



## What Kind of Education Do We Need for the 21st Century?

I recently wrote about the revival of classical education, which has its origins in the Middle Ages, and how it is being used today by many American homeschoolers. That form of education not only served the needs of those living in the Middle Ages, but has been used throughout the centuries very effectively in training the mind. It was based on an understanding of the power of the human brain to successfully deal with the realities of life.



Its main emphasis has been on literacy and the uses of the mind through logic, rhetoric, memorization, scholarship, Bible study, and learning the languages of the Scripture: Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Indeed, when Harvard College was founded by Calvinist Puritans in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636, its purpose was to provide the new colony with a learned clergy. Thus, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew were part of the curriculum, and John Calvin was upheld as the model of the Christian scholar. His Institutes of the Christian Religion was considered the ultimate masterpiece of Christian biblical scholarship.

The Founding Fathers of America were products of that form of education. But in those days, after the great Reformation, the emphasis was on knowledge of the Holy Scripture and the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Settling in the wilderness of North America and free to create a purer Christian civilization from the ground up, their aim in studying the ancient world was to retrieve the wisdom of the past. This enabled them to formulate a philosophy of government like no other in history. It is summed up eloquently in just 55 words in the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

In other words, our rights are derived from God, not a king, and that the purpose of government is to secure these rights, not to infringe on them or destroy them. This was a truly revolutionary doctrine, reflecting man's total dependence on God for his life and his liberty. The centrality of God in the life of man was its basic message.

But that message is no longer taught in America's government schools. And that is why there has been an irreversible exodus from those apostate schools by over two million American parents. Godless, atheist education is so totally opposed to everything the Founding Fathers stood for that its very existence in America today is an affront to the very founding of this nation. The public schools have become the treasonous Trojan Horse in the body politic of America. That most Americans tolerate the system is an indication that most Americans have lost all touch with our basic history and God-given purpose.

But how did this come about? It did not happen overnight. It was the work of zealous atheists (humanists, progressives, and socialists) determined to impose their denial of God on the nation as a



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whole. Even the United States Supreme Court joined in the movement to expel God from the public schools. Before its decision of 6/19/87 that banned the teaching of Creation Science in the schools, the court stated that the Louisiana law of 1981 “was clearly to advance the religious viewpoint that a supernatural being created humankind,” and therefore violates the First Amendment’s prohibition on a government establishment of religion.

How ignorant can a Supreme Court justice be? An establishment of religion refers to the establishment of a national church, such as the Church of England. It does not ban acknowledgment of the existence of God.

In speaking for the majority, Justice William J. Brennan wrote: “The legislative history documents that the act’s primary purpose was to change the science curriculum of public schools in order to provide an advantage to a particular religious doctrine that rejects the factual basis of evolution in its entirety. Out of many possible science subjects taught in the public schools, the [Louisiana] legislature chose to affect the teaching of the one scientific theory that historically has been opposed by certain religious sects.”

The fact is that many scientists are critical of the theory of evolution. There is no scientific evidence that living matter arose spontaneously from non-living matter. There is no scientific evidence that higher organisms evolved from lower organisms, or that one species has evolved into another. Nothing in the fossil record affirms that idea. Transitional fossils have not been found. The fossil record shows new species appearing suddenly without any ancestors. Only Creation Science tries to explain that the universe is not the product of random accident, but is the product of a purposeful intelligence.

But the question still remains: What kind of education do we need for the 21st century? We need the type of education that enables Americans to deal with the problems and dangers America faces in the 21st century. The biggest problem we face is the loss of our freedom and the loss of our constitutional republic. To combat these trends we need young brains that understand what is at risk.

It is in the primary grades that the foundation can be laid for the development of an intellect. Modern culture has reduced primary education to Mickey Mouse edutainment. It treats children as if they were imbeciles, capable only of thinking and acting as if they were baby animals at a theme park. But the truth is that a child’s brain is a dynamo of language learning, capable of expanding its power by increasing its vocabulary. Each word is an atom of knowledge helping the child master his environment. Therefore, a primary curriculum must take advantage of this tremendous learning energy before it loses its natural impetus. That is why the primary child should be taught to read by intensive, systematic phonics; to write in cursive script; and to count by traditional memorized arithmetic.

The curriculum should also include exercises in memorization. The child should be taught to memorize the 23rd Psalm, the preambles to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. These basic ideas should be imbedded in a child’s mind so that they become a permanent part of his or her budding intellect. The child should be taught the 10 Commandments so that moral behavior is instilled at an early age. In other words, there ought to be a catechism dealing with the principles of our Judeo-Christian heritage and our constitutional republic.

The catechism method has been used throughout the ages as an effective and proper way to teach children what they must know about their religious and political heritage. In teaching arithmetic, we can begin teaching about economics. A five or six-year-old can begin to understand elementary economics since they accompany their parents to the supermarket and can be taught about comparison



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shopping, the value of commodities, how to get the most for your money.

When it comes to literature, poetry and Bible stories can open the door to a love of good story-telling. Aesop's Fables teach moral principles. R. L. Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses* is a gem that can be used to introduce the child to the delights of poetry. By the third-grade, the child can start reading books about astronomy, space travel, the Founding Fathers, American history, local geography, state geography, and United States geography. Biographies of American heroes instill patriotism.

The third grade is also a good time to introduce the child to classical music. When I was in the third grade, our teacher had to use a cranked up phonograph and records to play classical selections that helped us develop a taste for good music. Today, one has CDs, DVDs, YouTube, and other technological marvels to bring good music to the child.

History should not be taught as a branch of "social studies." It should be taught in the same way the Bible teaches the history of the Hebrews, chronologically. I once asked a group of students at a private school if they could name the first war the United States was involved in. Not one of them could name the Barbary War, declared in 1801 during the Jefferson administration (1801-1809). But if they had learned to name America's wars in their chronological order, they would know them. Most Americans today cannot even tell you who our enemy was in World War I. The progressives have destroyed the teaching of American history because such accurate knowledge turns you into a patriot, and patriotism is a no-no in the atheist, socialist public schools.

Since the purpose of American education should be to train up new generations of Americans to want to defend freedom and restore our constitutional republic, one should begin teaching the difference between socialism and capitalism as early as possible. One should be taught the history of economic freedom and how it has made us the richest nation in history. Young Americans must be armed with the intellectual tools needed to replace our present statist politicians with others who will repeal all of the laws that have crippled our economy and destroyed the American dream.

We must also encourage young Americans to enter politics in order to replace all of those socialists who are destroying our free society. We've learned that most politicians are venal individuals who will borrow and spend for programs that don't work but get them reelected. They exist in both parties, and therefore careerist Republicans can be as corrupt as careerist Democrats.

To produce the new incorruptible legislator, we must convince patriotic young Americans that if they want honest men in government, they will have to enter the political arena. And the education they get should prepare them to accept such responsibilities. They don't have to make politics a career, but they should be willing to serve in government as they would be willing to serve in the military.

Many young patriotic Americans volunteer for military service because they understand the nation's need to defend itself. But our greatest enemy is now entrenched in our government, and that is why we need an army of volunteers willing to enter politics in order to drive out the internal enemy as committed to destroying us as any foreign enemy.

Can we get a million homeschoolers to create a system of education that will train up such Americans? The problems faced by America in the 21st century are quite different from those faced by previous generations. Never before have we had to face an enemy entrenched in Washington, wielding the levers of power aimed at destroying our freedom. We have an army in Afghanistan fighting and dying in order to defend us against foreign terrorists, while here at home the enemy is already in control of our government.



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These young Americans should graduate from high school with a knowledge of American history, government, electoral politics, judicial decisions, constitutional law, etc. so that they can become effective soldiers in the battle to retain our freedoms. That should be the educational agenda for homeschoolers in the 21st century.



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