

THE BIBLICAL EDUCATOR

"To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding" Proverbs 1:2

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HELP IS ON THE WAY! (We Hope)

by David H. Chilton

Regular readers of *The Biblical Educator* will have discerned in its pages a very definite educational philosophy. That philosophy involves the settled conviction that Jesus Christ must be acknowledged as Lord in every area of life. With us that is no idle phrase. It means that a Christian school is much more than a very expensive way to make sure our children have morning devotions, or are protected from drugs, violence and sexual perversion. A Christian education must seek to instill in the hearts and minds of the students the practical, day-to-day recognition of God as Creator and Lord of the world. The child must be trained to see every fact as a *created fact*, already interpreted by God's word. Everything in life — history, science, art, music, government, mathematics, family, labor, love and war — is under the absolute authority of God. Man's duty is not to seek knowledge apart from the standards imposed by Scripture, but to consistently think God's thoughts after Him. Nothing can be known truly unless it is known in terms of the Bible, the ultimate standard of truth. All learning must be fully integrated in the light of God's revelation. Any knowledge which departs from this standard is apostate knowledge, an attempt to "know good and evil" in autonomy from God.

Every Christian educator would agree with these statements — at least in theory. In practice, however, we are immediately confronted with several problems. In the first place, the lack of really excellent, consistently Christian textbooks is appalling, and a major hurdle to be overcome. Many schools are using secular textbooks, and teachers on occasion must spend more time refuting the humanistic perspectives contained in them than they spend in positive presentation of the truth — and, meanwhile, praying fervently that their young, impressionable charges will not be seduced by the literature provided by the school.

An even more disastrous problem is related to the predicament of the teachers themselves. Most Christian teachers have received their education in public schools. While they are sincerely striving for educational reformation, they often find themselves fighting the Lord's battles with remnants of Saul's armor. Trained by secularists to perpetuate the humanist faith, they are overwhelmed by the task of implanting the Biblical worldview in their students. The daily grind of teaching, disciplining, grading, planning — and looking bright and fresh! — affords little time for extensive reading in the necessary literature. Let's face it — Christian reconstruction is tough. It's easy to succumb to the temptation to let things slide along, to do things the way they've always been done, reassuring ourselves that *"anything's better than public schools."* Certainly, God doesn't want public schools — but He doesn't want just anything, either.

Simply put, our schools, teachers, parents and children need help.

Some of this, we trust, can be found in *The Biblical Educator* (and if we *aren't* helping, let us know: our mortal fear is that the authors may be only writing to each other). Also, more textbooks are being written, although some now in the making will not be completed for several years. Then, too, there are many scholarly, Biblical works available for the various disciplines (see, e.g., the bibliography in Ruth Haycock's *Bible Truth for School Subjects*). But something more could be added, right now, that would help fill the gaps in the teachers' knowledge and the student's materials.

Allow me a slight digression at this point. One of the most powerful tools of statist indoctrination is *The Weekly Reader*, with its secondary-school counterparts, *Junior Scholastic*, *Senior Scholastic*, and *Scholastic Search*. These periodicals are filled with humanism and worship of the state on a level that is almost incredible. One recent issue of *Search* was devoted to the praise of all the following: the ERA, Henry Barnard (the father of educational bureaucrats, who made it his personal mission to destroy Christian schools), the new U.S. Department of Education, revolution, and punk rock. And those are only the more obvious ones. Others are more subtle, such as the "Wordsearch" puzzle which has the kids looking for words such as: Department, Education, Federal, Health, Public, State, and Welfare. (I don't *think* I'm being paranoid for seeing a pattern here.) And for this year, the editors have held out the bright promise of a monthly series on "values." My comments on *that* are available to any interested bureaucrats who send in a stamped, self-addressed plain brown wrapper.

To return to the subject: We are considering the idea of publishing a similar magazine or newspaper, on a monthly basis, which would provide Christian schools with a Biblical analysis of important issues, written on the students' level. It would deal with current events and problems, history, economics, government, geography and ethics. We could also include puzzles and games for development of vocabulary and logic skills (such as our own "Wordsearch," for terms like: Creation, Dominion, Reconstruction, Theocracy, Gold Standard...the possibilities are fascinating!). A publication of this kind would enable students, parents and teachers to integrate all truth under the Lordship of Christ. Economics would be tied to Biblical ethics; history and government would be bound to the Covenant. All of life would be seen in terms of Scriptural standards, and training would be provided in applying Christian principles to new problems.

That, at least, is our desire. But we need help. We need suggestions, encouragement and insight from you. We need to know how many of you would be interested in receiving and supporting such a venture (since it will have to pay its own way). Which brings me to my final point. One of our advisors informs us that 70% of all publications fail within their first year; 95% flunk out within three years. This is for two reasons: (1) failure to conform to market demand, and thus (2) lack of funds. We are convinced there is a *need* for the proposed publication — but we aren't sure there's a *paying market* for it. That's where you can help. Send your letter, this week, to the editorial address.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS: Our Future and our Foes

by Kevin Craig

As the government escalates its war on independent Christian schools, wearied soldiers of the Cross may often find themselves asking, Is it all worth it? Is there any chance that such a tattered minority can triumph over the gargantuan State and its institutions? The concept of "Epistemological Self-Consciousness," explained in a previous article, not only shows us who the ultimate victor will be, but how we as Christians should deal with our enemy.

Matt. 13:24-29 records the parable of the Wheat and the Tares. The parable indicates that believers and unbelievers both are left in the world until they mature. Then the tares are taken out of the world, followed by the wheat. In this historical process, the wheat becomes more like wheat, and the tares more like tares. The Christian, equipped with God's Word, sets out to exercise dominion under God, and through the Word is given power (Acts 1:8; Eph. 1:19; I Cor. 4:20; 2 Tim. 1:7; II Cor. 10:5; Rom. 16:20). The unbeliever is propelled by his own rebellion against God into a headlong dash toward death (Prov. 8:36). Fortunately, the Word of God acts to restrain his lawlessness (I Tim. 1:8-10) and he does not destroy himself. The man who acts consistent with his avowed unbelief will be a very ugly, powerless person; something like a punk rocker. Or worse.

For some unbelievers, however, the law of God does more than simply restrain lawlessness. It is used by them to become great scientists, teachers, and scholars. Even if they don't read the Bible, they have the work of the law written on their hearts (Rom. 2:14-15). Their consciences tell them they should obey the law of God. The more they do, the better teachers they will be. They would never admit that they are following the Word of God, but they are, and God, who guides the universe by the Word of His Power (Heb. 1:3), promises that those who obey his law will be prospered in this life (Deut. 8 and 28).

Gary North therefore points out that unbelievers have two choices. First, they can conform themselves to Biblical law, or at least to the work of the law written on their hearts. Or second, they can abandon God's law, and thereby abandon power. They can succeed in whatever they do only if they do it on God's terms: by acknowledging and conforming themselves to God's Word. There is no other way. Remember, any turning away from the Word brings impotence, fragmentation, and despair.

This leads us to our future and our foes. If God is the source of all good gifts (Jas. 1:17), then the future belongs to those who are blessed by God, and overtaken by his gifts. According to Deut. 28 and Lev. 26, this means that only those who turn to God and His Word can expect victory and success. The maturing of the wheat and the tares does not lead to the cultural impotence or defeat of the wheat. Christians who are committed to God's Word are in the driver's seat. The atheist punk rock star cannot compete with the genius of a Christian like Bach. He will destroy himself while Bach goes on to glorify God in victory. The unrighteous can gain access to God's blessings only by accepting God's moral universe as it is, not by inventing an evolutionary fable, and imagining a universe of chaos and meaninglessness. The future has meaning for the Christian, because it is in the future that the Christian will triumph. Proverbs 13:22 promises that "the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." Just as Canaanites inhabited the Land and kept it from going wild so that the Hebrew children could inherit cities they did not build (Ex. 23:29-30) so the Lord allows Humanists to devise wonderful music, physics, chemistry, and even teaching methods, so that when we inherit the Promised Land, we can burn the idols and keep that which conforms to God's Word. Cornelius Van Til describes it like this: "Sinful men will continue to produce a marvelous culture. But

1 of the products of their culture will be taken from them and brought into the great display chambers of the Kingdom of Christ. When sinners repent then their culture is saved with them. If they do not repent then their culture will still be saved, but for others who do repent, and these will enter in upon the inheritance of it. The meek

shall inherit the earth" (*Essays on Christian Education*, pp. 8, 15).

Matthew 13 also tells us something about our foes; that we sometimes can cooperate with them. Until the unbeliever matures, and strikes out against God and His creation, he may look and act much like a Christian. Some satanists respond to the knowledge of God's law written in their hearts. They have a large degree of knowledge about God's creation. We must keep in mind that the fall of man was not a decrease in knowledge or intellect. The unbeliever can still have knowledge. It can be applied to God's creation and produce beneficial results. The rebellion of the unregenerate lies beneath the surface, smouldering, ready to flare up in wrath, but restrained by God and His Word. The atheistic scientist says that there is no order in the universe, but knows in his heart that there is order — God's order. And for him to continue working, he assents to God's order. The successful unbeliever (i.e., one who resembles a Christian more than a punk rocker) is like a cattle rustler who steals his neighbor's cows, raises them, and produces a really great steak. Without his neighbor's cows, or his neighbor's knowledge of raising cows, he would be lost. He says that there is no order or meaning in the universe; that it would make just as much sense to feed the cattle lye or poison, but he *knows* this isn't true, and he feeds them according to God's Word and succeeds. As long as the unbeliever is willing to abide by the Word of God, we can work with him. Every gift he has has been stolen from God, but as long as what he *does* is *inconsistent* with what he *says* he *believes*, he can be a great economist, a great scientist, or even a great teacher. *Our standard is the Word of God.* We judge all things according to the law of God. *The Biblical Educator* is observing even humanistic teachers and is constantly finding Biblical approaches to education that Christians can employ. Just because a person is not a Christian does not mean that that person can arrive at no true knowledge. By the grace of God, they can. And they do. Next time the *BibEd* cites an atheistic or humanistic publication, or praises a non-Christian teacher, remember this sad fact: For decades now, professing Christians have neglected the Bible as God's instruction book for all time. They have dropped the torch in one area after another. Our current economic, political, and educational problems are the result of this retreat. But even many humanists recognize that their children aren't learning, and their conscience tells them that what they are (or are not) doing is wrong. They have searched for solutions and have found the answers in the law written in their hearts. Thus they may be working in terms of God's Word even though they deny God all the while. Ironically, many Christians claim to believe God's word, yet deny it by failing to practice it. Our standard is not what *men* may say, but what God has said.

AN EDUCATIONAL COMMENTARY ON THE BIBLE

by Rodney N. Kirby

#8 — "Crime and Punishment" (Genesis 3:8-24)

Scripture is like a many-faceted jewel — we may look at it in many different lights and gain new insights into the wisdom of God. Our text for this month illustrates this well. There are many applications of God's curse upon Adam and Eve and the serpent. There are many economic implications revolving around the concepts of scarcity and work, which have been developed by Gary North and others. The Institute for Creation Research and others have brought out the geological implications — no death and decay (with resultant fossilization) before the fall, the second law of thermodynamics, etc.

We wish to look at the text from an educational point of view. This would encompass other aspects (economic, for an economics course, geological for science classes, etc.). We will concentrate on the text as it applies to *discipline*.

Scripture teaches us that there is a parallel between God's chastisement of us, and our chastisement of our children (Prov. 3:12; Deut. 8:5; Heb. 12:7-11). Thus, if we are to be godly in our discipline (as parents and as teachers), we must examine how God disciplines us. So what does this text in Gen. 3 teach us about God's discipline?

First, notice the questions God asked in verses 9, 11 and 13. Obviously, God did not ask these questions for His own information — God knew full well where Adam and Eve were, and He knew exactly what they had done. God was asking these questions for *man's* sake, not for His own. God is here confronting Adam with the reality of his sin, by drawing out a confession. God could have punished Adam and Eve immediately after they had eaten the fruit. Instead, He made them realize just what they had done by questioning them about it. To be sure, they shifted the blame elsewhere, but notice that both Adam's and Eve's excuses end with the confession, "And I ate" (vs. 12 & 13).

So also we, as parents and as teachers, must verbally confront our children with their sins. When we see one of them disobeying, it is all too easy to levy swift punishment immediately. We must, however, take the time to talk about the child's misdeeds with him, so that he knows exactly what he did wrong. Younger children especially may not remember what they did, and must be reminded. All children must understand that they are not being punished because they got caught, but because they disobeyed their parents or teachers, and ultimately that they transgressed God's Law. Taking this time has two effects. First, it clarifies in the child's mind what he is being punished for, so he will not do it again (the "peaceful fruit of righteousness" — Heb. 12:11). Second, it gives the parents time to calm down and administer punishment in love rather than in anger.

Notice now the technique Adam and Eve used — blameshifting (vs. 12-13). They blame God ("the woman whom *Thou* gavest") and other creatures. But notice that God follows it right along the line. "Adam, what did you do?" "It was the woman's fault." "All right, Eve, what did you do?" "It was the serpent's fault." (God doesn't ask the serpent — he had nobody but God that he could blame.) Then God deals with the serpent (vs. 14-15). But He comes back to the woman (vs. 16), and finally returns and deals with Adam (vs. 17-19).

Our children also are going to shift the blame to someone else ("Johnny hit me *first*"). We should follow it right along — "All right, Johnny, what did you do? (You'll get *yours* in a minute, Billy!)" We deal with *all* the offenders, not just the one we caught.

Next, notice that, throughout God's punishments here, there runs a thread of grace. In verse 15, God promises ultimate victory over Satan (fulfilled in Jesus Christ). In verse 16, while God promises pain in childbirth, Eve will still be able to have children — her line will not be cut off. And in vs. 17-19, although Adam will have to work harder, he will still be able to grow food and live. Also note that God did not "curse" Adam and Eve as He "cursed" the serpent. Adam recognized this element of grace when he named his wife *Eve* — the Hebrew means "living." He recognized that life would continue — under a curse, yes, but not annihilated.

Even so, we must hold out mercy to our children, even in punishment. They must realize that their disobedience has not severed relationships between them and their parents, but that they are punished in order that they might grow in grace (Heb. 12:11). We should reassure children of our love for them immediately after the punishment is carried out. This is one advantage of spanking over some other forms of common punishment (staying in from play for a week, no car for a month, etc.). The spanking is over and done with, and the child and the parents can forget about it. Prolonged punishment means that, for a time, there is a barrier between parents and child; spanking gets it over with quickly, and quickly restores fellowship.

It was mentioned above that God did not "curse" Adam and Eve; rather, He "cursed" the ground — man's environment. God punished Adam by forcing him to work harder to carry out his calling of subduing the earth (Gen. 1:28-30; 2:15). This was not a capricious punishment, however. Man's dominion involved his being *under God* — an obedient viceregent. Man had disobeyed God, and so his dominion was corrupted. Adam was forced to work harder as a punishment.

It is difficult to apply this to our discipline of children — do we

punish children by "punishing" their environment? There are some ways we can do this. If a child disobeys his parents and watches a TV program forbidden to him, he may be punished by not allowing *any* TV for a few days — even acceptable programs. Also, we may use work as a punishment. If a student does not bring in his assignment, or does it poorly, we may add more work, and demand that it all be done, in addition to his regular homework.

Finally, we see in vs. 22 through 24 another principle. We have already mentioned the fact that in God's punishment there is (in this world) an element of grace. This is seen here in these final verses as well. While it was punishment to be sent out of the Garden of Eden, away from the presence of God, there was also an aspect of mercy to it. Adam and Eve were now sinners in rebellion against God. They had a sin nature. Had they remained in the Garden, they would have taken from the tree of life and lived forever (vs. 22). They would have become confirmed in their sinful condition, maturing eternally as sinners, growing more and more in their rebellion. Instead, God sent them out, to prevent their living eternally as rebels. God removed them from a situation which could have been permanently harmful to them.

In the same way, we (as parents and teachers) remove our children from seriously harmful situations. To be sure, at times we let them suffer the consequences of their actions. But sometimes this would be dangerous (a child playing with fire, for example). If a student has shown himself to be irresponsible, we must remove him from potentially dangerous situations (the chemistry lab, for example). We do not take time to reason with the child all the time — we just remove him as quickly as we can.

Our discipline of children is patterned after God's discipline of us. Let us learn from this and other passages how God deals with us, so that we may treat our children in a god-like manner.

BOOK REVIEW

by Darlene Weaver

Robespierre: the Voice of Virtue, by Otto Scott. (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books. 266 pages) \$5.00. Order from Ross House Books, P.O. Box 67, Vallecito, CA 95251

Otto Scott gives us a horrifying picture of the French Revolution, one which should serve as a sufficient reminder of the perils of humanism. It is a well-written history, intriguing and exciting, even to one not familiar with the events and characters of this period of French history. In a descriptive account of the elements comprising the Revolution, it presents fresh insight into what might otherwise be a curious and somewhat cumbersome sequence of events beginning with the Old Regime and ending with a "liberated" public. He tells the history, not in the usual fact after fact, date after date form, but graphically depicts the villainous persons and lascivious events behind the scenes of the French Revolution. Robespierre and his comrades seem to come to life.

The character of Robespierre and his closest associates, the half-paralyzed Georges Couthon and the evil Louis Saint-Just, the role each played in the political arena, reminds one of the fact that God uses man's own depravity to mete out His judgement upon the ungodly. These men were eventually condemned as enemies of the revolution by the National Convention. The "Incorruptible," the Voice of Virtue, was neither anarchist nor socialist; he was Jean Jacques Rousseau's firmest disciple combining in his finicky and acidic personality the highest sense of civic service to society with a deep vein of coercive idealism. Terror and virtue were the motivating forces of this government. The triumvirate used their political powers as heads of the Committee of Public Safety, one of many equivocal euphemisms, to remake France in light of their religion of humanity and humanitarianism, social idealism and revolutionary patriotism, and the ultimate weapon, the guillotine, to depopulate France of her supposed enemies.

Scott subtly weaves a visible thread throughout this history of the ingenious ways the revolution was spurred and kept alive. He cites the use of oral as well as written means to effect the desired ends:

In all, the shift in national mood in response to the journals and speakers of Paris was something new and awesome the rest of the world did not fully appreciate: it marked the first use of massive propaganda to alter facts after events, and to change people's minds about what they saw and thought. It was stupendously successful...

and,

Jacobin literature appeared everywhere, its speakers were eloquent, impassioned, and numerous. The Society had a chart of every city block and village street; it had lists of royalists and priests, of missing or suspicious aristocrats and "speculators," of all the enemies of the people and the nation. The words ran together and were used interchangeably. A new language had come into being, in which the term "people" meant everybody in the abstract but not anybody in particular. People meant Jacobins and their supporters and followers: all others were enemies of Liberty, Equality, and France: they were non-people. The revolution was organized; it was not a spontaneous event.

As Scott so aptly points out, the movement continued by the creation of new enemies of the state each time the revolutionary spirit flickered. Crime was rampant throughout France during the Revolution, but patriots were continually reminded to look towards the future as they would toward ultimate salvation. The masses, however, could not eat the future, and so, as the government concentrated its efforts on its enemies — "...all who by their actions, by their connections, speakings, writings have shown themselves to be...enemies of Freedom" — the people of France starved. The government was unconcerned with such petty crimes as robbery, rape and murder; political crimes against the state were of the greatest import. The temporary government, Robespierre argued, had allowed gross crimes only because its ranks contained spies and traitors. The Constitution was to be the real government of France; it granted religious freedom and liberty. All were encouraged to look beyond these momentary insanities and dream of a future utopia. As these dreams faded, new snipping boys were found, the most common being the aristocracy and the clergy.

With this coercive program, the government decided it would be in the best interest of the people to institute laws redistributing wealth: taxing the rich and maintaining food prices and wage controls, to name a few. Private property was deemed the cause of many social injustices and, true to socialistic format, it was decided that man would be more virtuous without it. It was resolved that the needy patriots would benefit; not to mention the economic problems the fledgling government faced. Wealthy patriots were suspected of treason; the government regulated prices, and businesses were subject to search.

Private interests were denied so that public interests could be advanced.

Private enterprise was not the only institution to come under attack; the de-Christianization of France was also on the agenda. All forms of Christianity were abolished, including religious holidays. Churches became known as Temples of Reason. Cults were not affected by the regulations — they, in fact, flourished. Calendar reckoning began with Year One of the revolution, the Christian being done away with. Scott cites examples of state control equally as startling:

In true scientific fashion, names that stretched back to times of the Romans were eliminated; each department, canton, and municipality was to be known by its number. Plans were already underway to erase the individual cultures, dialects, and customs of these areas; differences would no longer be tolerated. These measures created a new rational system overnight; in effect, wiped away the efforts of the past as from a slate. The Assembly decrees threw out of office, by eliminating the offices, those who had held hereditary posts in cities, towns, villages and provinces, and replaced them with new administrators. The hundreds of thousands of jobs created overnight by the measure ensured many new supporters for the new regime. The depth and sweep of the change imbedded change, in an instant, as deeply as though it had always existed.

Alongside edicts and commandments such as these, the government instituted a national draft, ensuring its vigilant eyes would be upon all patriots. Robespierre spoke in favor of compulsory education at, of course, the expense of the state so that every child would receive the same biased training. The Assembly, democratically, voted only in favor of such a measure for primary schools.

Using "democratic" means to depopulate, brainwash, and coerce Frenchmen into their desired way of thinking, the Jacobin Society, with Robespierre as its spokesman, continued to lead France in its hellish nightmare, until the timorous opposition finally cemented its forces. The regime of virtue fell suddenly and dramatically, and, Robespierre, trying to commit suicide, shot himself through the jaw, an ironic twist that stilled the infamous voice forever. He did not, however, cheat the avenging guillotine of yet another victim.

The careful reader will be certain to observe the perceptive and discerning methods Scott applies to make him aware of the relationship that France's revolutionary period has to our present day and age; and just how incontestably linked the affiliation is. The book does not blatantly preach against the dangers of humanistic thought, but the pointers cannot be missed. The Christian should review and understand history in light of God's law order so as to prevent the diligent work of unregenerate man. This study of the French revolution assures keen insights into what is being passed off today as mere social reform. It is more than reform; it is stark and open rebellion and revolution against God and his kingdom.

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