

# Wichita TPA Homeschool Convention, June 2011

## CULTIVATING A MIND FOR GOD

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**Introduction:** Good Morning. I'm glad to see you here today.

I wasn't sure what to expect – being the first session of the day and being situated right before Voddie. I knew my husband and my mom would be here, but had I been me in your place, I would have been tempted to arrive *just* in time to catch Voddie's "Harvard or Heaven" at 9:30 - - which I highly recommend you going to, by the way.

**Opening Prayer** – Calm my anxious heart. Speak through me Lord, and encourage Your people for we love You and we desire to see Your Name revered among the people. Give us humble hearts, ears to hear, eyes to see, and ready feet to walk by faith with the power You faithfully provide. Lord, we are so thankful for the privilege of meeting here in public in absolute freedom and liberty; we are grateful to reap the reward of that long-ago battle fought for religious freedom. May we not take this freedom for granted, may we not squander ground Your saints have bled for, but may we use it to advance Your kingdom and make much of You in our midst.

**PP** My name is Jill Grier and I am a grateful wretch saved by grace alone; I'm the wife of my husband's youth, the privileged mother of three fine young men ages 17, 16, and 14, a former Colorado certified middle school teacher, and the founder of *Kingdom-MindedMoms* and Visionary Christian Home Educators (V-CHE).

We've been an 'official' homeschooling family since our oldest was only six. I say 'official' because anyone who is a parent home educates their children – whether they know it or not.

Have I mentioned I'm glad you're here?!!!

For a professing Christian, *having* and *living out* a solid Biblical worldview is vital to our personal testimony and God's mission for our life and our family. We are called to a high standard and, *that* standard is contrary to the wisdom of this world. When we don't practice what the Bible teaches, we cause others to stumble and we obscure and obstruct the glory of God. We become a stumbling block instead of being the necessary salt and light this world and the lost so desperately needs. We become a stench, instead of a fragrant aroma. We make the Family look bad! We become a Kingdom-Liability! This workshop will examine the consequences of thought and give you tools with which to think well and teach your children to think well – so we can represent our King well in this needy world –

PP “because what shapes your thinking, shapes your living!”

It’s important because statistics continually show that only 4% of Americans professing to be Christians have a biblical worldview. 4% ! Of professing, so called ‘born again’ Christians, only 9% do! How shocking! Something is wrong here. How can this be?

Perhaps Dr. James Emery White can help us understand the problem. If you want to know THE ONE book I would recommend you buying from this month’s collection, *A Mind For God* is it! Allow me.... (hold up book)

(Read from A Mind for God: pp.17 – 19.5 “One summer while studying at Oxford University in England, I was invited to a reception for visiting students. Within the first five minutes, I found myself in conversation with two women, one from Florida and the other from California. After exchanging the usual pleasantries, I was asked what I did for a living.

*I told them I was the pastor of a church.*

*The woman from Florida seemed primed for the moment. “Well, I’m glad somebody like you is at a place like this so that you can give people the truth. You know, the **real** story. Why don’t more ministers do that?”*

*“Well,” I said, “I’m not sure I know what you’re talking about.”*

*“You know, all of that stuff about Jesus having died on a cross, resurrected on the third day and all the miracles. I mean, he never died like that. In fact, he lived a long, full life, got married, and had kids.”*

*“Oh, really?” I said.*

*“Don’t you believe that?” She was incredulous.*

*I had just met this woman and didn’t want to immediately launch into a debate with her – it was, after all, such a pleasant English afternoon – but this was a bit much. I searched for the least inflammatory response I could think of. “I’m sure there are those who might agree with you, but I confess that I am not one of them.”*

*“You mean you believe all that stuff in the Bible?”*

*“Yes,” I replied.*

*“You mean, like the virgin birth?”*

*“Yes,” I said.*

*You could see it written all over her face. Here was a seemingly intelligent man studying at Oxford who says he believes the Bible. There was, to her eyes, something terribly wrong with this picture.*

*Our conversation went on in earnest but with a fascinating twist. While the woman from Florida continued to ask questions and raise objections, her friend from California joined with me to try to explain that perhaps some of the sources of her reconstruction of Jesus and the Christian faith were less than sound.*

*Impressed by her perspective, I said to my new ally, “So would you consider yourself a Christian?”*

*“No,” she said. “I’m open to it, but would still consider myself something of a seeker.”*

*Then to my surprise, the woman with whom I’d been debating said, “Well, I would certainly consider **myself** a Christian.”*

*Such conversations raise the fundamental question: **WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR A MIND TO BE CHRISTIAN?** In that English garden, behind Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford, a woman who was not a follower of Christ was more orthodox and biblical (and informed) in her thinking than one who professed an allegiance to Christ. Is a Christian mind something that can be detailed? Of course! This is one of the principal tasks of the queen of the sciences, Christian theology. As I teach my seminary students, one of the primary goals of Christian theology is to determine what is – and what is not – orthodoxy. There is **right** thinking, and there is **wrong** thinking. Wrong thinking, in theological terms, is called heresy.*

*And there is much heresy.” (end of quote from **A Mind For God**)*

Baptist Press finds that professing Christians without a biblical worldview were:

- 100 times more likely to endorse abortion
- 80 times more likely to say exposure to pornography is morally acceptable
- 31 times more likely to believe living together before marriage is morally acceptable
- 15 more likely to believe homosexual sex is acceptable.

**BUT I’M GOING TO SAY SOMETHING RADICAL NOW. SO BRACE YOURSELF!**

As vital as it is to have a forthrightly biblical worldview – **and it is** – it is possible to have a perfect score on paper and even live accordingly – and still go to hell!

Whoa now! you say....

Yep. I want you to think about it. Having a strong biblical worldview does NOT mean you are saved. Thinking Christianly, and even living in obedience to Scripture does NOT mean you are saved from the wrath of God anymore than ‘believing in God’ and ‘clean living’. Saul of Tarsus,

before his conversion on the road to Damascus, knew Scripture and lived out what it said. He was a Pharisee of Pharisees! He knew what the Scriptures said and he lived what it said.

So if *thinking* Christianly and *living* Christianly doesn't mean you're saved, could the reverse be true as well: *Not* thinking – and living Christianly – doesn't necessarily mean you *aren't* saved. I realize there are a lot of negatives in there! And you must know up front, I am jealous to attack 'Cheap Grace' and 'Easy Believism' in the evangelical Church. But, that thief on the cross, though assured by the lips of Christ Himself that his destination would be with Jesus in Paradise, most likely did not think Christianly... and didn't have the opportunity to *live* Christianly.

How many of you have ever taken a worldview analysis? (raise hand)

If you haven't, I encourage you to take one.

There are two I recommend on a regular basis:

- 1.) [Worldview Weekend](#) test (free)
- 2.) [Nehemiah Institute PEERS test](#) (small fee)

I have a handout for you complete with these web addresses.

Of those of you who have taken a worldview test, who was surprised with your results? (The first time I took it, I was really shocked with my results – even after being a Christian for a handful of years, I scored as a Marxist in several areas! That was a stab in the heart of someone who's Dad used to call her a 'PINKO-COMMIE' because before God saved me, I was as left-wing, Democrat as they came – I campaigned and voted for Jesse Jackson, for crying out loud! So here, I was humbled to know that even as a Christian I had some serious work to do! - - - so don't be discouraged, but do fight to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. It's God's will for you, so with your diligent labor, He will bring the good fruit – this is called sanctification.)

Why does all this matter anyway?

Isn't all that matters is that I'm destined for Heaven?

Isn't all that really matters is that I mind my 'p's' and 'q's' and don't embarrass myself or my God and wait for the Rapture - *again*? Jesus is coming back soon, isn't He – all the signs are there; all we have to do is keep doing what we are doing, stay uncontaminated by the world and hold on until He comes and rescues us out of this pit! Right?

IS THIS RIGHT? Is this really all we are saved for. Just saved for Heaven, but not saved for now?

I don't think so! I'm in the great minority, *but I don't think so*. I am convinced this type of selfish, minimalist-Christian-thinking seriously grieves our King - and does harm to our neighbor.

## “WHAT SHAPES YOUR THINKING - SHAPES YOUR LIVING.”

Matthew 16:18, Jesus us He will build His Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Do you believe this?

The problem is – we haven’t been advancing.

The *advancing* Church will never lose ground.

You see, we’ve been lulled into dull thinking and self-centeredness and escapism. We’ve bought into the lie of tolerance and ‘nice’. We’ve surrendered ground to the enemy by believing our job isn’t to advance the Kingdom under Christ’s very real and present Throne, but to watch the world slide ever more swiftly into the pit - - - and wait for Jesus to rescue us.

“*Why polish brass on a sinking ship?*” is the attitude.

Why polish, indeed?

I’ll tell you why.

This ship has been going down for the past 6,000 years! If it takes *this* long for the ship to sink, you had better clean the toilets! If we don’t fulfill our charge to subdue the entropy and corruption and decay, and pursue dominion, it’s going to get ugly – *and it has* – on *our* watch. Further, God’s Word tells us to be His image-bearers in this world – His ambassadors. We are to represent *Him* in every realm of life and living. We must know His Word, know His will, and advance it – for both the believer and for the unbeliever. This is the thing: GOD’S WORD IS TRUTH. GOD’S WORD IS WISDOM. Living by the rule of the Word of God is good for everybody. Truth is truth no matter who applies it – and everyone ultimately must apply it, for nothing else works.

God’s Word, made known and lived by will advance the Kingdom and make for a better home, a better church, and a better society. We’ve seen it before. Even here in America. The Puritans and Pilgrims endeavored to advance the Kingdom of God and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ so this place could be a beacon of His light. This land and this people were strong. They were belted in Truth. Truth held things together. Life together worked!

ONLY TRUTH WORKS, AND EVEN THOSE WHO HATE GOD’S LAW BENEFIT FROM OBEYING GOD’S LAW! Ultimately, Truth is the only thing that does work and even those who shake their fist at God unwittingly stand upon borrowed capital – a foundation of Truth.

We are living in personal, familial, ecclesiastical, and cultural chaos! We've been swimming in sewage so long, we don't even know it. Does a fish know it's wet? No! Not unless it's been tossed ashore and knows the terror of dry and waterless breath. We've been captive by the traditions and philosophies of this world for so long, we don't even know it.

We professing Christians have surrendered ground because we don't *live* like Christians - - - because we don't *think* like Christians!

MUCH OF WESTERN CHRISTIANITY TODAY HAS BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE BY THE 'SECULAR/SACRED' dichotomy articulated first by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato. Often called Platonic Dualism. I call it Christian Humanism – and most of us, who desire to please God and raise our children in the love, nurture, and admonition of the Lord are indeed Christian Humanists. OUCH! I know that smarts....

**It looks like this:** (On Flip Chart – taken from the book [Assumptions](#) by Christian Overman)

- DRAW BIG CIRCLE ON WHITE BOARD
- DIVIDE THE CIRCLE IN HALF HORIZONTALLY
- BELOW BOTTOM HALF LABEL “SECULAR/MATTER/BASE”
- ABOVE THE TOP HALF LABEL “SACRED/FORM/LOFTY”
  - FILL BOTTOM OF CIRCLE WITH WORDS LIKE
    - Body
    - Labor/work
    - Physical
    - Temporal
    - Hobbies
    - Architecture
    - Entertainment
    - Arts
      - Music
      - Literature
      - Movies
      - Fine art

FILL TOP OF CIRCLE WITH WORDS LIKE

- Mind/Spirit
- Learning/teaching
- Eternal

The Western church has embraced Plato's philosophy. See if you can recognize it: (erase words, leave circle and horizontal line)

- BELOW BOTTOM HALF LABEL 'SECULAR'
- ABOVE TOP HALF LABEL 'SACRED'
  - FILL BOTTOM CIRCLE HALF WITH WORDS LIKE –
    - Architecture – houses, malls, theaters, hospitals, police stations....

- Careers/Vocation – engineers, piano teachers, doctors, trash men, designers, mothers, fathers, electricians, farmers, politician, scientist, inventor, college student....
- Art/Entertainment – the sculpture of David, Monet?, U2, Star Wars, Black Beauty
- Days – Monday – Saturday, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Independence Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, birthdays, etc....

FILL THE TOP CIRCLE HALF WITH WORDS LIKE –

- Architecture – Cathedral, church building, chapel, monastery,
- Careers/Vocation – Priest, Pastor, Youth Minister, Worship Minister, Bishop, Nun, Monk. Seminary student, etc....
- Art/Entertainment – portraits of bible stories, Veggie Tales movies, The 10 Commandments movie, Casting Crowns, chamber choirs, hymns, Pilgrims Progress
- Days – Sundays, All Saints Day, Christmas, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, etc....

Here, we see a clear distinction between ‘what is secular and worldly’ and what is ‘sacred and holy’.

BUT IS THIS REALLY TRUE?

DOES GOD SEE THINGS THIS WAY?

DON’T BELIEVE IT FOR ONE MINUTE!

This thinking is not Christian – is not biblical.

God is LORD of every day and everything!

Consider this circle:

- DRAW A BIG CIRCLE ON THE BOARD
- DRAW A DASHED VERTICAL LINE DIVIDING THE CIRCLE IN A RIGHT SIDE AND A LEFT SIDE
- OUTSIDE OF THE RIGHT HALF CIRCLE WRITE
  - To the glory of God
  - “Thy will be done.”
  - (in harmony w/God’s design)
  - Worship of God

- OUTSIDE OF THE LEFT HALF CIRCLE WRITE
  - To the glory of man
  - “My will be done.”
  - (in conflict w/God’s design)
  - Idolatry
- LIST THE FOLLOWING WORDS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM OF CIRCLE THROUGH THE DASHED VERTICAL LINE
  - Business
  - Law
  - Education/School
  - Visual Arts
  - Home
  - Music
  - Sports
  - Entertainment
  - Pleasure/Leisure
  - Literature
  - Vocation
  - Hobbies
  - Labor
  - Sex
  - Medicine
  - Politics
    - SHOW THAT ALL THESE FACETS OF LIFE CAN EITHER BE DONE TO THE GLORY OF GOD OR TO THE GLORY OF SELF – IN LINE WITH GOD’S DESIGN OR IN CONFLICT WITH GOD’S DESIGN
    - **GRANTED:** There are some vocations that simply cannot please God because they violate God’s Law. Prostitution. Pimping. Drug-dealing. YOU GET THE IDEA!

When we begin to see all of life as either able to glorify God or glorify self, we will do things differently. Everything takes on a SACRED flavor! For indeed, everything *is* sacred! We are created to worship. That’s what we do! We will either worship the One True God in what we do, or we will worship an idol. It’s an Either/Or. Period. No way around it.

Being a mother is sacred work. Being a teacher is sacred work. Being a farmer is sacred work. Being a trash man is sacred work. Being a lawyer is sacred work. Being a politician is sacred work. If you are fulfilling these legitimate roles by reflecting His will in them, you are in harmony with His design for you, and you *are* glorifying Him.

Believe it or not (and I hope you believe it), there are missionaries on the foreign mission field who do not do their job for the glory of God. There are Pastors of evangelical churches (in this bible-belt city) who do not do their job for the glory of God. AND there are civil engineers working in construction and blockbuster movie producers who are doing their work for the glory of God.

Doesn't this make a radical shift in your thinking?!

I hope so! When we begin to think rightly, we will have hope of living rightly.

God declared in Hosea 4:6 – “My people are destroyed for lack of *knowledge*.”

**PP** “As in *that* time, God’s people *today* are vulnerable to the destructive influences of untruth when they are not properly taught the Word of God or the biblically-based life principles rooted in Scripture.

Changes occurring right now – in government, in education, in the sciences, and even in the visible Church herself – give clear signals that truth is not a priority in our culture. Lack of solid biblical teaching at home or in the church makes God’s people intellectually fragile and often unable to confront untruth and evil.”

(Acts and Facts/ICR.org/DFW)

The need within the regenerate Church today is biblical literacy coupled with keen discernment – and courage to advance in every realm and sphere.

**PP** “Culture is religion externalized.” (Henry Van Til)

The professing Christian has several choices, but only one is faithfulness:

We can either merely confront culture –

We can conform to culture –

We can abandon culture -

OR

We can transform culture.

*That*, Brothers & Sisters, is our holy calling. Transformation according to the *Word* and *will* of God. Starting in our homes, *but not stopping there!* Teaching our children to think! To take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ Jesus – our King.

**PP** <sup>5</sup>We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

~ 2 Corinthians 10:5 ~

This is a *full-circle* commission Beloved. We are to destroy arguments and EVERY lofty opinion raised up against the knowledge of God, but we don't stop there. We're *not* destroyers! We're *builders*! We're liberators! Once we take down that lofty thing – that idea, opinion, presumption, or truth-claim – we are to set captives free by proclaiming Truth.

*Every* thought concerning economics.

*Every* thought concerning politics.

*Every* thought concerning war and peace.

*Every* thought concerning ethics.

*Every* thought concerning family.

*Every* thought concerning church and doctrine.

Every thought concerning education.

Every thought concerning the arts.

Every thought concerning vocation.

Every thought concerning leisure.

I could go on ....

When we do this – and teach others *including* our children – how to do it as well, we will be agents of God's mercy and goodness to this world.

**We are told the greatest commandment** is to love God and love our neighbor. When antagonized by a Scribe in Mark 12:28-31, Jesus answered, "The most important is, <sup>(G)</sup> 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, <sup>(H)</sup> the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your **heart** and with all your **soul** and with all your **mind** and with all your **strength**.' <sup>31(I)</sup> The second is this: <sup>(J)</sup> 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment <sup>(K)</sup> greater than these."

We are our brother's keeper. It is the spirit of Cain that says, "Who am I, my brother's keeper?" Holy Spirit indwelt people must not say that. We are about the business of demolishing strongholds and every lofty idea that sets itself up against the knowledge of God; *'teaching them to observe everything whatsoever Christ has commanded'* – which is part of the Great Commission.

We are GREAT COMMANDMENT PEOPLE and GREAT COMMISSION PEOPLE.

We are not to let error fly and fall on listening ears, or allow our brothers to remain unchecked and held captive by vain imaginations.

It is *loving* to guard listening ears from untruth and error. It is *loving* to try to liberate captives and people who are bewitched by doctrines of demons; perhaps God will grant them ears to hear and minds of understanding and the gift of repentance and an escape!

We are to contend for the faith given once for all. We are to be contenders. The Christian life is a battle, not a pleasure cruise. We fight for the Lost in our midst – in the world *and* in the visible Church.

We are to be distinct and distinguished Kingdom advancers for the glory of God and for the good of our neighbor.

To think that God only cares about 'churchy things' and 'saving people to heaven' is to buy into a lie from the pit of hell.

God's rule is over everything!

## **CONCLUSION!**

Abraham Kuyper puts it this way:

***"There is not a square inch  
in the whole domain of our human existence  
over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all,  
does not cry: 'MINE!'"***

Chuck Colson adds to this, and rightly so:

***"If Christ declares "MINE!", then our business on this earth is to declare it 'HIS!'"***

AMEN! AMEN!

May this be the beat of our heart!

SDG