

# **SEMANTIC CONNECTIONS BIBLICAL INTEGRATION MODEL**

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## **Biblical Concepts for Traditional Academic Disciplines (The Reactive Approach)**

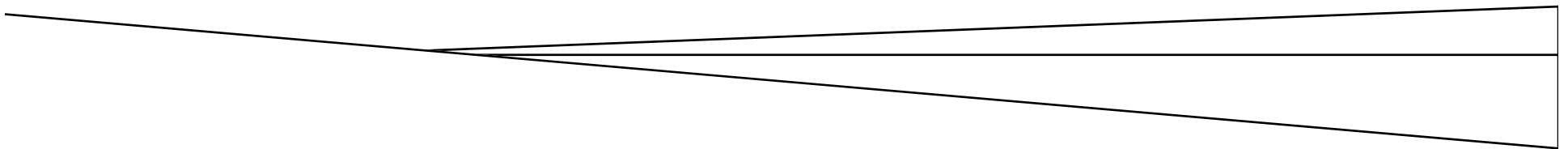


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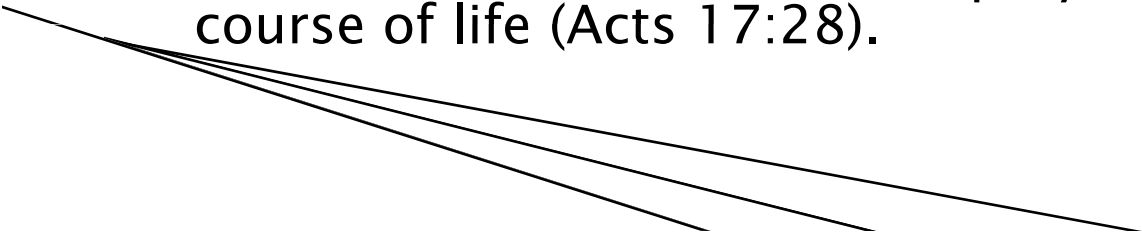
# Introduction

- ▶ Given that:

“Education is by a kingdom for citizenship in that kingdom” (Jellma, 1951) and that citizenship preparation for God’s Kingdom calls for a distinctiveness beyond that for temporal geopolitical citizenship (Yeago, 1997), this PowerPoint series presents some initial suggestions for integrating biblical teachings on Kingdom citizenship into preexisting academic content.

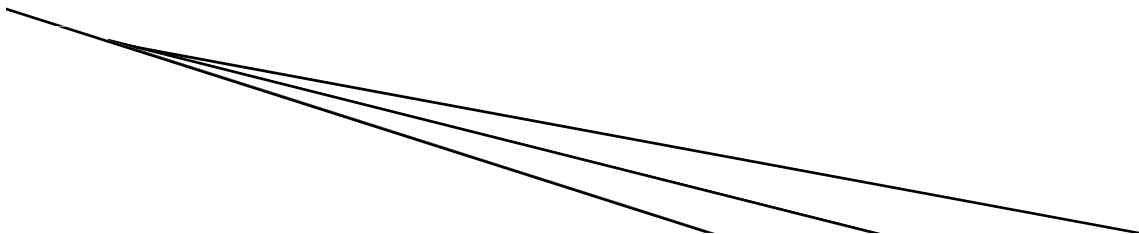


# History

- ▶ All of earthly history revolves around the Church and its predecessor, Old Testament Israel; but is preceded by events of eternity past.
  - ▶ History is both a description and an interpretation of the past as started before creation (Genesis 1:1), guided (Acts 17:26), and concluded by God (Acts 1:7). The study of history would start from the time of Satan's rebellion in heaven, to Adam and Eve, moving forward to the development of nations and the interaction of nations throughout time (cf. Hall, 1975; Marshall & Manuel, 1977; Sauer, 1994).
  - ▶ This study of the history of God's holy nation should be of a higher priority than the history of worldly geographical units.
  - ▶ History should be studied from the perspective of how God honored the intercession and prayers of His people in the course of life (Acts 17:28).
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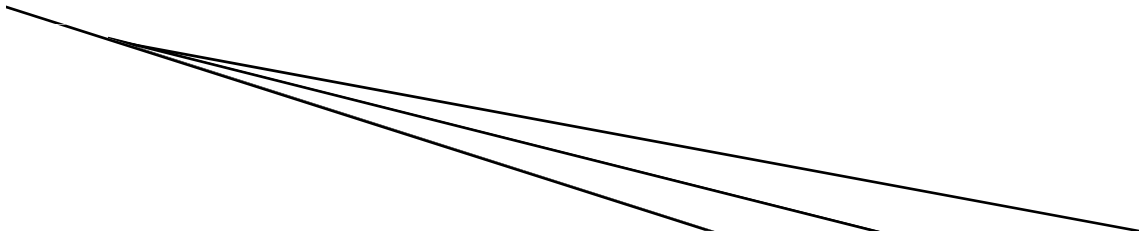
# Psychology/Human Behavior

- ▶ Clearly the most important issue in life relates to submission and obedience to God. The study of human nature from this dynamic is obviously essential for Christian education.
- ▶ Thus, human nature should be studied primarily from an orientation of how and why individuals historically did (e.g., Ruth) or did not fit into God's ways (e.g., King Saul) and the consequences that resulted from such decisions. Lessons from this type of study of human nature will then have eternal as well as practical significance rather than just theoretical import (Menninger, 1973; Willard, 1994).
- ▶ Also highly relevant is the study of the ways that humans are receptive to spiritual forces (cf. Eph. 2:2).



# Foundational documents

- ▶ By definition, education that is Christian has to be biblically formed (Haycock, 1993). To properly understand mankind, not to mention all of life, means to have a proper understanding of God's word (John 14:9; 1 John 2:3). Christians are instructed to rightly study His word to show themselves approved by God (2 Timothy 2:15).

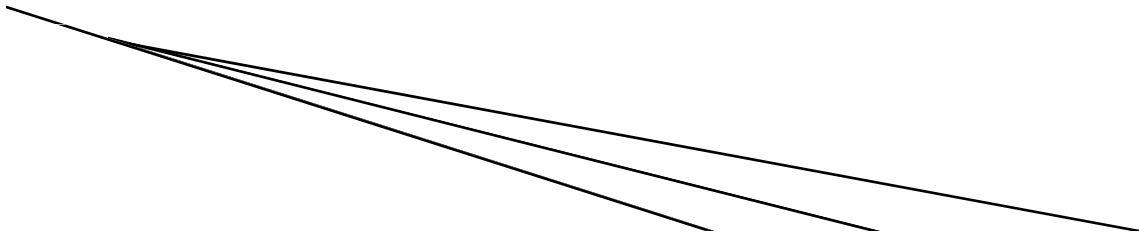


# Communications

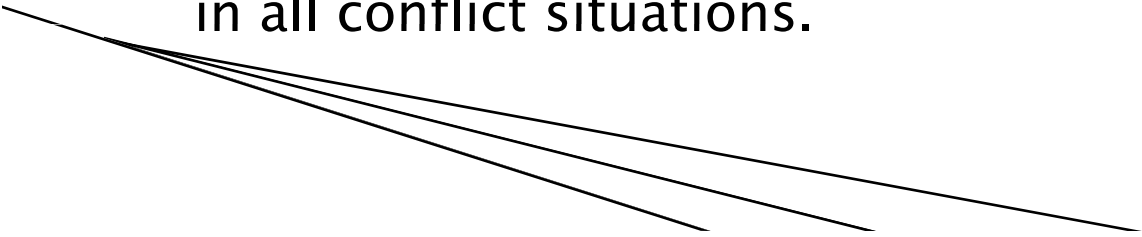
- ▶ Christian education should equip students to be able to give a ready, reasonable defense of the Gospel in order to make and build disciples (cf. Kreeft & Tacelli, 1994; Noebel, 1995; Wilson, 1993).

To be a proper citizen of the Kingdom calls for the possession of hermeneutic and exegetical skills necessary for correctly interpreting the Word of God (Whitney, 1994).

- ▶ The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20) charges Christians to add new citizens into God's kingdom and to help them become good citizens for His kingdom. The skills necessary to accomplish these ends include a diversity of abilities in communication. Rhetoric, logic, persuasive but gentle speech (Colossians 4:6; 1 Peter 3:15), proper defense of the faith, and other skills need to be mastered to fulfill this charge.

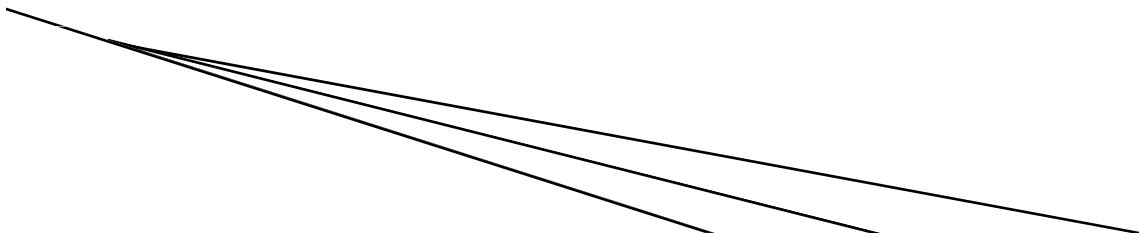


# Conflict Resolution

- ▶ Disciples of Christ need to be thoroughly equipped in prayer and other forms of spiritual warfare (Kraft, 1994).
  - ▶ There are two spiritual kingdoms at war with each other (cf. Daniel 10:13, 20; 1 John 5:19) and humans are either on one side or the other (1 John 3:10). Yet paradoxically Christians are told not to fight such battles with earthly armament (Ephesians 6:12). This obviously means that the carnal weapons of warfare will have to be unlearned and replaced with spiritually effective weaponry.
  - ▶ Christian spiritual warfare is not a trivial or easily understood practice. Even the angels tread cautiously in this matter as demonstrated in both Jude 9 and Daniel 10.
  - ▶ Love, forgiveness, and biblical integrity should be evidenced in all conflict situations.
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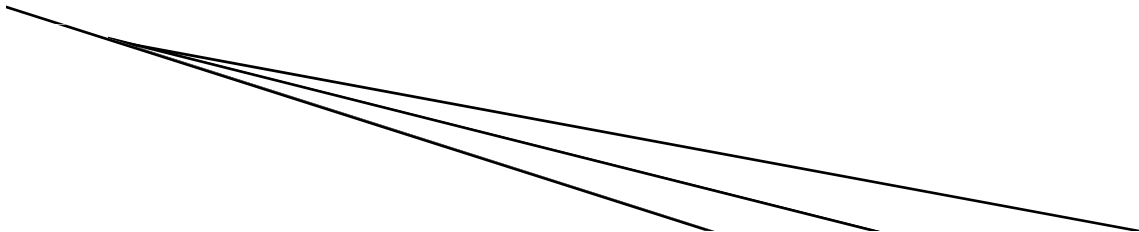
# Performing arts

- ▶ The Bible clearly implies that Christians need to be able to worship God excellently. The highest purpose for the performing arts would thus be to praise and bring glory to God.
- ▶ King David in fact invented musical instruments for this very purpose. This includes the dance (Psalms 149:3), singing (Psalms 30:4, 147:1) and instrumental worship (Psalms 98:5; 150:3–5). In fact, God actually sings and dances over His people (Zephaniah 3:17).
- ▶ Each person should thus be skilled in one or more of these areas for more than just self-pleasure or public entertainment (cf. Erickson, 1989; Wilson, 1989).



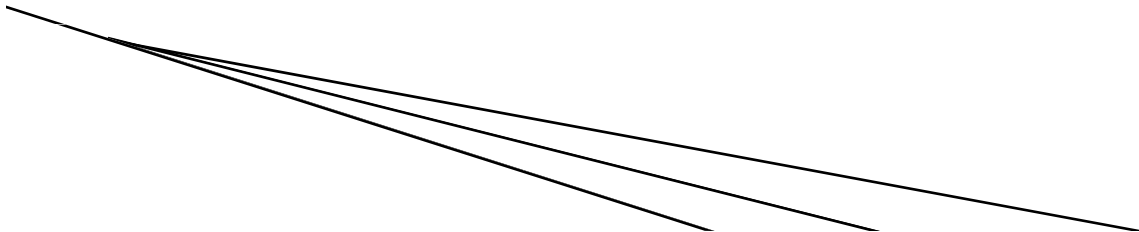
# Language arts

- ▶ Certainly, education that is Christian must develop skill in the use of words, including The Word (Byrne, 1977; Percy, 1980). Language is not only the prime medium of idea transmission, it is a primary instrument by which spiritual power is exerted (cf. Matthew 17:20).
- ▶ Literacy in the spoken and written word is thus necessary for the proper exercise of temporal and spiritual responsibility. Accordingly, Jesus, as the Word of God, (John 1:1, 14), is known by abiding in Him, and by extension, His Word (John 15:7). And this is known because of being literate.



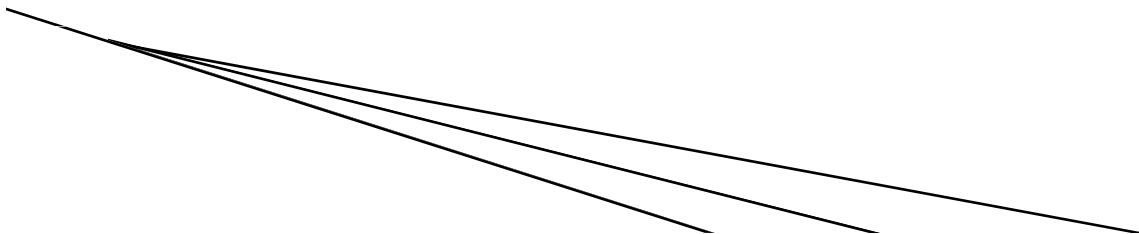
# Language arts

- ▶ In the true meaning of literacy, language art skills must go beyond the mechanics, such as sequencing and decoding. Instead, communicative competencies of reading, writing, and speaking, coupled with wisdom and thinking skills are the rightful hallmarks of literacy attainment. It is through being literate that the Gospel message is orderly and cogently presented as already suggested in the section in apologetics, and it is in conjunction with the section entitled languages that the Gospel can be translated into other languages. Christians can even think God's thoughts after Him and read His love letter to them because of being literate.



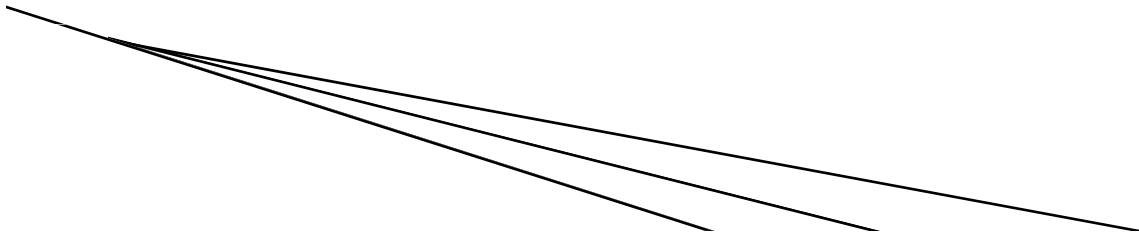
# Languages

- ▶ The commandment to take the Gospel to all people (Matthew 28:18–20) has direct relevance for Christian education. It means, among other things, that Christians need to learn languages of people groups they attempt to induct into the nation of God.
- ▶ Until an individual knows which group(s) to target for evangelization, a solid grounding in a foundational language like Latin would seem to be the best way to prepare to learn a specific language yet to be determined.
- ▶ Further, the mark of a good citizen of God's kingdom would seem to call for a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew to understand biblical texts (Rushdoony, 1981).



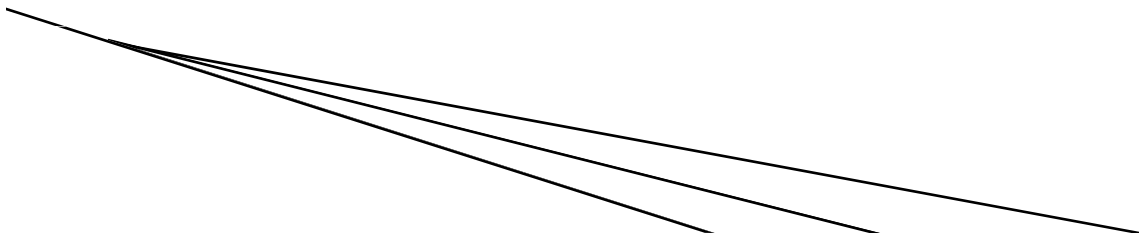
# Environmental Studies

- ▶ Since God calls Christians to be good stewards (e.g., parable of the talents, Matthew 25:15–30), Christian education must teach from the perspective of managing God’s resources for His glory (Blue, 1991; Burkett & Osborne, 1996). This would include an emphasis on tithing (Malachi 3:8–12; Luke 11:42) and giving as well as orienting students to live a lifestyle other than for just personal comfort (cf. Ephesians 4:28).
- ▶ If Christians truly are brothers and sisters of a blood bond that is stronger than unsaved siblings, then all the more reason why personal resources need to be shared with members of His holy nation (cf. Acts 2:45).



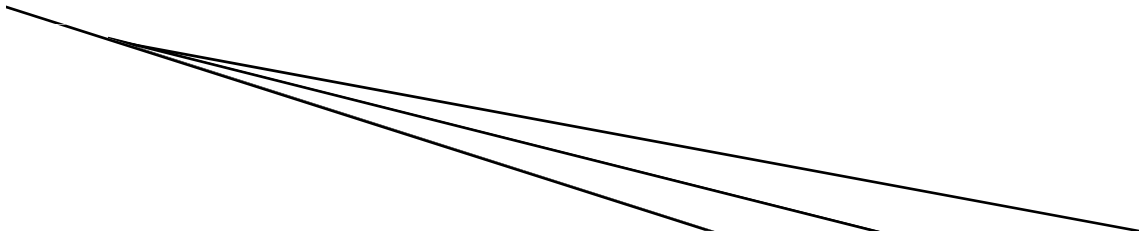
# Environmental Studies

- ▶ Furthermore, one's occupation needs to be seen not just as an end in itself but also as a vehicle and resource provider to bring the gospel to others (e.g., Paul's tent-making activities). In its fullest sense, stewardship is the management of not just financial sources but all resources including time, truth, talent, and even the soul and body that God has entrusted to each person. The interaction of stewardship issues and interpersonal relations (see next category) as described in the parable of the shrewd manager (Luke 16) is a lesson worthy of study in its own right.



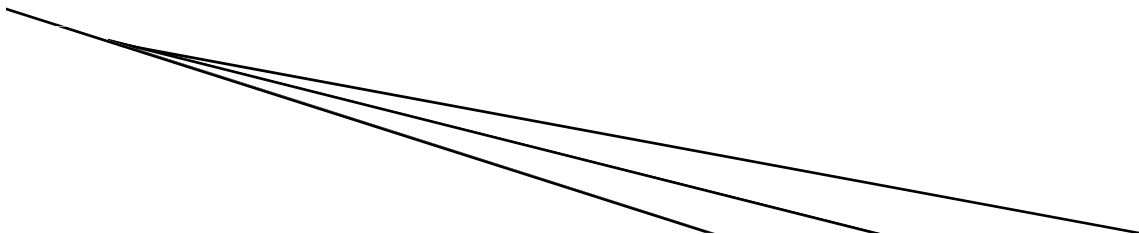
# Social studies

- ▶ A distinctive of Christianity and thus of Christian education is an emphasis on godly interpersonal relationships (Crabb, 1997; Palmer, 1966). Social relationship considerations should include these sample biblical tenets: settle matters quickly with someone who is taking you to court (Matthew 5:25); do unto others as you would have them do unto you (Matthew 7:12); look after orphans and widows in distress (James 1:27); do not divorce except for sexual immorality (Matthew 5:31–32); rejoice in persecution because you are a Christian (Matthew 5:12); turn the other cheek, go the extra mile (Matthew 5:39–42); do not resist an evil person (Matthew 5:39); love and pray for your enemies (Matthew 5:44); forgive others even before they ask (Matthew 5:14); and count all your trials as joy (James 1:2–3).



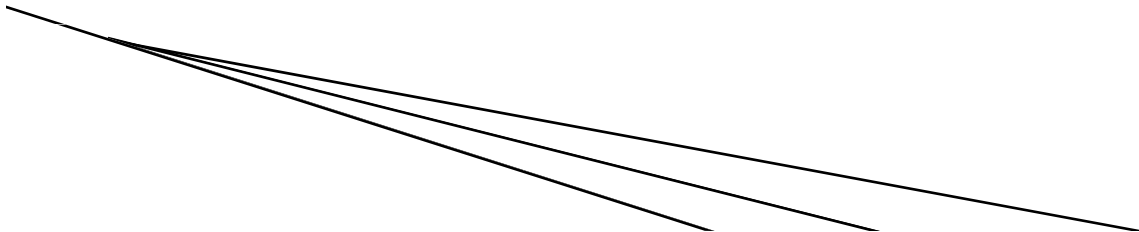
# Social studies

- ▶ While apologetics and other skills are essentials for good communication, the persuasive power of these skills is ultimately rooted in the character of the persuader. For an argument to be convincing, the demeanor and character of the persuader must be in agreement with the message. “Social study” tenets like those above make the messenger and the message uniquely compatible and thus highly persuasive and unselfishly authentic.



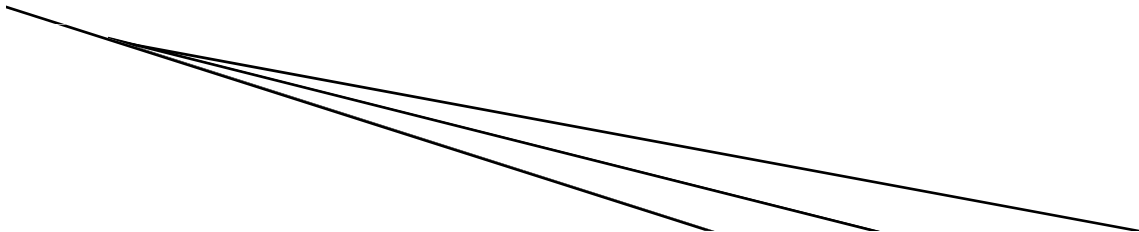
# Personal Development

- ▶ The essence of being a Christian and thus the goal of Christian education is that of being a disciple of Christ. This category includes practices that have come to be known as spiritual disciplines (Foster, 1988; Willard, 1988). They include two categories of expression: engagement expressions such as prayer, and abstinence expressions such as fasting.
- ▶ Discipleship invariably involves understanding or being disciplined by one or more others. Thus, discipleship relationships should be fostered as a regular part of personal growth.



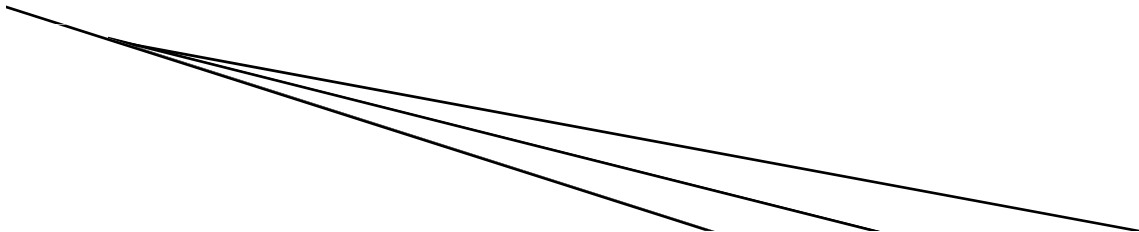
# Life principles

- ▶ Transformation of the mind as expected in Romans 12:2 calls for Christian education to teach a biblical view of life principles (cf. Robertson, 1982). Walking too closely to the world's ways of relativism and consequence-free living, Christians have lost sight of many of the principles that govern life.
- ▶ First principles that should be a natural part of the Christian's life understandings include repentance from dead works, faith, doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment (Heb 6:1-2).



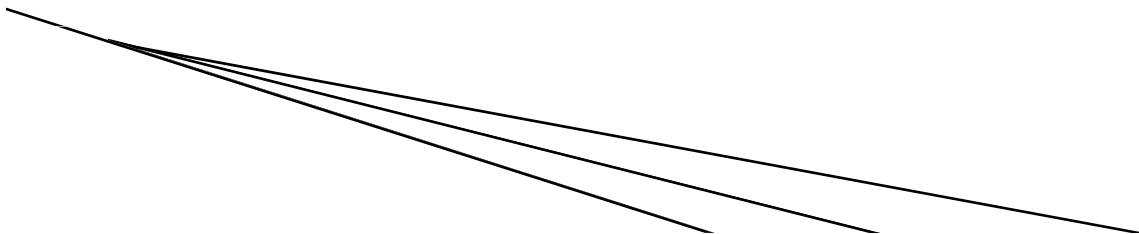
# Life principles

- ▶ A sample of deeper principles include: forgiveness heals but unforgiveness keeps the offender and the recipient of the offense in bondage (Matthew 6:14–15; Matthew 18:21–35; John 20:23); dying to self brings life (John 11:50; 12:25); God uses Satan to discipline His people (1 Corinthians 5:5; II Corinthians 12:7); people do not really change others – He does (Proverbs 21:1); and normative to Christianity is a life of suffering (Romans 8:17; Philippians 3:10).



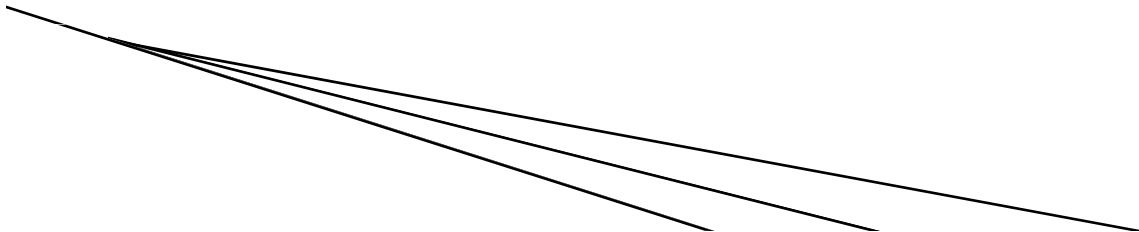
# Interpersonal relations

- ▶ Christian education without Charity – – Christlike love – – is fatally flawed. Possession of all knowledge and the ability to fathom all mysteries is incomplete, no matter how academically admirable, unless guided by love, so says the Bible (1 Cor 13:1–3). The most excellent way, according to Paul, is to demonstrate, just as Jesus did, the quality of selfless love (1 Cor 12:31).
- ▶ The teachings of I Corinthians 13: 1–7 on the behaviors that exemplify love in action probably have no peer in terms of demonstrating true Christianity to others (Long, 1967; Yancey, 1997). Qualities like not envying, always trusting, thinking the best of others, and keeping no record of wrongs need to be stock in trade dispositions for all Christians. In fact, Christians who “can fathom all mysteries, and all knowledge” (v. 2), gain nothing eternal if they have not love.



# Ethics

- ▶ Christian education can hardly be called Christian without a prime focus on the ethical standards that Jesus gave to His disciples (cf. Willard, 1998). A summary of these expectations – – the Beatitudes and the rest of the Sermon on the Mount – – are often called the Christian Manifesto or Christian Magna Carta. These teachings of Jesus are considered the capstone ethical standards to which all Christians are to conform (Harrison, 1987). While at times couched in hyperbole, they are attainable only at a great price and not without the power of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Teachings like do not resist an evil person, go the extra mile, do not be angry with your brother, rejoice in persecution, love your enemies, and be perfect as your heavenly Father is all stand in great need of understanding and cultivation within the Christian community. More the exception, they should be the norm. In fact, as the Beatitudes indicate, those who hunger for this kind of righteousness are blessed.



# Conclusion

- ▶ This PowerPoint series represents a beginning approach for integrating, biblical teachings on Kingdom citizenship into existing academic content categories, typically of temporal orientation. A potentially better way to equip for Kingdom citizenship is by initiating a new curriculum based on eternal qualities into which regular, temporally oriented content would be integrated.

