: yjimenez@ilcsda.org.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. JustStand.org, "The Science of Sitting and Standing": <http://www.juststand.org/tabid/636/language/en-US/default.aspx> summarizes key findings on the topic and provides links to PDF articles, studies, and case studies with applications to education. Unless otherwise noted, all Websites in the endnotes were accessed September 1, 2015.
2. Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 2011), 281.
3. She notes that many life-long diseases and illnesses begin in the school room where poorly constructed seats obstruct the functioning of the lungs, heart, nervous system, and lead to poor thinking. See Ellen G. White, *True Education* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2000), 125-129.
4. Health Corps, "Sitting Too Long Is Bad for Kids' Health" (November 2015): <https://www.healthcorps.org/sitting-too-long-is-bad-for-kids-health/>.
5. Len Kravitz, "Too Much Sitting is Hazardous to Your Health?" *IDEA Fitness Journal* 6:9 (October 2009):14-17: <http://www.unm.edu/~lkravitz/Article%20folder/sittingUNM.html>.
6. Gretchen Reynolds, "Sitting Is Bad for Children, Too," *New York Times* (September 2015): <http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/09/23/sitting-is-bad-for-children-too/>; Ali McManus et al., "Impact of Prolonged Sitting on Vascular Function in Young Girls," *Experimental Physiology* 100:11 (November 2015): 1379-1387. doi: 10.1113/EP085355.
7. Mayo Clinic, "What Are the Risks of Sitting Too Much?" Answers from James A. Levine, M.D., Ph.D. (2015): <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/expert-answers/sitting/faq-20058005>.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.; _____, "Non-exercise Activity Thermogenesis (NEAT)," *Best Practice and Research Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* 16:4 (December 2002):679-702.
10. Eric Jensen, "Moving With the Brain in Mind," *Educational Leadership* 58:3 (November 2000):34-37.
11. Ibid., 36.
12. For many years, the impact of posture on behavior has been of interest to education researchers. Two foundational studies are J. A. Easterbrook, "The Effect of Emotion on Cue Utilization and the Organization of Behavior," *Psychology Review* 66:3 (May 1959):183-201; and M. Eastman and E. Kamon, "Posture and Subjective Evaluation at Flat and Slanted Desks," *Human Factors* 18:1 (February 1976):15-26. More recent studies address similar concerns: Mark E. Benden et al., "The Impact of Stand-Biased Desks in Classrooms on Calorie Expenditure in Children," *American Journal of Public Health* 101:8 (August 2011):1433-1436.
13. Howard Gardner, *The Disciplined Mind* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999).
14. Robert E. Thayer, *The Origin of Everyday Moods: Managing Energy, Tension, and Stress* (Oxford University Press, 1997).
15. Nicole Brekke-Sisk, "Standing-room Only in Classroom of the Future," *Mayo Alumni* 42:3 (Summer 2006):3-5: <http://www.mayo.edu/pmts/mc4400-mc4499/mc4409-0906.pdf>.
16. Kayla Delzer, "Why the 21st Century Classroom May Remind You of Starbucks" (October 2015): [https://www.edsurge.com/news/2015-10-01-why-the-21st-century-classroom-may-remind-you-of-starbucks](https://www.edsurge.com/news/2015-10-01-why-the-21st-century-classroom-may-remind-you-of-starbucks;); _____, "Flexible Seating and Student-centered Classroom Redesign," *Edutopia* (April 2016): <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/flexible-seating-student-centered-classroom-kayla-delzer>; Tom Murray, "Beyond Ditching the Desks: Nine Creative Ways to Avoid the Cemetery Effect for All Classrooms" (August 2015): <http://thomasmurray.com/cemetery-effect/>.
17. Delzer, "Why the 21st Century Classroom May Remind You of Starbucks."
18. Albemarle County Public Schools, "Flexible Classrooms: Providing the Learning Environment Kids Need," *Edutopia* (August 2015): <http://www.edutopia.org/practice/flexible-classrooms-providing-learning-environment-kids-need>; Jennifer Gonzalez, "Classroom Eye Candy: A Flexible-seating Paradise" (November 2015): <http://www.cultofpedagogy.com/flexible-classroom/>; Lindsey Petlak, "Functional, Flexible Classroom Seating Options" (November 2015): <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/top-teaching/2015/11/functional-flexible-classroom-seating-options>.
19. Amy Emnett, "Letter to Parents About Flexible Seating" (2015): <http://mrsemnettsclass.weebly.com/alternative-seating.html>.
20. Carol Ann Tomlinson, "Strategies for Managing a Differentiated Classroom," in *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms*, 2nd ed. (Alexandria, Va.: ASCD, 2001):32-38: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/101043/chapters/Strategies-for-Managing-a-Differentiated-Classroom.aspx>.
21. Brekke-Sisk, "Standing-room Only in Classroom of the Future," 3.

DO YOU KNOW THAT COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY DIALOGUE is online?

Visit dialogue.adventist.org to find past and current issues of the journal in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish, all available for free!

Even better, we are developing a *Dialogue* App for smartphones and tablets, which will be available soon.

Spread the good news to your college, university, and young professional friends, so they can be part of the ongoing *Dialogue*.

