

Why Christian Higher Education by Dr. Marti Williams

Higher Education is being defined as a venue of education that extends beyond High School, is typically found in University type settings with the conferment of degrees such as Associates, Bachelors, Masters, EdD, DMin and PhD. Higher Education is typically not funded by the government (even though some states offer a discount to those students who are residents of said state). Students must meet various testing, financial, academic and lifestyle standards in order to gain entrance into an institute of Higher Education.

Christian Higher Education is distinctive because of a particular world view. In the most general of terms, a Christian world view is a way of perceiving and interpreting the world around us from a Biblical perspective – with the Word of God being the measuring stick of all that is believed and acted upon.

With these (somewhat general) boundaries set in place, the argument for Christian Higher Education is as follows:

1. While the Bible does not mention “schools/universities” in the modern understanding, there is certainly a rich history of advanced training for those who would be involved in the ministry of the Word, Priesthood.
2. Priests in ancient Israel would train until they were 30 years old – training in the Torah, the specific laws of sacrifice and purification, judiciary ruling, business, people skills, music etc. This training would be (with regard to time and rigor) equivalent to a PhD.
3. Scribes would be trained in language, writing, have a well-rounded understanding of the Law and Israel’s worship practices.
4. Jacob was described as a “man of the tents” in Genesis 25:27. This is an Hebraicism for: a man of the books, a scholarly man of discipline and learning.
5. Moses was trained by the wise men of Egypt.
6. Jeremiah was from Anathoth, an area in Israel known for its rich theological archives and schools.
7. Isaiah was obviously trained and gifted with the spoken and written word.
8. Ezra, as a Scribe would have been thoroughly trained in a formal setting.

9. We find the School of the Prophets in vogue in the Book of 1 Kings, while no direct information is given about this group, it is not a far reach to assume that there was some method and form of formal education that went beyond reading, writing and math.
10. Daniel and his friends were described thus, “As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”
11. In the New Testament we find such passages as:
 - Study to show yourself approved.
 - They searched the Scriptures day and night.
12. We know that Paul was highly trained, “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day.”

In centuries past, one could expect a child to be trained or apprenticed by a parent or guardian, but that is no longer the standard in our world. Christian Education, from Kindergarten to Terminal degree, is a vital part of the ministry of the Church. Education is a key part of making disciples of all nations – teaching men and women to think critically and to rightly divide the Word of Truth. There is a discipline and “denial of self” that is required for those who are educated – that is not so easily grasped by those who have not gone thru the rigors of study and research.

There are at least three entities that the CHURCH of the Lord Jesus should have maintained control and responsibility over: education, welfare and medical care. We have allowed the government to take these powerful and potentially transformational opportunities and use them for that which is less than honoring to God. Modern education is now the impetus for our brightest and best to have their faith deconstructed, welfare is now a black hole that sucks the life out of an economy and generates more and greater need with less and less desire to provide for oneself/family, and the medical system has so lost its moral compass that it murders the unborn and thoughtlessly reassigns gender according to the whim of the patient.

We must not lose the vision and passion for higher education, should the Lord tarry, a destiny of a generation may very well depend on it.