



Dear Friends, From a prison cell in Rome, Paul wrote a letter to a young man he mentored by the name of Timothy. In that letter, Paul charged Timothy with executing the prime objective of his ministry, which was to pass on the *legacy of truth* to the next generation. He said, "The things you have heard me say, in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to *reliable* men who will also be *qualified* to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2).

Our Prime Objective: As most of you know, the prime objective of our ministry is to pass on the *Legacy of Truth* to the next generation. In order to achieve that end, it requires the intense personal process of mentoring high school and college age students. To be a mentor is a one-on-one commitment, and there is no shortcut for the time and effort needed to invest in these lives. However, over the years, God has clearly shown us how a harvest goes forth, multiplying itself many times over, by the work of the Spirit.

In this update, for your encouragement, I have included (below) the testimonies of two *reliable and qualified* students I have had the privilege of teaching and with whom I have entered a mentoring relationship. However, before reading their testimonies, I think it is important to define these two terms (*reliable and qualified*) in the context of

our prime directive. I have also included the communication skills these students have been taught in the classroom and will be employing as they converse with individuals who hold opposing points of view.

Reliable Students: Reliable students are anchored in the faith, “not tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching or the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming” (Eph. 4:14).

Qualified Students: Qualified students have internalized the principles and communication skills used by Jesus. They understand that the principle-centered questions he used were designed to disarm emotionally charged or dishonest questions. Students learned how to initiate and navigate a discourse by applying the dialogical, interactive *strategy and tactics* used by Jesus.

Communication Skills: Now that we have defined reliable and qualified, in the context of our prime directive, what communication skills will these students be employing as they engage in various discourses? Jesus used three levels of strategic discourse when he responded to questions or accusations. His goal was to shift the focus of a contentious engagement of words to a truth principle that would guide the discussion. He accomplished this by asking tactical questions. Here is a brief explanation of his strategy and tactical questions.

Strategic Discourse: The interactive discussion strategy used by Jesus kept a dialogue moving in the direction of truth. His strategy involved three levels of critical and constructive engagement of ideas. The three levels are: the first principle level (identify the truth), the parabolic level (illustrate the truth), and the personal level (apply the truth). Hence, instead of arguing with his opponents, these three levels helped them to draw their own conclusions.

Tactical Questions: Jesus used first principle questions as a tactic in order to achieve a particular outcome. If we do not have a goal in mind while engaging in a conversation, then we are the kind of guides Jesus identified when he said, “They are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit” (Matt. 15:14). Here are the six tactical questions employed by Jesus, including their outcomes:

Identification: questions that help us to think like our listener.

Clarification: questions that help them think about what they believe.

Translation: questions that help us to understand their beliefs.

Justification: questions that help them justify their own ideas.

Persuasion: questions about stories that help them visualize the truth.

Salvation: questions that help them recognize their need for God.

Finally, please pray for God's provision for the expenses of the ministry, for it is unique in that those who need our help are rarely able to contribute financially for the support of the ministry. In fact, we have always had a "no fee" policy, believing that this is God's work and He will move friends such as you to provide for our financial needs. *Moreover, the summer months are financially challenging and a donation would be most appreciated!* Thank you for any kind consideration you can give to this request and as always, we are most grateful to our God for your partnership in the ministry God has entrusted to us.

By God's Grace Alone, Pete

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A Note From Cruz

I spent the majority of my life in the Atlanta Public School system as an atheist. However, in ninth grade I gave my life to Jesus Christ later in that year. After speaking with a few of my friends, I decided to take Mr. B.'s Critical Think course. I was expecting a basic bible study, theology, or philosophy class. Instead, his class entirely transformed my worldview and my life. There are several ways Mr. B. has helped me answer my questions and find solutions to my problems.

Ever since I was a young child, I have wanted to go into the field of Paleontology. Yet, that field of study would often put me at odds with the Genesis account of creation. This struggle went to the point where I even started the school year believing that Genesis must have been one big metaphor. So I set aside an entire book of the Bible because I just did not understand it. However, after reading a few chapters

in *Unshakable Foundations*, engaging in discussions with Mr. B. and other students, I was able to see the credibility of the Genesis account of creation. I fear if I had never met Mr. B. and taken his class, my faith would have been irreversibly damaged, and my beliefs would have been questioned even more heavily by the time I arrived at the end of this school year.

This course has taught me how to articulate what I believe in coherent, academic terms and how to communicate my beliefs and values effectively and with respect. I learned various principles and universal laws of critical thought, along with scientific rules, which I have been able to apply to individuals with opposing points of views and have meaningful dialogues outside of the classroom. Discussions I have had with individuals who embraced opposing viewpoints often ended with them realizing their position was untenable or admitting the need to rethink their point of view.

I want to thank Mr. B. for being one of the most influential teachers I have had and for his willingness to go out of his way to challenge the minds of his students, sparing time and thought towards their questions, ideas, and experiences. *I also want to encourage the supporters of Legacy of Truth Ministries to continue their support of free education for students taking these Critical Thinking classes!* I would not trade my experience and knowledge I have received in this class for anything! *With Gratitude, Cruz*

A Note From Levi

I came into the Critical Thinking class, thinking it would be cool, but I felt as though as I had a grasp on my beliefs. While I did have a grasp, Critical Thinking helped me understand how to understand and discuss my beliefs. Critical thinking is one of those skills that makes life easier in ways you don't always realize at first, and it's more than just analyzing information. It's about learning how to question things, how to recognize biases, and how to make well-reasoned decisions. What makes this critical thinking course different from other classes is that it pushes students to start with first principles in order to create a basis of thought to build upon. It's all about problem-solving, logic, and figuring out the best way to approach complex issues. Honestly, it's relevant no matter what field you're in.

Every culture, every industry, and every profession benefits from people who think critically. Whether it is in business negotiations, political discussions, moral debates, or even everyday conversations. The best part is that these skills aren't just stuck in

the classroom. Teachers pass them on to students, and students can apply them in real life, making smarter choices and thinking deliberately about the world.

College is just one place where critical thinking shines, helping students take apart tough readings, build strong arguments, and confidently participate in discussions. Even after college, when you use these skills you will see truth more clearly and will be able to build meaningful relationships with others. I'm incredibly thankful for the opportunity to take this class as it has improved my mind in ways not many classes can. Thank you to Mr. B. for all he has done for my classmates and me. May God bless you and keep you. *Sincerely, Levi*