

# The Trojan Horse in Christian Education

Abridged



by  
Mike and Carolyn Riggs

*a survey of contributing thought trends*



# A Child Perceives



Listening to the world,  
And storing up sounds;  
Looking at the world,  
And seeing the wonder;  
Tasting and smelling the world,  
And calling it good or bad;  
Feeling the world with the whole body,  
And discovering how it fits;  
These are the ways  
A child perceives.

Providing pleasant sounds to hear,  
Wonders to see and explore,  
Treats to taste,  
Fragrances to smell,  
Loving arms to feel,  
These are the ways  
A parent teaches.

**Copyright:** The Trojan Horse in Christian Education: A Survey of Contributing Thought Trends,  
Copyright © 2006, 2013, Lamp & Quill International.

**Publisher:** Lamp and Quill International, 29064 St. Tropez Place, Castaic, CA 91384-4741; Tel: (661)  
295-9786, (877) 295-9786; Fax: (661) 295-9796, E-mail: lampquill@lampquill.com; Web:  
www.lampquill.com.

**Country:** Printed in the United States of America.

**All rights reserved:** No part of this material may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or  
transmitted in any form, by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, computer or  
otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher, with the exception of brief  
excerpts used in articles or reviews.

**Scripture references:** All Scripture is from the King James Version of the Bible.



# Contents

Introduction .....	1
--------------------	---

## Part 1

### In Pursuit of Knowledge

1. Basic Assumptions .....	7
2. Old Testament Times .....	13
3. Between the Testaments .....	29
4. New Testament Times .....	41
5. Until the Fifteen Hundreds .....	51
6. The Fifteen Hundreds .....	67
7. The Sixteen Hundreds .....	75
8. The Seventeen Hundreds .....	93
9. The Eighteen Hundreds .....	105
10. The Nineteen Hundreds .....	125
11. Jean Piaget .....	155
12. The Trojan Horse Is Here - Is It Too Late? .....	181

## Part 2

### In Pursuit of Knowing God

13. Pursuing Truth .....	223
14. A Solid Foundation .....	231
15. God's Word Is Essential .....	239
16. Beware of False Prophets .....	245
17. Consider the Soil .....	249
18. Sanctification Is a Process .....	255
19. Training Children Is a Process .....	261
20. King Joash Lesson Evaluation and Helps .....	273

## Appendixes

A. Presuppositions of Christianity and Psychology ..	295
B. Humanism .....	296
E. Types of Fallacies .....	303
F. Basic Teaching Orientations .....	306
G. Biblical Counseling Helps .....	311
H. Also in the Unabridged Edition .....	313



# INTRODUCTION

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Joshua 1:8

Having worked with men in the military and in college for a number of years Mike, (coauthor of this book) began to see how the ministry of churches and Christian families actually played out in the lives of some who were raised in the church environment. Away from home for the first time, these young men were finally able to make their own choices. In this new environment their real personal convictions were revealed. Their manner of life made it obvious that their true convictions were not much different than those raised outside of churches and Christian families. This book speaks to how this can happen so much easier than many realize.

During college orientation Mike helped start Bible studies with incoming freshmen. He soon learned how important it was to get to them early. Once, when he was reminding some freshmen about the time and place for the Bible study, a couple of their friends showed up to accompany them on a previously planned bar trip. The embarrassed freshmen turned down the bar-hopping arrangement.

From the initial Bible study questionnaire Mike had been excited to meet some students who had grown up in solid conservative churches. Since Mike had not been raised in a church-attending family, he was looking forward to their input in the Bible study and even in his own spiritual growth. He had started his Christian life at the end of his freshman year in college, just before entering the military. Both in college and in the military, Mike had been taught to study the Scriptures, have quiet times, memorize Scripture, and

What had happened to leave such a legacy of anemic Christians with “pat” answers but no real relationship with the Lord?

meditate on it daily. He was also taught the importance of sharing his faith with others and serving in some kind of Christian ministry. He was looking forward to the participation of these freshmen who undoubtedly had much more opportunity for Christian growth than he had.

Mike vividly remembers the first week of the study in John 1. After reading the passage, he began to ask questions about the truths in God's Word to get the observations of the students. He was shocked to find that they had "pat" answers and had never learned how to interact with the Scriptures. Mike had to set aside his surprise and begin to help them learn to really look at the Scripture and see the wonders of God's Word. He taught them how to commune with God in quiet times with the Scriptures and in prayer.

However, their initial responses still gripped him as he wondered what had happened to the eighteen plus years these solid churches and Christian families had with these kids. Out of the numerous men

How can children from committed, church attending families so readily

Mike worked with in college and military ministries, he found only one occasion where the student had learned how to learn and grow in Christ and minister to others. What had happened to leave such a legacy of anemic Christian life and walk with "pat" answers but no real relationship with the Lord? How can children from committed, church-attending families so readily abandon their heritage?

When Mike and Carolyn's own children came along, they continued to ponder this question. They began to get a glimpse of what had happened. Their children were being presented with a short story about some Bible hero without any real reference to God's authority or man's need for repentance. Perhaps the anemic faith of the college students had started years earlier.

Carolyn (other coauthor) began regularly observing what was being done with the toddlers, in their daughter's class. Eventually, she discovered answers to many troublesome issues when she began to see how the lessons deviated from the truths of Scripture.

When Carolyn started teaching, she found that it took forty hours every week to make biblical sense out of the lessons she was given to



## *Introduction*

use. Class time began with a focus towards the truths in the passage, and the focus was maintained through stories, activities, songs, snacks, etc. until the last child left. Most of the preparation time was spent changing the various parts of the lesson from a man-centered, feel-good, all-is-well activity to an activity that put the focus on God and His attributes, and on man and his need. After several years of struggle, she began using the Bible alone. Having just finished studying Romans herself, that is where she began.

To Carolyn's surprise, it immediately took half the time to prepare a lesson, which included separate classes of two-three year olds and kindergarteners. Realizing that few teachers could devote that much time to preparing lessons, she began writing down what others would need in order to do what she was doing. The teachers she met with weekly continued to confirm that they only spent one to two hours in lesson preparation with a key factor of beginning early. That question about the anemic faith of the college students has led to a lifetime of searching for answers.





**Part I**

**IN PURSUIT**

**OF KNOWLEDGE**



## Chapter 1

---

# BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the  
ungodly,  
nor standeth in the way of sinners,  
nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the LORD;  
and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,  
that bringeth forth his fruit in his season;  
his leaf also shall not wither;  
and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so:  
but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous:  
but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalm 1

As an influential Christian thinker, Francis Schaeffer wrote and spoke about the relevance of Christian truth for all of life. In the foreward to Schaeffer's *Trilogy* J. I. Packer presents five perceptions that shaped Schaeffer's work. These perceptions are also relevant to the investigation of the foundations of Christian education. Consider Packer's observations about Schaeffer's work.

1. There are not many basic worldviews, and we need to realize how much our haphazard thoughts take for granted.
2. "Ideas have legs," so how we think determines what we are.
3. The Western mind is adrift on a trackless sea of relativism and irrationalism. Ongoing syntheses, embracing the idea that there is no real distinction between right and wrong or truth and untruth, will come to be swallowed up by a category-less "pan-everythingism." (Basically, the idea that everything is okay but Christianity, which is established on absolutes.)

4. It is important to identify the antitheses between truth and untruth, right and wrong, good and evil, the meaningful and the meaningless, Christian and non-Christian value systems, secular relativism and Christian absolutism.
5. We need to live truth as well as think it in order to demonstrate to the world that the personal, infinite God is really here in our generation.<sup>1</sup>

We will consider four basic presuppositions of the Christian faith.

We will consider four basic presuppositions of the Christian faith. To oppose, ignore or compromise the Scriptural definition of any one of these presuppositions is to compromise the Christian faith. The four basic beliefs or assumptions we will be considering are:

1. **Scripture:** Scripture is God's special revelation to man about God and about man's relationship to God, to one another, and to God's creation (Jn. 1:1-4). Scripture is the absolute, inspired, infallible, inerrant, plenary, authoritative, truth from God (2 Tim. 3:16-17) with a clear, absolute structure of right and wrong (Ex. 20:1-19; 2 Pt. 1:21).
2. **Fleshly Man:** Man was good as God created him, but he sinned and encountered God's judgment, bringing the consequence of death and eternal punishment (Gn. 1). God is one God who exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ), and God the Holy Spirit. God is holy, righteous, just, and cannot accept sin in His presence (Ex. 11:44-45). However, God graciously reaches out in love and draws people to Himself for eternal salvation through the blood of Jesus who is the way, the truth, and the life.
3. **Fleshly Man:** Man was good as God created him, but he sinned and encountered God's judgment, bringing the consequence of death and eternal punishment (Gn. 3). Now all men are born with a sin nature that leads them away from God. Sinful man must repent and turn to God as His Lord for salvation (Rm. 3:23, 6:23; Jn. 3:16). This repentance and turning to God is illuminated and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Redeemed man wants to serve God by using his spiritual gifts for God's glory because of the mercy and grace

---

<sup>1</sup> Francis A. Schaeffer, *Francis A. Schaeffer Trilogy*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, A Division of Good News Publishers: 1990), xii, xiii.

- he has received. He is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and is in a process of sanctification (1 Tim. 4:5; 1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Pt. 1:2).
4. **Eternity:** God's judgment (Heb. 9:27) occurs after death, resulting in eternal life with God in heaven or eternal punishment apart from God. The only way for eternal salvation is through God's Son Jesus who paid the penalty for sin, a gift of grace because of God's love (Jn. 14:6; Eph. 2:8-9), which leads to ultimate justification (Rm. 4:25).

A hospice caretaker who regularly sees individuals approach death explained it this way: when a person approaches death, it is either "fear or faith."

Hope in God is the only thing that can offer faith at the point of death. Hearing of the death of one who spent a lifetime studying God's Word and serving God brought this reality home. The man had finished the race well and was eager to go to be with his Lord. His family would miss him, but they were comforted in being able to share in his enthusiastic hope and joy.

The opposite of these biblical presuppositional beliefs is:

1. God does not exist or is no longer involved in the affairs of man. It is more appropriate to describe God as being everything that encompasses the self-existent universe and everything as being God.
2. Man is the source of knowledge and guidance above Scripture.
3. Man, basically good, is at the pinnacle of the evolved state with ultimate responsibility for the achievement of an ideal utopia through science and socialism.
4. There is no life after death, or if there is life after death, then man determines his destiny by what he does in this life.

With the presupposition that Scripture is not true, here is a sampling of alternative perspectives in which man is the focal point:

1. God is dead, uninvolved, or nonexistent.
2. The origin of the universe came through evolution, with man at the pinnacle.
3. Jesus Christ was the perfect altruist, and the stories about His miracles are merely folklore.
4. Morality is in constant flux. Man is basically good, so he needs psychoanalysis to eliminate guilt feelings based on outdated moral values.

5. God is too good to reject anyone or send anyone to hell.
6. The mind establishes reality. Man can establish truth through systematic dialecticism (thesis, antithesis, synthesis).
7. There is no eternity, so eat, drink and be merry.
8. Man should strive for the ideal utopia as a world citizen.

Many try to land somewhere between the two opposing views; however, the result is the same as for those who are diametrically opposed to the Scripture (Mt. 7:13-14). According to Scripture there is no room for compromise. There is either a Creator God, or there is not. Man is either depraved, or he is basically good. The Bible, God's Word, is our blueprint for life, or it is merely a suspicious history book with good moral stories and inherent inaccuracies. There is either life after death, or this life is all there is.

Many try  
to land  
somewhere  
between the  
two opposing  
views ...

It is not as though a believer never sins. Sanctification is a progressive process in which believers continually need to have their consciences brought in line with God's truth. Our previous beliefs, along with the influence from the world, compromise our belief structure. We must use the time we have to purge ourselves of wrong thinking so that we no longer accommodate former beliefs that oppose God's truth. It is a constant process to filter out sin and untruths and live an uncompromised life.

One area of concern is when individuals teach children because they are more willing than they are prepared, thinking that keeping children happy and safe is their only obligation. They do not realize that children are like sponges, soaking up content, or the lack thereof, and the attitudes. Teachers who enter the classroom without having spent time with God in His Word during the week are dangerous indeed, for themselves and the students. Children pick up and pass on the spiritual emptiness, which leads to misguided ideas of the Christian faith and walk. It also produces children who fill the spiritual and mental void with unruly behavior.

Some people claim to believe that Scripture is true even though they are largely or partially ignorant of its content. This ignorance allows them to hold onto values that support their lifestyles and reject values that interfere with what they want to do. Their



less-than-solid foundation leaves them following the crowd and being blown about by the latest wind or wave of doctrine.

To some, God is more like a puppet to manipulate or a superhero to access when something is too tough or is out of control. On the other hand some people become angry with God and accuse Him of neglect when things do not go their way. The complaints and hopelessness multiply because of an improper knowledge of God and faulty expectations about the nature of the Christian faith and walk.

Those who do not have a solid foundation in the Scriptures too often listen to the wisdom of the world and bring the world's thinking into the Christian setting. They have aided its infiltration into Christian thinking and education in the same way it was done to them. This would not happen so easily if believers were truly knowledgeable of and sensitive to God, God's Word, and God's principles.

We expect those in the world to reject or ignore the Scripture.

We expect those in the world to reject or ignore the Scripture. That leaves them as their own seat of authority with a myriad of options for how to view God, His Word, man, and eternity. Their presuppositions can take any form since there is no foundational authority. They will tend to look for those who support and encourage their way of thinking and reject or ignore those who oppose them. For the same thing to happen to a Christian is sad, indeed. In a time and place where the Scriptures are so readily available, it is unnecessary for anyone who seriously wants to follow God to be ignorant of His Word and His principles. That is why it is just for God to judge those who ignore His truth (Rm. 1:18).

When Jesus warned us to follow the straight and narrow path, He immediately followed it by warning us to beware of false prophets (Mt. 7:15-20). In the following chapters we will chronologically review various ways men have found to reject God and His truth and to justify themselves apart from God. We will consider presuppositions in the four basic areas of **Scripture, God, fleshly man, and eternity** in light of absolute truth, untruths, and intermediate variations.

The Old Testament reveals instructive patterns of God's continual plan of redemption in spite of man's persistent sinful ways.

These patterns help us identify what is happening today no matter what the governmental, religious, social, or philosophical structures may be. See if you can identify any repetitive cycles throughout history.

Most importantly, see if you can identify patterns that are inherent and influential today.