Patriot's Progress

May 2004

Good Reading for students and friends of Patriot University

(1111)

The great 19th-century naturalist and Harvard professor Louis Agassiz was once approached by the emissary of a learned society and invited to address its members. Agassiz declined the invitation, saying that lectures of this kind took up too much time that should be devoted to research and writing. The man persisted, saying that the society was prepared to pay handsomely for the lecture.

"That's no inducement to me," Agassiz replied, "I can't afford to waste my time making money."



Reverend Fun

www.reverendfun.com



There's been a Rapture...are there any heathen pilots on board?

Be dogmatic about dogma and gracious with God's grace, and learn to discern between the two.



There is a deep chasm that has swallowed up many Christians. This rift between believers is the strongly held conviction that everything a person knows and believes is absolute truth, and anything that deviates from their beliefs is heresy. To avoid this trap, we need to understand what is heresy and what is not.

Throughout the history of Christianity, there have been foundational truths of the Scripture that have been considered heresy by someone. When our Lord Jesus came on the scene after God had been silent for four hundred years, He was accused of blasphemy, which was heresy. In the eyes of the Pharisees, Jesus was a heretic, a person propagating false doctrines that went against everything they believed. Yet, we know that Jesus was not only the way but he was absolute truth, as well (John 14:6). The apostle Paul was also accused of being a heretic. When he stood before Felix, he admitted that the Way, which we now call Christianity, was considered by his accusers of being heresy (Acts 24:14).

However, the history of the church is often characterized by its struggle against true heresy. The apostle Peter warned against heretical false teachers who denied the Lord and were thus bringing destruction upon themselves (2 Peter 2:1). Since then, Christianity has struggled with Docetism, Donatism, Gnosticism, Nestorianism, Sabellianism and other "isms." Even now, we must confront and oppose the false doctrines of numerous modern cults that masquerade as Christianity.

So, what is heresy? Heresy is any false doctrine or belief that is contrary to the essential tenants of the Christian faith. Heresies are issues that deny who Christ is and what He has done. Heresy denies one or more of the bedrock, foundational truths that will separate an individual from eternal life. There are core beliefs that are at the heart of our faith.

These include the Trinity, the deity of Christ, His physical death, burial and resurrection, the atonement for our sins through His death, the free gift of salvation by grace rather than by works and the inspired and inerrant nature of the Bible. We hold such truths to be the non-negotiable pillars of Christianity.

There are many questions between believers where the Scriptures are either silent or difficult to discern. If our brother differs from us on one of these issues, does that make him or her a heretic? It does not. Someone may hold a wrong interpretation of some specific doctrines in the Bible, but their belief on these points will not keep them out of heaven, nor should it sever fellowship between other believers.

Let me hasten to add that from God's perspective, there is only one right answer to every doctrinal issue. But not every issue will separate us from His fellowship for eternity. When we get to heaven we will be able to ask Jesus, "Who went astray on this issue, did I, or my brother?" Will it come as a shock that you were not right on everything you believed? You may discover that the fact that you felt offended only showed that you were the weaker believer (study Romans 14). Let love be your guide (Romans 14:15).

What is needed is discernment, which is not always easy to attain. Discernment comes only through prayer, study of His Word and enlight-enment by the Holy Spirit. It is dangerous to assume we have reached the lofty heights of spiritual discernment that qualifies us as the only person with spiritual truth. Only Christ is truth and our insight must always come from Him.

Next time you read a book or hear a sermon and find that the author or speaker holds a different view on some point, stop and ask yourself whether this issue is a part of the essence of our faith, or, is the issue a peripheral one. Jesus shared that He has sheep in other folds (John 10:16). Do not oppose those other folds that are truly His. Allow Him to separate the wheat from the tares (Matthew 13:24-30,36-43). Remember, there is only one Shepherd, and eventually there will be but one fold.

Dr. C. Walt Hammonds
Director of Ministerial Studies

Although George Whitefield, the great evangelist, strongly disagreed with John Wesley on some theological matters, he was careful not to create problems in public that could be used to hinder the preaching of the gospel. When someone asked Whitefield if he thought he would see Wesley in heaven, Whitefield replied, "I fear not…for he will be so near the eternal throne and we at such a distance, we shall hardly get sight of him."

-Warren Wiersbe

Enjoy the Mountains of Your Life and...



Every life consists of mountains and valleys. The mountaintop experiences describe those moments of peace and happiness, when everything seems good. But the valleys of our lives—even when they represent our lowest times—are more valuable than the mountaintop experiences. And you must travel through the valley to get to the next mountain.

However, for centuries people who do not know the Lord have said, "The LORD is God of the hills, but He is not God of the valleys" (1 Kings 20:28). And for centuries God has shown those who wish to know, that He is God of both the valleys and the mountains. God and His blessings cannot be locked out of any place.

The word "valley" is found nearly 170 times in Scripture. Dozens of literal valleys are mentioned by name because of significant events that happen there. For example, you've probably heard of the Valley of Megiddo (where the battle of Armageddon will take place).

The Bible also speaks of the valleys of human experience. Here are a few:

The Valley of Decision. Joel 3:14 says there are "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision." Indecision may leave you somewhere you do not want to be. The first reason God put us here on this earth is to give us the opportunity to make a decision to trust Jesus Christ, then to follow His plans.

The Valley of Harvest. 1 Samuel 6:13 reminds us that the harvest comes in the valley, not on the mountain tops. It is in the valleys of life that we grow and blossom. Let's face it. We could not mature and learn much without the troubles and trials we go through.

The Valley of Rejoicing. Psalm 65:13 tells us that the valleys themselves may "shout for joy, they also sing." Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

The Valley of Vision is referred to twice in Isaiah 22. And in Proverbs 29:18 we are reminded: "Where there is no vision, the people perish, but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." It is God who gave you that good dream that will take your life forward, and He wants to help you "go for it!"

The Valley of Preparation. We usually get what we get ready for. In 2 Kings 3 we read the story of a land where God was ready to deliver people from a long and hard drought. But before the Lord sent the moisture He instructed the people to "make this valley full of ditches." Those who did not believe Him dug a little or no ditch, and they got little or no water. Those who dug huge ditches got huge pools of water.

The Valley of Weeping. Psalm 84:6 speaks of the Valley of Baca, which means "weeping." This life requires tears. But you will notice that same Bible verse teaches that it is God's plan for us to simply pass through this valley of weeping, to water the flowers with our tears and leave a better place behind us.

The Valley of the Shadow of Death. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4). Each of us has an appointment with death. But for those who trust in Jesus Christ—"the lily of the valleys"—God has promised there is nothing to fear. In the first place we will walk *through* death valley, to something wonderful on the other side. And for the believer in Christ, it is only a *shadow* of death, not the real thing. Shadows may be scary, but they can't hurt you.

It is wise for you to thank God for all the valleys of life!

—Dr. Lonnie Skinner

5 Tips for Students

- Determine you *like* to study. Then it will become a pleasure, not a drudgery.
- 2. Plan your work—work your plan. Have a definite time and place to study.
- Discipline yourself to stay on schedule. Accumulation of undone jobs makes your work harder.
- 4. PRAY about your studies.
- 5. Ask the Lord to be your "private tutor." You will be amazed at what He will show you!



When growth stops, decay begins.

Are You a Healthy Tree?



He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. —Psalm 1:3 (Read all of Psalm 1)

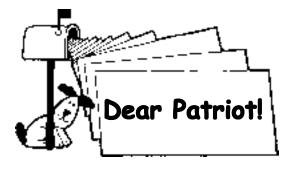
Godly men and women are compared in Scripture to sturdy, healthy trees, planted by the rivers of water, laden with fruit, and full of leaves (Ps. 1:3; 104:16). In order for us to be fruitful trees, we must:

- 1. *Stand straight for God.* Lives that reveal Christlike character are lovely to behold, for they are not gnarled by sin or rotted by hypocrisy.
- 2. *Be strong*. Those who are well-rooted in God's Word will be unmovable in times of trial and temptation.
- 3. *Keep growing*. As healthy trees add a new ring of growth each year, we too should constantly grow in grace (2 Pet. 3:18).
- 4. *Bring blessing to others*. Some trees provide food, others give shade, and others are made into lumber. So too, Christians should provide spiritual food and comfort to their neighbors, as well as use their time and talents to build people up in the Lord.
- 5. Be ready to be transplanted when God so wills. Christians are not here to stay; they are waiting to be transplanted in the garden of heaven where their fruit will never wither and their leaf will never fade.

How good a tree are you? Is there any fruit, any beauty, any growth worth talking about? Or are you wilted and unproductive? Get growing!

—Henry G. Bosch

What we are hearing from our students!



I want to say thanks for all you at Patriot University who make it possible for me and many others to earn a degree!

I have learned from and really enjoyed all of the courses I've taken so far! God has used them to make me a better person. Thank you and I pray God will bless you because of the blessing you've been to me.

Jessica Coriell, Alabama

I give my thanks and appreciation to the Patriot University External Studies Division. I am being blessed each day since I began my BA studies with our beloved Patriot University. I am not only doing my best each day to fill in the blanks found in my workbook, but also I permit my mind to be saturated with those very materials which make me to grow in grace. And guess what? The fruit of my labor at Patriot University is now being reaped by my congregation at St. Paul Baptist Church. To God be the Glory!

It is my fervent prayer and hope that as soon as I complete my BA degree program that the Lord will open more doors for me to immediately get into my Master degree program and so forth.

May the Almighty God bless the work of yours as I continue my studies.

Striving to serve Christ,

Rev. Wallah S. Wilsitoe, Jr., Liberia

Thanks for all that you do! There is always something to look forward to as a Patriot student: receiving new courses, getting back recently completed graded courses, etc. I truly appreciate Patriot University and the staff there.

David Radford, North Carolina

It is with the utmost appreciation and thanksgiving that I write this letter, to extend my deepest heart-felt gratitude to all the staff at Patriot University.

I believe the opportunity that Patriot University extends to their students truly honors God by helping students like me to adhere to the exhortation of Paul in II Timothy 2:15 "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth".

With the guidance of Patriot's course work I have earned two degrees: a Doctoral in Christian Counseling and a Masters in Christian Education. More importantly, I have grown and developed in a closer spiritual walk with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! God has moved greatly in my life through Patriot University and for this I am eternally grateful. *Frank J. Crockford, West Virginia*

Take the Patriot Challenge!

Send in at least one completed course with your yellow worksheet every month during 2004!

	Student Name:
	Title of completed Course(s) enclosed with this sheet:
	INSTRUCTIONS
1.	Answer all questions on these four yellow pages as you read this issue of <i>Patriot's Progress</i> and all (KJV) Scripture references mentioned.
2.	Return completed yellow worksheet WITH a completed course BY JUNE 5, 2004 and receive a \$3 voucher when your graded course is returned. (<i>To receive credit we must receive it before 6-15-2004</i>). Undergrad students will also receive two credits for the course when <i>twelve</i> monthly worksheets are successfully completed.
1.	Louis Agassiz said: "I can't afford to my"
2.	Jesus was accused of blasphemy, which was
3.	Paul confessed: "that after the way which they call,
	so I the God of my fathers, believing all things which
	are written in the and in the"
4.	Heresy is any doctrine or belief that is contrary to
	the tenants of the Christian faith.
5.	Heresies are issues that deny Christ and what has
6.	Paul reminded the Roman Christians that "we shall all stand before
	the of Christ."

7.	"whatsoever is not of is		
8.	Discernment comes only through	,	of
	His and	by the	e Holy Spirit.
9.	The Lord will have the reapers separate the	wheat and	tares "in the
	time of"		
10.	Identify the following from that parable:		
	A. He that sows good seed = the	of	(Jesus).
	B. The field = the		
	C. The good seed = the of	the	·
	D. The tares = the of the _		one.
	E. The enemy that sowed them = the		
	F. The harvest = the of the		
	G. The reapers = the		
11.	Every life consists of	and	
12.	may leave you somewhe	re you do	not want to be
13.	We could not and		much without
	the troubles and trials we go through.		
14.	Valleys themselves may " for joy	, they also	·
15.	List the seven valleys of human experience r	mentioned:	
	A. The Valley of		
	B. The Valley of		
	C. The Valley of		
	D. The Valley of		
	E. The Valley of		
	F. The Valley of		
	G. The Valley of the	of	

16.	The five tips for students given include:				
	A. Determine you	to study.			
	B your		your		
	C yourse	elf to stay on			
D about your studies.					
	E. Ask the Lord to be your "				
17.	In order for us to be fruitful tre	es, we must:			
	A	for God	ı.		
	B. Be				
	C. Keep				
	D. Bring	_ to			
	E. Be ready to be		when God so wills.		
18.	ump?				
	A to God.				
	B God.				
	C God's praise	es.			
19.	The Lord Jesus was not asha	med to exercise	e His calling before an		
	audience of				
20.	O. Jesus was able to reveal fresh truth, but preferred to				
	the				
21.	Jesus spoke of	, and expoun	ded the things		
	concerning	·			
22.	Nothing is as difficult as		well.		
23.	Thinking has nothing to do wit	h,	but it has everything to		
	do with				

24.	are	And	are		
25.	We tend to read books that of	confirm our			
	because we are such	people.			
26.	Learning to read faster is sin	nply a process of	·		
27.	. (Fast or Slow) readers retain more of what they read.				
28.	Francis Bacon said, "Some I	books are to be	, others		
	to be, a	nd some few to be			
	and				
29.	There is a super special (75	% off) discount available in May	for what		
	new course?				
30.	More time is wasted not in _	but in			
31.	The "blessed" or happy man in Psalm 1 is described in				
	Verses The "ung	odly" is described in Verses			
	The last word to describe the "blessed" man is "				
	The last word to describe the	e "ungodly" is "	·"		
32.	Match the following, after you	u study Psalm 13:			
	Sighs	A. Verses 5-6			
	Songs	B. Verses 3-4			
	Prayer	C. Verses 1-3			

HERE'S SOMETHING THAT CAN HELP YOU!

Read aloud at the beginning of each day:

By God's grace I will learn and grow in His Word today. I have scheduled a 15-minute period to work on my courses. I will complete a workbook page right now or as soon as possible. Then I will carry a course with me, and look for a few minutes to complete another workbook page.



In a Slump

Read Psalm 13

Athletes hate slumps. They'll try anything to get out of those times when they can't hit the baseball or make a free throw or catch a pass. Baseball players change bats. Basketball players change shoes. Football players change their routine. They'll do whatever they can to find success.

Christians should hate slumps too. We should try anything to get out of those dry spells when we can't seem to pray past the ceiling, or when reading the Bible seems more frustrating than not winning a game all season.

A spiritual slump can make us feel forsaken by God. We struggle with troubling thoughts. Our hearts become sorrowful. We're sure that we're fighting a losing battle.

That was the position David found himself in as he described his situation in Psalm 13:1-2. His spiritual slump came, it seems, from a delayed response to his request for help. Yet David knew how to work his way out of the slump. First, he appealed to God (vv.3-4), the true source of spiritual refreshment in dry times. Second, he trusted God (v.5), the only One who knows the way out. Third, he sang God's praises (v.6), knowing how important worship is.

In a slump? Plead with God, trust Him, and praise His name. Then get back in the game!

—J. David Branon



The Highest Education

"He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." —Luke 24:27

The two disciples on the road to Emmaus had a most profitable journey. Their companion was the **best teacher** the world has ever known. The Lord Jesus was not ashamed to exercise his calling before an audience of two people. He does not refuse to become the teacher of even one. Let's keep company with this excellent Instructor, for until He is made unto us wisdom we shall never be wise unto salvation.

This unrivalled tutor used the **best textbook**. He was able to reveal fresh truth, but preferred to explain the old. He turned at once to Moses and the prophets, and showed us that the surest road to wisdom is not speculation, reasoning, or just reading human books—but meditation on the Word of God. The best way to be spiritually rich in heavenly knowledge is to dig in this mine of diamonds, to gather pearls from the heavenly sea of God's Word.

The Lord led the two disciples to consider the **best subject**. Jesus spoke of Jesus, and expounded the things concerning Himself. Here the diamond cut the diamond, and what could be more admirable? The Master of the House unlocked His own doors, conducted the guests to His table, and placed His own goodies upon it. He who hid the treasure led the searchers to find it. Our Lord would naturally discuss the sweetest of topics, and He could find none sweeter than His own person and work. And so should we search the Word with an eye to the same topic. Oh, Lord, give us grace to study the Bible with Jesus as both our teacher and our lesson!

Cultivate the Art of Thinking...by Reading



NOTHING is as easy as thinking.

And nothing is as difficult as thinking well.

Thinking well may be profitable, but if it is, it is always painful. There is a price tag to thinking well.

I saw a sign in a businessman's office some time ago which jarred me. It said, "You are not what you think you are. What you think, you are." I was reminded of Proverbs 23:7, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he..."

Thinking is always dangerous unless it is under the direction of the Spirit of God. Then it is eminently profitable. Philippians 4:8 even tells us what to think about: things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent, and worthy of praise.

Thinking has nothing to do with age, but it has everything to do with attitude. There is an epitaph that says, "Died—age 28. Buried—age 64." Unfortunately, that is the story of too many lives.

An 86 year-old lady I know recently spotted me at a social gathering. The first thing she said was, "Well, what are the best five books you've read in recent months?"

After a little conversation, she said, "Look, let's not bore one another. Let's get into a discussion. And if we can't find anything to discuss, let's get into an argument." There she is—86 years old and still thinking strong. Her first question was about reading. In my judgment, one of the most crucial means of stretching your mind is through the process of reading.

Readers are leaders. And leaders are readers.

The mind is like a muscle. It develops with use. You won't wear it out. No one ever dies with a brain that has been totally used. That will *never* happen. Though you do need to constantly stretch your mind, be careful what you feed it, because what you feed it will largely determine what you are.

Perhaps you don't have a formal education. You *can* get the most profound education that it is possible to get...simply by reading. By reading you can pick the greatest minds of all the centuries.

Here are some tips on how to cultivate the art of thinking by reading:

Read widely and wisely.

Everything in print is not worth reading, even in the Christian bookstores. Read as widely as possible, because this is the way to stretch your mind.

We tend to read books that confirm our prejudices because we are such insecure people. That's why most of us are not thinking. We are just rearranging our prejudices. I often read books that I don't agree with. If an author does not stretch my thinking, he doesn't really help me much.

Try to see things from different perspectives. I imagine myself as a doctor when reading a particular passage in Luke; then I get the perspective of a medical man.

How to choose good books.

First, I pick books primarily on the basis of the author. A significant author generally produces a significant book.

Second, I look for a book that has been on the market a sufficient period of time to prove its value. If a book has been around for a while (and not just because it happens to be a book on sex or some sensational subject), then it tends to have quality.

An example of a book that has survived the fads of the moment is Herman Harrell Horne's *Teaching Techniques of Jesus*. It goes back into the early 1900's. It is still in print and it ought to be. It is a classic. For Christian leaders it is "must" reading, because it deals with the whole process of how Jesus trained His disciples.

Third, I read books that are out of my particular field. Right now I'm reading a book on architecture that is absolutely fascinating. I just finished one on ornithology, the study of birds. This is the kind of thing that gives you all sorts of enriching material. It can also make you a more interesting person.

Learn to read faster.

I read three books every week and 35 journals every month. The only way you can do this is by learning to read better and faster.

Learning to read faster is simply a process of discipline, nothing more or less. Many people think that if they slow down, they will retain more. Nothing could be further from the truth. The truth is that if you speed up your reading, you will retain more.

Become a "snatch" reader.

I have reading material all over the house. When I have ten minutes here or there, I pull down the book and read. I do lots of reading at airports and on airplanes.

Try "in-depth" reading.

Some people develop the practice of reading quite a number of books on the same subject for a period of time. This gives you depth and breadth in a *specific* field that you don't get with the more scattered wider type of reading.

My goal is to spend one hour daily reading and studying the Word. I spend one month per book and cover in depth twelve books of the Bible per year. I've been through the Bible like this about seven times in my life. I set this goal early in my ministry, for I wanted to be a minister of the Word of God.

Some books are to be reread.

You may reread some books, but they are rare ones. Sometimes you simply can't get it all in one reading. And, furthermore, you may not get all of it at your level of maturity. If you read the same book ten years from now, you get an altogether different perspective.

One book I've reread is John Milton Gregory's *The Seven Laws of Teaching*. It was written in the last century.

If teachers read this book annually, they will never teach the same way again. I've been teaching in seminary for more about a quarter-century and have read the book every single year.

As Sir Francis Bacon said, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." Start reading more to cultivate the art of thinking.

—Dr. Howard Hendricks (He also wrote "Teaching to Change Lives", the resource used for Patriot's course entitled "Laws of Teaching and Learning").



Suppose a bank were to credit your account each morning with \$86,400. But this money carries over no balance from day to day. Any part of the money you fail to use during the day is removed from your account.

What would you do? That's a no-brainer. You'd draw out every cent every day, and use it to your advantage!

Well, you have such a bank, and its name is TIME! Every morning it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it rules off as lost every second you failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balances, and allows no overdrafts. Each day it opens a new account with you. If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours. There is no going back. And there is no drawing against tomorrow.

2 More New Courses

For Undergraduates

Relational Parenting

Parents can raise good kids in a troubled world. This course shares insights by Ross Campbell designed for parents to help their children take responsibility for their own behavior. This study challenges us to stretch our thinking and consider some relational, proactive steps that may differ from some of the traditional behavior control methods that have often proved ineffective.

Plan A = \$28 Plan B = \$108

75% OFF During the month of May, "Plan A" students can get this course (CC 116) for only \$7 when ordered with another course at regular price!

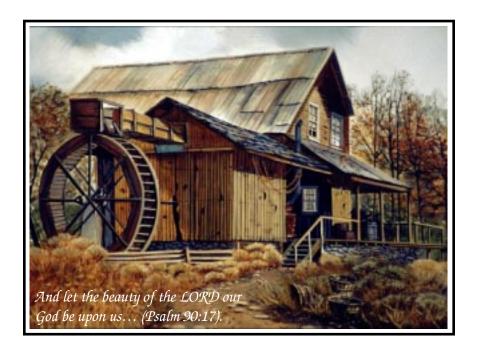
Effective Women's Ministries CM 301

In this course, Jill Briscoe, Laurie Katz McIntyre and Beth Seversen share tips and techniques for establishing groups and programs that meet the needs of today's women. The book shows how to develop programs that are specifically tailored to your church and your community.

Plan A = \$20 Plan B = \$100

God can use these courses to help us in our own lives and in our influence with others for Christ!

Order Today



How to Contact

Patriot University

Email Address: mail@patriotuniversity.com Web site: www.patriotuniversity.com

Office Hours

Your University Offices are open Monday-Friday, except for holiday breaks. *Offices close two hours earlier on Friday*.

Please note time zone differences:

Eastern time office hours—11 to 7 Central time office hours—10 to 6

Mountain time office hours—9 to 5

Pacific time office hours—8 to 4

A student may request an evening phone appointment.



It's About Time!

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. —Psalm 90:12

More time is wasted not in hours but in minutes. A bucket with a small hole in the bottom gets just as empty as a bucket that is deliberately kicked over.

Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.

—Carl Sandburg

Time is nature's way of keeping everything from happening at once.

We master our minutes or we become slaves to them; we use time or it uses us.

As if you could kill time without injuring eternity. —Henry David Thoreau

Patriot University Students who Graduated in March



Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies

Kevin Hoffman Angela Van-Nes Finksburg, MD Franklin, IN

Bachelor of Arts in Christian Elementary Education
Michele Scaife Conroe, TX

Bachelor of Arts in Christian Counseling Teresa Jackson Ocala, FL

Master of Arts in Evangelism & Missions
Thomas Winiarczyk Wyoming, PA

Click the "News" button often on our Website Home page for the latest news from Patriot University

www.patriotuniversity.com