



Dear Friends, As we approach the beginning of a new school year, I am thinking about some of my students who are heading off to college. Among them are some very capable young people I have often referred to as the Daniels and Esthers of our time. In this update, I want to introduce you to one of those students whom I believe God has raised up “for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14).

By way of introduction, I want to share with you some of the principles I teach my students that can be found in the book of Esther. The theme of the book centers on an edict issued by the King of Persia that on a certain date all of the Jewish people living in the Persian Empire were to be killed. In this book, Esther takes on a dangerous “covert operation” to reverse the king’s edict in order to save the Jewish people, and Mordecai believes that God has raised up Esther “for such a time as this.” *There are three principles embedded in the story of Esther that teaches us how to operate in a hostile, worldly environment.* I have used them in many secular and academic settings, and they are a vital part of the communication philosophy I pass on to my students.

#1 Concealed Identity: *Hold off on revealing your Christian identity until the right time and at the right place* (Esther 2:10, 7:3-4). When I served on various academic committees for the State of Georgia, I created a business card with the title, “Critical Thinking Consultant.” This “title” was a great conversation starter, but more importantly, it helped to circumvent the bias assumptions that existed and provided opportunities to articulate my Christian beliefs and values in academic terms.

#2 Cultural Psychology: *In order to communicate across worldviews, one must gain an understanding of how the secular mind thinks within the context of the culture.* Esther knew the culture and she understood the thought process

of the king (within that cultural framework). Based on these two important factors, Esther developed a plan of action to get the king to reverse his edict.

#3 Interpretive Sociology: *Interpretive sociology seeks to understand how people interpret reality according to their sociocultural point of view.* Esther needed to construct an interpretive framework (the banquet) in order for the king to see the “real” consequences of his edict. She wanted the king to see that his edict, in reality, would be applied to his “own house” (Esther 7:8). When a false idea, or perceived truth, is applied on itself, it will eventually self-destruct.

“For such a time as this . . .” Some of my students were able to internalize these principles and apply them to our current sociocultural environment. One of those students is Emily Sawires, who just graduated and will be attending the University of Georgia in a few weeks. She is the kind of young adult whom I believe has the potential to influence her peers and possibly her professors. For your encouragement, I have included a note from Emily in this update and her excellent review of my eBook, *Morality and Cultural Diversity* (<https://tinyurl.com/3be3pa67>).

As for me, I recently read a Bible verse that expresses my mindset with respect to the calling God has placed on my life. “Even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to the next generation, Your power to all who are to come” (Psalm 71:18). Yes, I am old and gray, but I will continue to train and mentor these gifted young adults until the Lord decides otherwise. Finally, as you may know, the summer months always seem to be a difficult time to receive contributions. Nevertheless, I am absolutely committed to “staying the course.” I also know and appreciate your commitment to help us realize the vision that the Lord has so graciously entrusted to us. So, if you would prayerfully consider making a donation, I would be most grateful!

By God’s Grace Alone—Pete

How The Critical Thinking Courses Have Helped Me Prepare for College

As the age of social media continues to flourish, teenagers are now, more than ever, susceptible to society’s attempts to control what we think. I and many others have struggled to discern the difference between truth and society’s fickle morals. Mr. B.’s class has played a pivotal role in teaching me to think objectively and focus on the unwavering truth.

The Critical Thinking courses were unique in a myriad of ways, as compared to other classes I have taken in high school. I believe the main thing that sets these courses apart from typical high school classes is Mr. B.'s genuine care and devotion to his students. It is evident to each student that his primary goal is to prepare high schoolers as free and independent thinkers, not only for college, but more notably, for life in the secular world.

The class structure and teaching style that Mr. B. employs are key factors to the success and impact of the courses. It is vastly different from typical high school classes, revolving around having conversations and asking questions to uncover the truth. The discussion-based environment was highly effective in encouraging the application of the principles that I learned as it pushed me to utilize my newfound knowledge through dialogue with my classmates. In addition, the frequent stories and insights from life experiences that Mr. B. shares are exceedingly beneficial in both engaging students and preparing them for the "real world."

As I prepare to head off to college, I strive to remember the lessons I have learned in Critical Thinking. I believe being equipped to search for the truth amidst conflicting belief systems is one of the greatest assets I can take to college. These courses have prepared me to interact with people from all kinds of backgrounds and with all sorts of worldviews. I have been taught to never take anything I hear at face value. Instead, through respectful and rational conversation, I have learned to analyze information by employing First Principles (such as the laws of non-contradiction and identity) to test their validity. Whether I meet close-minded professors or judgmental peers, I feel confident and secure in the principles that I have internalized as I start college.

I am currently planning to study International Affairs, possibly on the Pre-Law track. One of the first classes that I am taking is Introduction to Global Issues—a topic that was frequently discussed in Critical Thinking as we analyzed worldviews, cultural events, and their effect on society and ultimately, the way we see the world. As I prepare for my courses, I feel blessed, not only for what I have learned in Mr. B.'s classes but also for his continued mentorship as I venture into the secular world of education.

It is extraordinarily rare to find a teacher who cares so much about helping his students even (and especially) after they have graduated and who consistently points them to the truth when their faith is attacked or when experiencing doubts. His extensive wisdom is an invaluable resource, especially in the academic disciplines that deal with world issues. I, along with many others who have taken Mr. B.'s Critical Thinking courses, are extremely thankful for Mr. B.'s support and mentorship as I look forward to both the joys and challenges of pursuing higher education.

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supports

Legacy of Truth. It is my hope that your investment in me, and so many others like me, will one day produce the kind of fruit that will honor the Lord and advance His Kingdom.

With a grateful heart, Emily

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