

Introduction

Sometimes, people work for a paycheck.

“Not enough to get tired,
Just enough to not be fired.”

Ho-Hum.

In the same way, students often work for a grade.

“Not enough to really learn,
Just enough to get the grade and move on.”

Ho-Hum.

But is that what God intended?

“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men . . .” Colossians 3:23

“Whatever you hand finds to do, do it with your might . . .” Ecclesiastes 9:10

“ . . . not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.” Ephesians 6:6–7

Rather than a ho-hum approach to life and learning, He created us to be *passionately* involved:

“You shall Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind.” Luke 10:27

Recognizing that we cannot crawl inside the students’ minds and hearts, throw a switch, and create a passion for learning, how on earth do we get them involved in the process? How do we help them move beyond spectator to active player?

The solution we and many others have discovered is a new model:

We must work with the design of God.

Our Creator uniquely designed each of us with strengths and styles of learning, so we must respond to this by developing an educational approach, which gives opportunities for these differences. Realizing that our students are made in the image and likeness of God, and recognizing that we are working under God, we begin to comprehend that our labor in ministry is nurturing handcrafted masterpieces, not assembly-line, Dollar Store merchandise!

A basic, practical, and attainable method for accomplishing this is to provide variety in the learning

environment. With that in mind, the *Ancient Civilizations & The Bible* curriculum was designed with a broad variety of opportunities for pursuing information. Without the teacher having to analyze every student or to create a dozen different activities, the program offers suggestions for creating that variety.

Honor and respect your students

Allow them to be whom they were designed by God to be: physical? verbal? interactive? daydreaming? hands-on? logical? artistic? musical? quiet? attention-getter? leader?

The many-faceted suggestions within each section of the curriculum allow students to actively and personally pursue learning—no more spectator education! The students will purposefully be involved in setting the direction of each Unit through their exploration, discovery, discussion, hands-on activity, and creative expression. Engaging them this way honors and respects the unique approach to learning, which God has set into each student. This impacts the entire course—not just by providing real opportunities for the students, allowing them to joyfully and actively learn the content, but by also providing real structure, a valid paradigm of structure and organization, enabling teachers to move forward within the content of the course. By approaching lessons this way, teachers are given the opportunity to be partial to *every* student (rather than partial to the linguistic and math/logical students whose successes normally dominate the classroom); to be fair and just in assessing student accomplishment through giving opportunities and honoring all the different types of learners; to be creative in the areas that appeal personally to them; to keep all the students motivated and moving along in their studies.

This curriculum encourages each learner to become self-motivated: through choosing specific learning activities; through choosing how to creatively share what has been learned; through team projects as well as individual accomplishments; through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning opportunities; and through the integration of multidisciplinary learning (which sometimes appeals to the student beyond the actual subject of history).

“Learning is not always FUN. Most of it is very hard work, but it does not also have to be unpleasant. Gardening in spring is delightful—it’s

hard work, but pleasant. Only a fool would try to carry out the same activities in winter. Why add unpleasantness to something already difficult? But we do that in learning all the time. Something hard but satisfying often unnecessarily becomes something both hard and unpleasant.” Rosalie Pedder

Our intent is keep learning delightful, even if demanding and challenging. We have endeavored to present a rich variety of creative activities for you to access for your students.

Teach history as HisStory

A biblical perspective in history means seeing God as central to our understanding. In this curriculum, we do not add a few Hebrew dates into an otherwise typical presentation of history and label it “biblical.” Instead, we want to see history from His point of view; to view all of history—all cultures and events—in the light of God’s revelation of Himself and of His ongoing redemptive purpose pursued throughout the world’s existence. Encountering God in the affairs of men, distinguishing the good leader from the bad leader—the hero from the villain—and making those determinations based on the Bible, is teaching history from a biblical perspective. (See “Worldviews in the Study of History” on page xxv for an illustration of this principle.)

To gain this perspective, the student is frequently asked to consider, “*What was God doing in this moment of history?*” The answers are found and explored in the Bible, the archaeological record, the writings of experts, and historical source documents. This overlapping of what are often described as “secular” history and “sacred” history gives us a front row seat to observe the incredible events, the amazing people, and the fascinating

Teaching History From A Biblical Perspective . . .

- Letting them learn history in ways that honor and respect their individual design;
- Letting them be inspired by the greatness of who God is and what He has done;
- Letting them meet the great heroes of world history and see the great villains;
- Letting them be mesmerized by the incredible adventures and cliffhanging tight spots;
- Inspiring them to jump in with both feet and discover whatever is unexplained, curious, awe-inspiring, funny, fascinating to THEM!

. . . IS TEACHING HISTORY FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE.

imprints of God’s interaction in our world. This provides not only insight into history but revelation of the Maestro of HisStory. With this perspective, students will not only gain academic understanding of history, but more importantly, they will grow in their personal understanding of God’s faithfulness and wisdom.

The highest purpose and ultimate goal of this curriculum is to see the lives of students change as they come face to face with the reality of God’s amazing faithfulness throughout all time.

May you find great joy in this study!

In Jesus,

Diana Waring

Structural Overview

The Course of Study

SCOPE

- » Unit One: Creation & The Flood
- » Unit Two: The Rise of Civilizations
- » Unit Three: Egypt & The Exodus
- » Unit Four: The Children of Israel
- » Unit Five: Assyria & Babylon
- » Unit Six: The Persians & Medes
- » Unit Seven: Greece & The Hellenists
- » Unit Eight: The Rise of Rome
- » Unit Nine: Jesus Christ, Immanuel

The Structure of Each Unit

STRUCTURE

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION

- » Discuss Key Concepts
- » Read the Unit lesson
- » Listen to the appropriate recordings
- » Read appropriate online articles
- » Consider and discuss opinions
- » Choose interesting books or Internet search

WEEK TWO: EXPLORATION & DISCOVERY

- » Research a topic of your choice
- » Learn the “Words to Watch”
- » Construct the timeline
- » Report findings on your research

WEEK THREE: HANDS-ON

- » Geography mapping
- » View art & architecture
- » Design art projects
- » Conduct science experiments
- » Music suggestions
- » Cook the recipe

WEEK FOUR: EXPRESSION

- » Linguistics: journalism, prose, poetry, playing with words
- » Art: painting/drawing, graphic design, sculpting, cartooning
- » Music: compose, practice performance
- » Drama: comedy, tragedy, reality, reader's theater, puppetry
- » Movement: pantomime, dance, action
- » Conceptual design

Explanation of Structure

Based on the Myers-Briggs definitions of Learning Styles—Feeler, Thinker, Sensor, Intuitor—*Ancient Civilizations & The Bible* has been designed so that each Unit proceeds through a four-week cycle of one week per learning style. This means that every student will have the opportunity to learn history in their own style, as well as from other approaches.

Complementing this approach is the opportunity for students to learn new information from a combination of *visual*, *auditory*, and *kinesthetic* presentations. This insures that your students have the occasion to learn in the way they learn best. This curriculum has already designed this multi-modality approach into every Unit. Hopefully, you will access aspects of each one in every Unit.

Week #1 will appeal greatly to the *Feeler* Learning Style, as students gain the “people perspective” by listening with you to auditory recordings, reading the scriptures and other history materials, and discussing together what they are learning. The discussion suggestions range from open-ended questions with many possible answers to discovery questions which require both content and studied consideration.

Week #2 is designed to capture the interest of the *Thinker* Learning Style by appealing to the *authoritative* and *factual* perspective through chronological work with a *timeline*, vocabulary *drill*, and *research & reporting* projects. Since the students are allowed to each select their own *research project* and the manner in which they will report what has been learned, there is an intrinsic motivation factor—they choose what they want to learn about!

Week #3 provides the often neglected *hands-on* learning opportunities, which will allow the *Sensor* Learning Style to thrive. This week focuses on the geography of a historic time through *mapmaking*, and gives place to the *fine arts*. Students are given exposure to great art, architecture, and music, and given *hands-on* experiences with *creating* art and *preparing* food. *Science experiments* round out this week, connecting the historic moment in time with its scientific inventions, explorations, and discoveries.

Week #4 gives the idea-loving *Intuitor* Learning Style a platform and an audience for *creative* expression. The possibilities include creative writing, journalism, poetry, short stories, political cartooning, posters, illustrating, sculpting, skits, puppetry, music performance, role playing, pantomime, dance, conceptual design, and more. Each student has the opportunity to be *creatively involved* as deeply or as casually as their interests and time constraints take them.

Goals for the Teacher

Through this flexible, multidisciplinary, learning-style-centered approach to history, teachers will be enabled to:

- impart history instruction in ways that will be retained and comprehended;
- facilitate and guide the students' active participation in learning;
- recognize the value of each student's unique design of God in learning;
- validate the particular thread of history which the student is interested to learn;
- provide encouragement as needed;
- offer a safe atmosphere for discussion and creative problem-solving;
- help students choose appropriate projects and resources;
- give opportunities for students to demonstrate what has been learned;
- evaluate students progress based on direct experiences and actual learning.

Goals for the Student

Through this in-depth look at human history from Creation, the beginning of history, to Jesus Christ, the centerpiece of history, students will learn to:

- understand and trust God's faithfulness;
- view other cultures and peoples from His perspective;
- gain an understanding of some of God's intimate and overarching work in human history through nations and individuals;
- understand the importance of worldviews in interpreting history;
- gain a solid foundation in apologetics, using the Bible as literal history;
- comprehend the relevance of ancient times to today's headlines;
- understand the chronology, as well as the cause and effect of world history;
- have a critical and in-depth understanding of each of these cultures through various disciplines, such as art, science, literature, geography, music, warfare, agriculture, religion, family life, government, economics, architecture, communications, and history;
- understand these civilizations' unique impact on other cultures;
- learn how to approach, appreciate and apply the study of history.

Icon Key



Teacher Tip: From time to time in each Unit, there are suggestions or ideas, which can make your work as a teacher easier, more creative, or more successful. This icon highlights these suggestions and ideas.



Question: Several questions have been provided for you to ask your students during the course of each Unit. This icon emphasizes these questions—which can help spark more stimulating class discussions.



Spiritual Emphasis: Since this curriculum seeks to understand history in light of what God has done—tracing the history of redemption—and, since the object of the curriculum is to not only gain knowledge of the content but also an understanding of God's character and nature, there are opportunities in each Unit to engage your students on a spiritual level. This icon can include areas for prayer and discussion, as well as suggestions for activities with a spiritual purpose.

Teachers As Followers of the Lord

My journey in teaching history has taught me far more than the date Julius Caesar was assassinated. As the Lord has taken me on an amazing adventure of discovery, I have encountered the most unexpected sources in the most unusual places:

- While visiting the British Museum, I noticed a small untitled sculpture. On my return to the U.S., during a Bible study on Abraham, Genesis 22:13 stood out: “Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns.” My thoughts exploded as the small sculpture in London jumped back into my memory. Though unmarked in the exhibit, it was titled by the archaeologist who discovered it in a burial pit of ancient Ur, “The Ram Caught In The Thicket.” Realizing that God might have placed a prophetic witness of His provision for Abraham in the pagan culture of Ur, I rushed home to research the dating of the sculpture, to see if Abraham had lived prior to its creation. Amazingly, it was dated at least 200 years before Abraham walked the earth!
- At a small country museum in Maine, a book title grabbed my attention: *Nineveh and Its Remains* by Austen Layard. I had only a brief glance to see if it was useful in my studies. Opening the book at random, I began to read the author’s description of how nineteenth century intellectuals had discounted the truth of Scripture, in part because of its description of the ancient Assyrians—who were totally unknown through any other source. With Layard’s discovery and excavation of Nineveh, the Bible stories leaped squarely onto the pages of history AND shut the mouths of the critics! This opened my eyes to the amazing place Assyria has held in both world history and biblical apologetics.

Through these experiences, as well as many others, my eyes were opened to the fact that, though I was limited in my knowledge, God was actively leading me to keys of understanding—all I needed to do was follow Him. What an amazing discovery! He wants to lead us—you as much as me—to teach us, show us, and open doors of knowledge for us. If we ask, we will receive. If we seek, we will find. If we knock, the door will be opened.

You see, I find that God did not relegate the subject of education to a closed academic system (which would be similar to the evolutionists’ view that we live in a “closed system”—one without God). Learning was intended by God to be revelational—because He, the source of all wisdom and knowledge, is intently involved in it:

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth.” John 16:13

As dearly beloved followers of Jesus Christ, we who are teachers need to understand this: the essential truth at the very foundation of education is that God is the True Teacher, the Master Teacher, the Actively-Changing-Lives Teacher. To teach as a “student teacher” under His authority and His leading will transform our hearts and attitudes, it will dramatically affect our students’ experience, and, in the final analysis, it will reflect the heart of God.

Instead of a mere dispenser of facts, requiring our students to regurgitate the same facts back to us, we can teach with anticipation and a sense of wonder, expecting God to show us new insights, new connections, and new understandings we never had before. We can enthusiastically and humbly share with our students what and how God has taught us, eagerly encouraging them to watch for His involvement in their own lives.

Practically, here are some points we need to consider as we follow God in teaching:

#1 Education that conforms to God’s ways will first of all be relational, because He has called us to be His children (a profoundly intimate relationship with our Father), and He has set us in one Body (a necessarily cooperative, healthy, and interdependent relationship with each other).

We learn about all subjects in relationship to Him. We see all fields of knowledge (biology, mathematics, physics, music, literature, history, architecture, etc.) as having their beginnings in God:

- He created all things (the sciences);
- He set order into the universe (mathematics);
- He created ears to hear the sounds of birds singing, leaves rustling, water swishing, AND He created voices for singing (music);
- He spoke the universe into existence AND gave us His Word (literature);
- He created man in His own image and likeness (the start of our history);
- He designed the world (architecture);
- . . . and on and on and on.

We teach our students relationally, not as mechanical computers intent solely on transmitting facts—with no heart, no artistry, no intuition, no comprehension of others, no lively debates, no symbiotic learning, no creativity, no opportunity to defend oneself—but as brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ:

- We honor them
- We allow individuality to them
- We listen to them
- We ask them
- We learn from them
- We respect them
- We humble ourselves before them
- . . . and on and on and on

#2 Education that conforms to God’s ways will also be revelational because God actively leads us and guides us into all truth. We facilitate the students’ learning, but He is the One who can communicate and bring illumination to the students in ways that will change their lives. God’s revelation as the foundation of Christian education is dramatically opposed to the common system of education, which looks no higher than human reason, and sets teachers as the authoritative experts in charge of distributing knowledge. This has its foundation in the Greco-Roman worldview:

“The ancient Greeks believed that humans could, by using their ability to think rationally, discover and understand the fundamental order of the universe and everything in it. They developed the belief that humans could equal (and even exceed) the gods in understanding.” Dr. Perry Seymour, astrophysicist

In other words, the ancient Greeks (and later, the Romans) depended solely on human reasoning rather than on God’s revelation. This viewpoint is diametrically opposed by Scripture:

“For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:22–24

The Greeks enthroned human reason, educating and indoctrinating their students in this point of view. As Christians, we must choose a different path.

“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy [such as, ancient Greek philosophy] and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.” Colossians 2:8

We must enthrone Jesus Christ—the power of God and the wisdom of God—educating and discipling children in a biblical worldview. We can open doors for the students into their own personal adventure of discovery with the Lord. We can be their enthusiastic audience and wise advisors, encouraging them to learn in light of God’s active and intimate revelation.

Teachers who follow the Lord, who teach under His Lordship, need to consider that biblical education:

- is both relational and revelational;
- leads us beyond mental comprehension to life application;
- has its beginning and ending in the character and nature of God;
- finds its true test, not in a graded essay question, but in a life lived in obedience—a life well-lived.

“Happy is the man who finds wisdom,
And the man who gains understanding;
For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver,
And her gain than fine gold.
She is more precious than rubies,
And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
Length of days is in her right hand,
In her left hand riches and honor.
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her,
And happy are all who retain her.”
Proverbs 3:13–18

