



THE PAIDEIA LETTER

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HIS LOVED AND HIS OWN: CHRISTIAN SCHOOLING AS A MODEL OF THE KINGDOM

Each year since 1984, D. Bruce Lockerbie has addressed THE PAIDEIA CONFERENCE, usually in a Keynote or Closing Address. On September 20, 2015, he spoke to the theme of this year's Conference and its particular emphasis on the task for Christian schools to be a better model of the Kingdom of God.



Thirty-one years ago I first addressed an audience at the precursor to this Conference, founded by **Donald P. Kirkwood (photo left)** The year was 1984, the place was **Geneva College (photo right)** in Western Pennsylvania; my topic—no surprise—was the obligatory role of every member of a Christian school's board, administration, and faculty in marketing their school to attract gift support by the manner in which they collaborate in fulfilling the school's mission.



As retiring Dean of Faculty at **The Stony Brook School**, responsible for recruiting and hiring teachers, then evaluating their effectiveness in the classroom, I was moving into a new appointment endowed by the **Thomas F. Staley Foundation** to represent the School widely and make contact with donors and potential donors during my travels. Upon returning home, my message to colleagues was always this: *"People give to are convinced or willing to believe that the lives of our students."*



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Tonight my message to you is similar but tempered by realities we could never have anticipated in the mid-1980's. In those years—and with notable exceptions—Christian schools were still commonly characterized as if they were the red-haired stepchild of evangelical churches. For evidence, a few years earlier the **National Association of Evangelicals** had abandoned Christian schooling and dismissed John Blanchard, a former headmaster of **Wheaton Academy**, and the National Association of Christian Schools, leaving a void to be filled by the

eventual founding of the **Association of Christian Schools International**.



Throughout the 1980s and beyond, Christian schools were identified by their **“cheap for Jesus”** economics and minimal-competency academics. The vaunted explosion in founding schools—**“three new schools per day”** was the claim—was turning often into financial failure because many of those schools were not worth supporting. Not only was their funding model faulty but the intellectual level was often embarrassing. Christian schooling had tilted totally toward spiritual formation at the expense of a counter-balance of academic integrity and challenge.

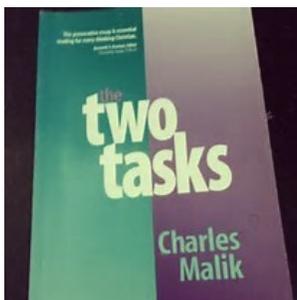
Into this vacuum we stepped boldly with this Conference, whose unifying purpose we expressed as **“strengthening the financial base and academic integrity of the Christian school.”** From the outset we maintained the absolute necessity of adequate funding to make the mission claims of academic excellence real, genuine, honest, and measurable; but we believed equally in the balance between academic rigor and spiritual formation based on biblical truth. In those early days, this was the hardest selling point we faced: **How to convince a sincere head of school or board chairman that a Christian school must not diminish or ignore its obligation to be a school rather than what CARDUS Education Survey of 2012 called “a tuition-funded youth group.”**



Tomorrow afternoon, some of you may choose as your excursion to visit the campus of **Wheaton College** and tour the **Billy Graham Center (photo left)**, dedicated 35 years ago last Sunday. The principal speaker on that occasion was the Lebanese scholar-statesman **Charles Habib Malik (photo right)**; his address was ***The Two Tasks***. It may be the most important speech by a Christian educator since—on the same date—a fledgling headmaster named **Frank E. Gaebel** gave an address in 1922, at the opening of



The Stony Brook School. Here are four statements by Malik:



- **“It is neither a shame nor a sin to discipline and cultivate our reason to the utmost; it is a necessity, it is a duty, it is an honor to do so.”**
- **“All the preaching in the world, and all the loving care of even the best parents . . . will amount to little, if not to nothing, so long as what the children are exposed to day in and day out for fifteen to twenty years in the school and university virtually cancels out, morally and spiritually, what they hear and see and learn at home and in the church.”**
- **“The problem is not only to win souls but to save minds.”**
- **“The greatest danger besetting American Evangelical Christianity is the danger of anti-intellectualism.”**

Thank God, most schools represented at this Conference—as our delegates representing both **Christian Schools International** and ACSI will attest—no longer need convincing of financial stability or academic integrity. Yes, we still have schools led by earnest but myopic heads and boards echoing the author of a book called ***The Heart of the Matter: The God-Focused School*** who proclaims that a Christian school is **“not about academics.”** Or the board member who told me, **“I’m not concerned about college admissions, I just want this school to be on fire for Jesus!”** Or the mother who said, **“I don’t care about my daughter’s AP scores, I just want her to have fun!”**



But such schools are now in a limited minority. Instead, we have in this audience delegates representing a nearby school—**Wheaton Academy**—whose distinguished history stretches over more than 160 years; another, **Timothy Christian School** in neighboring Elmhurst, whose patron **Harry Huizinga**—my late step-father’s close

friend—was founder of **Waste Management, Inc.** We have **St. David’s School (photo right)**, Raleigh, North Carolina, representing a rarely-found evangelical Episcopal tradition, and **Life Christian Academy**, Tacoma, Washington, in the Assemblies of God. We have boarding and day schools, and schools offering early and elementary instruction, and schools in the college-preparatory model. We have schools richly endowed, and schools that have sacrificed from their limited funds to be here tonight.



Whoever we are, wherever we come from, we all face daunting educational, philosophical, theological, social, legal, and political challenges never anticipated by most of us. We are here at this Conference to address some of them



As I begin my 60th year in the vocation of Christian schooling, I’m more aware than ever of the importance of Christian schooling from its earliest years on. Too often our emphasis focuses on the secondary grades; meanwhile increasing numbers of parents choose to bypass the Christian school’s early and primary schooling of their children, as if a secular and deliberately godless instruction and influence were of no concern to them. God’s mandate through Moses in Deuteronomy 6 does not offer a waiver on godly teaching to begin with the onset of puberty or as a rite of passage into adulthood; it is to begin early and make an impression on our children. So I commend the leaders of schools like **St. Timothy’s Lutheran School**, San Jose, California, whose program begins with 2-year olds; or **St. Lawrence Academy**, an Orthodox parish-sponsored elementary school in Felton, California; and in State College, Pennsylvania, **Nittany Christian School**, now 121% larger in enrollment than six years ago.

My other pressing concern is neither financial or pedagogical. If a category is required, my concern is social, demographic, economic, and racial: the seemingly intractable American phenomenon of what might crudely be called “**WASP Christian Schools**”—that is, schools whose adults on the board, administration, faculty, along with student body bear little demographic or racial or ethnic resemblance to the world as it is in their own locale and nation, as well as in the Kingdom of God. With few exceptions, we are mostly monochromatic, even at this Conference, while—ironically—many of our schools have invited a new class of ethnic minorities to enroll, our Asian nationals whose wealthy families help sustain our financial balance.

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May I offer my “creds” to speak on this topic? I am currently researching the story of a distant relative named Charles Henry Corey, a Canadian Baptist pastor who emigrated from New Brunswick to New Hampshire in the 1850s. In 1864, he joined the Union army as a chaplain. As the Civil War ended, he was concerned about former slaves and their lack of an educated clergy to minister to them; so by 1867, he had become head of Augusta Institute, now **Morehouse College** in Atlanta, and the following year he was appointed to lead a new seminary in Richmond, now **Virginia Union University and Seminary (photo left)**. This is a heritage of which I am proud and for which I thank God.

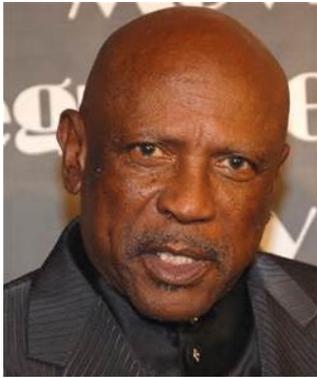


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I know something myself about being a

foreign student—albeit a Canadian—who became a naturalized American citizen. My family moved, first, to Michigan in the 1940s; then after returning to Canada, we arrived in Brooklyn, New York, in 1951. At age 15, I had left a high school in which there was not a single person of color to enroll at **Fort Hamilton High School (photo right)** where the same Nordic population predominated, mostly of Scandinavian descent with a few Italians to counter any





blondes. I had never met a Negro, a colored person, a black. My first acquaintance with a person of color occurred as I matriculated at **New York University** and met teammates: **Ray Frazier**, eventually a Baptist pastor, a would-be actor named **Louis Gossett, Jr. (photo left)**, and Lenny Grace, already a veteran of the Korean War. As a result of knowing them, I came belatedly to some modest recognition that Jesus does indeed love **“the little children, all the children of the world / Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight . . .”**

Six decades ago, a slow but steady change was developing among independent schools, but not overnight! As Harper Lee shows us in her newly-published novel *Go Set a Watchman*, the human heart is hardened against easy change. Sometimes it takes a revolution. Gradually I learned much more closely what the theme of this Conference

implies: **“His Loved and His Own: Christian Schooling as a Model of the Kingdom.”**

I remember an evening in 1957, during my first year at Stony Brook, when the jazz pianist **Teddy Wilson (photo right)** brought his quartet to perform at Stony Brook—Arvell Shaw playing bass and Joya Sherrill singing “I’m Beginning to See the Light” and “Take the A -Train.” At the reception following, Teddy Wilson sat with Frank Gaebelein at the grand piano in the headmaster’s living room, attempting to teach the classically-trained Gaebelein to improvise on a hymn tune!



In the boys’ residence hall where we lived, in classrooms and in the choir I directed or on teams I coached were young men such as **Charles F. Johnson (photo left)**, later a producer and director of acclaimed TV shows; a nephew of Nat “King” Cole; a distinguished surgeon; a concert pianist; a Wall Street attorney; and—yes—an eventual member of Louis Farrakhan’s “Fruit of Islam” militia. But as a result of the generosity of **The Clark Foundation** (aka **Singer Sewing Machines** and the **Baseball Hall of Fame**) and sustaining gifts from DeWitt and Lila Wallace, founders of *The Reader’s Digest*, we were also able to enroll Tuesday morning’s speaker, a young man from East

Harlem named **Harold C. Spooner**, now a leading spokesman for racial righteousness. I remember another student named **Larry Jackson** who, just before graduating, said to me, **“At Stony Brook, I’ve learned that black isn’t the only way to spell brother.”** He may have been referring to the Caucasian classmate who had insisted on a black friend being his roommate. That white boy’s father—editor of the only newspaper in North Carolina refusing to endorse Barry Goldwater because he was too liberal!—made a trip to our school to demand that his son choose someone else, and left disappointed. And as the school became co-educational, I learned

from young women as well about personal dignity and racial pride as components of their Christian identity.



I recall my African American colleagues on the faculty, one of whom addressed us this afternoon, and what I learned from **Spencer Christian (photo right)**, now a famous TV personality based in San Francisco, and **Russell Weatherspoon** about grace.



I recall a board member, the late Tom Skinner **(photo left)**—himself a former gang leader in Harlem—who introduced the Stony Brook administration to the new concept of an institutional mission statement and mentored us in com-

posing Stony Brook’s own declaration of mission; I recall William Pannell and John Perkins leading our faculty in intercessory prayer for our nation at times of turmoil.

I wish such a history and profile were more frequently found on the campus of the typical Christian school, but it isn’t. Of course, we are living in the aftermath of Ferguson, Baltimore, Charleston, and the incendiary sloganeering of **‘Black Lives Matter.’** We still face the realities of population density and where families reside; we suffer from the reaction following, first, the Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, then the desegregation-by-busing orders in the 1970s, resulting in the founding of “white flight” academies,

only recently obtaining their legitimacy as genuine “Christian schools.”

THE THOMAS F. STALEY FOUNDATION



In 1972, on my first assignment as one of the Staley Foundation’s visiting lecturers at a major Southern university, I was invited to meet with the board of a local Presbyterian church-sponsored school. When asked to describe my ideal Christian school, I spoke in terms of **“His loved and His own”** and our need to identify with all of God’s children. One of the Presbyterian elders exploded in rage, slammed his fist on the table, and said, **“I’ll be damned if that’s the kind of Christian school we want here!”**

But we also suffer from a paucity of minority board members and heads and administrators and classroom teachers in our schools. I know a Christian school in the suburbs of America’s blackest urban center, a community preferred and inhabited by African American stars in sports, entertainment, and industry. Its kindergarten classes enroll children, 75% or more of whom are black; but soon thereafter those youngsters drift away to other schools because the only person of color employed by that school is an administrative assistant who—of course!—also coaches the all-white girls’ basketball team.

Again, I acknowledge exceptions among Christian schools in America, one being **Chicago Hope Academy**. Here I want to welcome and introduce two people who represent Christian schooling intended primarily for the underserved population of America’s inner cities: I present to you **Tina and Bob Muzikowski**, founders of Chicago Hope Academy, and invite Bob Muzikowski to give us a brief overview of this transformational school (photos right).



[**Bob Muzikowski’s remarks**]

If you are asking, “Why this emphasis at this time and place?” I reply like my Scots kinsman Macbeth, “My way of life / Is fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf .” Therefore, I must make the most of every opportunity. Last fall, after THE PAIDEIA CONFERENCE and CESA Symposium, I was stunned to note that, among the 300 or so Christian school delegates at those two events, there were fewer than a half-dozen African American educators. I determined—under God—to do something to change the complexion of our gathering by reaching out to members of various minority groups in our clientele. Our failure in succeeding to any representative degree is self-evident.



But I am not discouraged, and I am determined to do whatever I can, knowing that **“when He cometh . . . to make up His jewels,”** among **“His loved and His own”** will be those who have entered the Kingdom because you and I welcomed them as children or teenagers and eventually as colleagues—brothers and sisters—showing them that the Kingdom of God knows no East or West, no race or genes or nationality or status because, as the hymn writer William Dunkerley (photo left) expresses, **“Who serves my Father as His child / Is surely kin to me.”**

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WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO THIS KEYNOTE ADDRESS?

Are you conscious of the disparity between what we profess about “the Kingdom of God” and the enrollment and employee profiles of most Christian schools in North America? Practically, we appear to be segregated by residential population and our churches: White suburbs, Asian communities, black and brown inner-cities—these seem to be the surface realities—but the ultimate fact is this: *Our white majority schools haven’t yet learned how to appeal to minority parents and their children because we have almost no one who looks like them and knows where they’re coming from!* We have not looked earnestly enough for board members, school heads, administrators, and classroom teachers from minority groups. Unless we do something to break that pattern, we will continue to be passively and unintentionally segregated schools.

We must do something *now* to change our current profile from predominantly *white* to represent not only our nation but—more important—the Kingdom of God!

Let me know if you support such a goal for Christian schooling in North America.

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Yes, I want to be an advocate for Christian schools that look like the Kingdom!

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