BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

by Alan Pue, Ed.D

As a pastor one of the most difficult challenges for me was making decisions about which missions projects to support. There were two primary reasons for the difficulty. First, there were simply too many projects from which to choose. Literally dozens of requests ended up on my desk. Secondly, the quality of the projects were usually quite good. In fact, in our case at least, it was rare that a request for funding wasn’t connected to a quality, worthwhile idea.

How that worked itself out in the practical reality of decision making was often not discussed. Candidly, I found the “just let the Lord lead” method for making critical decisions to be very unsatisfying. Don’t get me wrong, I do believe that God does lead us through His Spirit and His Word. But that still begs the question as to how He does lead. Recognizing that I had been given a task of oversight, stewardship and leadership for which I would give account, it seemed imperative to me that I discover God’s mind about how quality decisions could be made.

My study on that topic ranged far and wide. I read many books and studied the Scriptures intensively. What I learned, and have put into practice as a pastor, school administrator and now college, administrator has proven to be of enormous help since I accepted a position of leadership here at The Master’s College. God has given us an incredible resource here. To squander this gift would be unthinkable. To advance God’s purposes here is, however, a challenge which requires us to constantly solve some rather complex problems. The quality of our decisions will, to a large extent, result from the quality of our decision making process. I’d like to share some of the biblical principles that have helped frame that decision making process here at TMC.

PRINCIPLE 1
CHARACTER PROMOTES CONFIDENCE

True biblical planning acknowledges the sovereign nature of God. (Isaiah 14:24-27)

There are numerous passages which speak to God’s sovereign actions in the world, perhaps none so explicitly as Isaiah 14:24-27. The powerful army of Assyria has laid siege to the city of Jerusalem. The population is literally starving to death. There is absolutely no hope for survival; simply no plan brilliant enough to stare off the inevitable. Jerusalem is doomed. Judea will fall. Only that isn’t what happens. God miraculously delivers the city and destroys the army of the Assyrians.

Once again we see in vivid detail that God’s purposes will be accomplished. There are no circumstances too difficult to thwart God. The text in Isaiah makes this absolutely clear.

“The Lord of Hosts has sworn, Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned it will stand. For the Lord of hosts has planned and who can frustrate it?”
Isaiah 14:24, 27

God has a plan for His people and nothing can ever frustrate that plan. This aspect of God’s character gives us the confidence we need to move ahead boldly in pursuit of fulfilling His purposes. This truth should also create in us the right attitude as it relates to our planning. That attitude is revealed in principle number two.

PRINCIPLE 2
THE PROPER ATTITUDE

True biblical planning commits the outcome to God.

Even the secular mind recognizes that the outcome of any planning process is dependent on many variables that are often beyond a person’s control.
One of my most enjoyable fantasies involved Aladdin’s lamp. On a lazy summer afternoon I would lie on the grass, gazing into the sky and imagining what great fun would ensue if I could ever locate that wondrous lamp with its imprisoned genie. Three wishes.

Anything I wanted. Oh, how grand were the possibilities! I must confess, that as I look back on those thoughts, none of my desires could have been considered in the least bit altruistic! Alas, all too soon I discovered that such possibilities only occur in fairy tales. Or do they?

The Scriptures relate to us the story of an individual who is given just that tantalizing opportunity. We are told that not long after Solomon ascended to the throne of the nation of Israel, God appeared to him in a dream with this offer, “Ask what you wish Me to give you.” It was, only one wish, not three; but I’m sure that, given the same opportunity, you’d take it. Though Solomon was still a young man, his response demonstrated great maturity. The request he made of God wasn’t for wealth, or long life, or the ability to fly (my childhood dream). It was for wisdom, a response the text makes clear pleased God.

Wisdom. “How blessed is the man who finds it.” Solomon so eloquently reminds us in the Proverbs. Yet how many people actually seek wisdom? Be honest. Is your quest for wisdom characterized by the same energy you might display while searching for a hidden treasure? We will zealously pursue a quality education, valuable information, useful skills, significant authority, financial security, or widespread popularity, but do we genuinely desire wisdom? Do we even recognize its value?

In this issue of The Master’s Current Dr. John MacArthur reminds us why the pursuit of wisdom is so critical to those who would represent our Lord in this world. Read and discover as did Solomon that wisdom is, “...more precious than jewels...nothing you desire compares with her” (Proverbs 3:15).

Alan Pue, Ed.D
Editor
The Scottish poet Robert Burns captured this reality with such simple elegance when he penned, "The best laid plans of mice and men often go astray." How absolutely true. The author of the Proverbs reminds us of this principle when he writes, "Commit your works to the Lord, and your plans will be established." (Proverbs 16:3) The Psalmist speaks to this principle as well when he reminds us to "Commit [our] way to the Lord, trust also in Him and He will do it." (Psalm 37:5) God can be trusted. He possesses all of the resources necessary to accomplish His purposes through us. And as the writers of Hebrews reminds us, "we have a great cloud of witnesses" to the fact of God's faithfulness. What we know and have experienced thus far in our lives gives us every reason for continued confidence.

**Principle 3**

**Consultation Prevents Catastrophe:** True biblical planning requires wisdom and wise counsel.

So then, the obvious question. If God is sovereign, if His plans are going to come to pass anyway, why bother? Good question. Simple answer: we must engage in quality decision making because God expects us to act with wisdom on the principles He gives us, not to simply react haphazardly to circumstances. The Proverbs provides us ample evidence that God expects us to think about issues carefully and to make wise decisions that accurately reflect His nature and purpose before a watching world.

God never acts capriciously or reactivly. As His children neither should we. To do so is to dishonor Him. Our responsibility as His children is to demonstrate with clarity the nature of God. Wisdom is a key aspect of God's nature. I don't believe we will ever understand in this life how God's sovereign nature and our human responsibility intersect. It is a mystery beyond our finite capacity to reason. I have noticed, however, that organizations which work hard at making good decisions tend to make a greater and more positive impact in this world for the kingdom of God.

While the Proverbs are neither laws or promises they do speak of probabilities. For example not every person that lives according to biblical principles lives a long life, but it is more probable that such will be the case. So when the writer of the Proverbs instructs us that "there is no guidance the people fall, but in an abundance of counselors there is victory," (Proverbs 11:14) and "without consultation plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed," Proverbs 25:22 and "Prepare plans by consultation and make war by guidance," (Proverbs 20:18), it would seem prudent to employ that principle in our decision making process.

In a time and culture where change seems to be the one constant, the challenges
to wise
decision making are significant. A plurality of Godly leaders who acknowledge God's sovereign work, submit to His purposes, and then think deeply about issues is, therefore, a great resource for any church or organization.

**Principle 4**

**Excellence Produces Excellence:** True biblical planning can only originate in a noble heart.

A major challenge to quality corporate decision making lies in identifying quality people to make those decisions. It has always been interesting to me how much emphasis Paul places on character and how little he places on gifts and skills when he outlines the qualities of those who would lead the church. In fact there is a significant emphasis on a person's ability to get along with other people. Corporate decision making fails in many churches not only because there is no plan to plan but because the people who are asked to plan don't posses the requisite qualities.

It is simply the case that everything does rise and fall on spiritual leadership. Failure to identify and involve competent people of sound biblical character will inevitably doom any organization's decision making process. Choosing the right people is the most fundamentally important aspect in constructing a quality decision making process. To assist you in that task I would heartly recommend a study of the following passages of scripture: 1 Timothy 3:1-13, 2 Timothy 2:1-26, Titus 1:1-9, Acts 6:1-7, Isaiah 32:1-8, and Proverbs 11:24-31. These texts provide valuable insight into the character of one who would lead the church. The kind of people identified in these texts, utilizing a good process will usually produce excellent plans.

**Principle 5**

**Worship Promotes Willingness:** True biblical planning proceeds from the presence of God.

I find it a remarkably consistent truth that people who purposely place themselves in the presence of God are more willing to accept His direction, and to tackling even the most arduous tasks. Think of Moses asked to lead the nation of Israel through the wilderness. Think of Jeremiah asked to preach to a people unwilling to respond.

Think of Paul and Barnabus asked to leave the relative comfort of the church in Antioch to embark upon an epic journey fraught with danger.

In worship we are reminded of God's sovereign nature and our solemn responsibility as sons and servants. In worship we see God "high and lifted up." In worship God's holiness is inescapable, His grace is recognized as remarkable, His purposes are made clear, and we appropriately respond, "Here am I, send me."

I believe that the trauma of deacons or elders meeting would be reduced significantly if those gatherings began with a time of genuine worship. How much more quickly could the leaders of a church "see" the real issues and make wise plans if that process began in the presence of God. Meetings that begin with a brief period of perfunctory prayer rather than a passionate pursuit of God are more likely to get bogged down in a battle over personal agendas. Worship reminds us that we should be in pursuit of God's agenda, not our own.

**Principle 6**

**Intercession Provides Insight:** True biblical planning actively seeks God in the process.

A study of Paul's recorded prayers tells us much about what he believed to be important. An example of this is the introduction of his letter to the church at Philippi. In that passage one of the things for which he prayed was an increase in discernment so that the people of that church could "...approve the things that are excellent." In other words they needed to be able to make good decisions.

If it is the case that a good decision making process begins with confidence in God's sovereign nature and proceeds from His presence then it makes imminent sense for us, as James instructs, to find wisdom at the feet of God. In fact we are told to come boldly to God with confidence (Ephesians 3:12).

Our failure to act on that instruction leaves us without the key resources necessary for wise decisions.

Our Lord has not left us without guidance. He has promised to "...make our paths straight..." (Proverbs 3:6b)

He has given us His Word as a "...lamp to [our] feet and a light to [our] path..." (Psalm 119:105) God has given us clear instructions about how to make decisions. If we will act in obedience to those instructions and employ the principles of Scripture we can solve even the most complex problems and exercise wise stewardship over the resources and responsibilities given to us by our Lord.
A story is told of a city fellow who was on vacation. One morning he was jogging down a country lane and came upon a barn with several bull's eyes painted on the side. Sticking in the center of each bull's eye was an arrow. Seeing a farmer on the other side of the fence, the jogger stopped and spoke, "Whoever shot those arrows must be really good." The farmer looked up and replied, "Well, our hired hand, Henry, did that. Actually, he's a little slow. But he shoots the arrows first, and then draws the bull's eyes afterward.

Quality ministries don't draw bull's eyes around arrows that have already been shot. Quality ministries are a result of strategic thinking. The targets are clear and well positioned, and the shooters are well trained. At The Master's College, we are continually in the process of carefully defining our targets, and refining our shooting skills.

In December of 1995, professional consultants conducted a strategic planning retreat with leaders of the college. This began a long range comprehensive planning process which continues even today. It includes all departments and every topic relevant to our future, including our alumni. Right now we are in this strategic planning process with our alumni. We are beginning to define the strategic plan for the alumni association that will take us into the next century serving our alumni and advancing the mission of the college.

One of the first steps in this process was to form a representative group of alumni, a Task Force, for the purpose of:

- Defining and clarifying our alumni association mission, vision, values and key result areas.
- Identifying the initiatives that will form the basis of our Alumni Strategic Plan for the next several years.

This Task Force of 29 alumni, listed below, met together on campus on October 23 and 24, and consisted of a composite group of graduates representing the last four decades—graduates who are committed to the mission of this college and sensitive to the Holy Spirit's direction and leading.

Jonathan Arnett '95
Cindy Cross '90
Ron Davis '77
Susie Davis '76
Angela DeMoura '92
Steve Dixon '81
Kurt Freeman '85
Peggy Freeman '85
Brenda Frields '93
Mark Gitt '93
Mark Gwinn '90
Marcy Gwinn '89

Bob Hammer '61
Jason Hartung '96
Mary Hartung '97
Marjorie Jacobson '76
Eric Johnson '90
Tim Kane '88
Matt MacArthur '88
Kelly MacArthur '88
Mark MacArthur '91
Erica MacArthur '91
Jonathan Niedenzu '91
Stephanie Niedenzu '91
Joan Osborne '96
Rod Shackelford '87
Beth Shackelford '87
Janet Simic '66
Steve Wheeler '82

That two-day meeting, led by our Provost, Dr. Alan Pur, and myself, resulted in the initial draft of the mission, vision and initiatives needed for a successful association and presented as follows:

**MISSION**
A functioning network can provide communication and opportunities for support. Therefore, the purpose of TMC Alumni Association is to be the connecting link between administration, faculty students and alumni for the purpose of addressing specific needs, including advancement of the college's mission and vision.

**VISION**
The vision of TMC Alumni Association as we enter a new century is to be a fully functioning, nationl organization, led by a full-time director and volunteer leaders who create and sustain the networking vehicles necessary for meeting the strategic objectives and goals of the association.

**INITIATIVES**
- Create and sustain the association structure.
- Enact a communication plan.
- Establish a system to support one another.
- Assist in a college funding project.

We are anxious to receive feedback from our alumni and past students pertaining to this initial draft of the first part of our alumni strategic planning. You may do this in one of two ways:

Fax number:
(805) 254-5459 Attn: Ron Hayden
TMC Web site:
www.masters.edu,
click on Alumni/Students, Alumni Zone.
Feedback Survey, and follow the directions indicated on the page.

Please be praying with us and for those involved in this planning process, as they seek the Lord's will and direction for advancing our alumni association.

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**WINTER COLLEGE VIEW WEEKEND**
Experience College Life Firsthand—February 11-13, 1999

College View Weekend is an opportunity for high school and transfer students to explore The Master's College and experience college life in a fun and relaxed atmosphere. Students will feel what it is like to be a college student for a weekend—an unforgettable experience that includes living in the dorms, witnessing our dynamic chapel program with Dr. John MacArthur, and many opportunities to interact with students and professors. We also have a special day at Six Flags Magic Mountain.

Visitors will also attend classes and see our faculty in action. This team of highly qualified, godly men and women is dedicated to cultivating the spiritual and academic potential of our students by providing personal, one-on-one attention.

College View Weekend provides an opportunity to preview college life in a way that will benefit students no matter which college they choose to attend.

Parents, youth pastors, and high school counselors are also invited to participate. For more information and registration materials, call the Enrollment Office at (800) 568-6248, x483.

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**calendar of events**

**January**
1-2 The Master's Classic Tournament
4-11 Winterim
8-10 Spring WOW (Week of Welcome)
11-13 Annual Bible Conference
14 Classes begin

**February**
6 7:30 p.m. Creation Science Symposium
12-13 College View Weekend
23 Day of Prayer
26 Wind Ensemble Concert

**March**
5-6 Men's Basketball Regional Tournament
11-13 Spring Musical "Fiddler on the Roof"
Craig & Jamie Timmins '78 live in Santa Clarita, California. Craig works in the finance division of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, developers of the Mars Rover. Jamie is the Hart High School District program specialist (Special Education). They have a son James who is 18 and a 16-year-old daughter Katie.

Susan and Ken Collins '79 are serving as Word of Life Missionaries in Sao Paolo, Brazil. They celebrated the birth of their third child, Daniel Edward, July 13, 1998.

Don Gilmore '81 is in his 17th year working at TMC. He is currently Director of Registrar and has been in the position for 5 years. He also serves as Sports Information Director for Mustang Athletics.

Terry and Lori Hyde '83 are serving the Lord in Panama with New Tribes Mission. Terry is working as field administrator ministering to missionaries and giving guidance for the work in the tribe. Lori does secretarial work. "It has been exciting to see indigenous leaders raised up, discipled ordained as elders, and leading their churches in Scriptural truth."

Ray and Lori Smith '84 live in Vacaville, California and are preparing to serve as missionaries in Australia with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (ABWE).

Mike Long '87 works at TMC as Hardware and Telecommunications Manager. He also teaches part-time in the Communications Department.

Kennon and Lisa (Weber) Fleming '89 live in Nashville, Tennessee with their son, Samuel Mason Fleming. Ken works at CNA Insurance and is still pursuing his career in music. He sings at coffeehouses in the Nashville area.

Ronda (Ogden) Gauger '89 is now located in Atlanta, GA. She has married a fighter pilot and has three adorable boys.

Mark and Erika MacArthur '90 have three children and live in Wheaton, IL. They serve together with fellow alumnus and pastor, Scott Ardavanis at Grace Church of Dupage. Mark is employed as an investment counselor.

Michael and Myriam (Burgethaler) Avery '92 were married July 18, 1998. She is working on her master's degree in Social Service and is presently employed as a Social Worker for the state of Washington.

Leigh Ann (Gilles) Gentry '92 is working part time as a neonatal intensive care nurse in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Her husband, Lance, is a Master's Seminary graduate and now pastors a church.

Naomi Wirth '92 teaches fourth grade in San Jose, California. She plans to marry one of her teacher colleagues, Dwaine Lee, on January 9th. After the wedding, they will move to Amherst, Massachusetts while Dwaine pursues a master's degree in International Development and Education with a long-term goal of working in Uganda.

Rachael Horner '94 is working at a software division of Hewlett Packard as a Marketing Manager, and continues to be involved in ministry at Grace Community Church. She lives in Santa Clarita.

Brad and Julie (Thompson) Lay '92 '94 are ready to move to Albania soon with their boys 2 year old Justin and 6 months old Joshua to join Robb and Pam Provost in church planting.

Kyle Luman '94 since graduation has married, graduated from UCLA: School of Public Health, worked in Ethiopia as an Epidemiologist, and now works for Stanislaus County Public Health.

Tom Gindorf '94 graduated from the Master's Seminary in May, and took an Associate Pastor's position at Navy Yard City Bible Church in Washington in June 1998. He is married to Julia (Reifield) '93 and they have two girls: 3 year old Madeleine and 2 year old Emma.

J.R. Gates '95, after working as a youth pastor for three years in Juneau, Alaska, is now the RD of Hotchkiss Hall at The Master's College. He plans to be married on New Year's Eve.

Christina (Chris) Ingram '96 is a Flight Attendant with Continental Airlines (her cream come true). She has been flying for over a year and is now based back home at Los Angeles International Airport! When she is not flying, she substitutes as an elementary school teacher in Newhall School District.

Margie (Klein) Roth '96 has been happily married for 1 year to Joreen Roth who is a Jr. High teacher at Cornerstone Christian School. Margie works as a Data Analyst for Scripps Health.

Chris and Holly (Halstead) Ablena '97 are now located in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Chris is in his 2nd year of studies at Regent University School of Law. Holly is working on graduate education courses at Old Dominion University. They have a beautiful 2 year old son named Gunnar.

Eric Lundquist '97 is currently living in Concord, California and is a teacher at Berean Christian High School. He is also Minister of Music at Morello Avenue Baptist Church.

Brian McIlwain '97 is now located in Manteca, California and is currently a reporter for the Manteca Bulletin. He states, "It's great to add a little Christian influence to the local media in my town."

Mark Ruhlman '98 is now located in Carnation, Washington. He is the accountant for Grace Baptist Church & Grace Academy in Marysville, Washington and lives at Camp Gilead. He is also the head high school soccer coach for the Academy.

Have you been promoted, received an award, changed jobs, married? We are interested in you! The events of your life are interesting to other alumni. You can help by sending items about yourself, classmates and other alumni. You can also help us keep our alumni mailing list current by using this form to notify us of a change of address. Send form to Alumni Office, TMC, 21726 Placeria Canyon Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91328 or send e-mail message to alumni@masters.edu I look forward to receiving information on the Master's Web site, www.masters.edu.

Name: _______________________
Phone: _______________________
Address: _____________________
City: _________________________
State: __________ Zip: __________
What year did you begin: __________
TMO/LABO: __________ Ye Grad: __________
News Item: _____________________

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I want to focus on the issue of wisdom. The Bible says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." In the book of Proverbs the father says to his son, "Listen to your father’s instruction and do not forsake your mother’s teaching and you shall learn wisdom.

We live in a day of anti-intellectualism. A time when the mind is being set aside and emotions dominate everything. The church has succumbed to that. There is an emphasis today on entertainment in the church. You sit there and let someone entertain you. What develops is intellectual apathy. There are some who are very concerned about this. The question is, why has the church lost its ability to think? Why is the church offended by thinking, deeply thinking, profound thinking? Why are we so immune in our minds?

I’ve been reading the biography of William Carey, missionary to India, which stirs my soul deeply. He had several sons who began to preach at an early age. He preached the Word of God, with power and conviction and with profound insight. His sons were sent off to be missionaries to translate the Bible into foreign languages. William, himself, was a shoemaker, a cobbler with no formal education, who went to India to translate the Bible into 18 languages. His daily routine was to get up at 5:00 in the morning and go to bed at 11:00 at night and most of the day was spent studying the Scriptures in its original languages to translate into some other language. All missionary work accomplished in those 18 languages since William Carey, which was at the turn of the 1800’s, was really built on his work.

What ever happened to Christian thinking? What ever happened to great theology? What ever happened to thinking deeply about biblical truth? Why do we have to just grapple lightly over the surface of everything? Why do we have to be entertained all the time? What ever happened to the pursuit of wisdom? We have, I think, confused the need for a child-like faith. That is a profound trust to God and a faithful love of Him with childishness or childish thinking. But that’s not how it was in the New Testament. Paul thought deeply and profoundly as the apostles did, about the things of God. Profoundly intelligent teachings pour out of these inspired minds in Scripture and I am filled with a love of the love of God by any means, they are literally filled with it. Step one generation away from the completion of Scripture, one generation away from the New Testament writers and you meet the men who were disciplined by the apostles and you find treatises and apologetics and circular letters of stating intelligence from those intensely devoted fathers. Faith, child-like faith, honest faith, deep faith and a disciplined mental life were not and are not natural enemies. A well formed mind holds a place of honor. It was believed for many millennia that a sound mind, a deeply thinking mind was the best mind, especially when applied to divine truth, able to grasp the riches of God’s profound revelation. On the other hand a fuzzy mind is not spiritual honor. We need to come to the Word of God with our minds. That’s why you’re here, because you want to apply your mental skills, to grasp a Biblical world view into which every discipline fits. John F. MacArthur who is an apologist writes, "As we approach the 21st Century it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to recognize that our entire culture is in trouble." We are staring down the barrel of a loaded gun and we cannot longer afford to act like it is loaded with blanks. Our society has replaced heroes with celebrities. Substance and depth have been replaced by image and personality. In the political process the make-up man is more important than the speech writer. As we approach the voting booth, we approach it not on the basis of a well developed philosophy of what a state should be, but with a heart full of images, emotions and slogans all packed into 30-second sound bytes. And the mind numbing, irrational and emotionally stimulated trivia that fills television talk shows is digested by millions of bored, lonely, mindless Americans.

This shift is expressing itself in a growing anti-intellectualism in the church, that results in the marginalization of Christianity because, listen folks, Christianity is for the mind. It is all about how you think and what you believe. And only secondarily what you feel when Christianity is no longer profound and when Christianity is no longer bringing truth to the mind, it is marginalized. That is to say it is weakened as to its influence, it lose its saltiness. When America was founded and the pilgrims came here in the middle of their tremendous commitment to find a spiritual environment, the mind was everything. They started planting Universities and Seminaries everywhere. They were highly educated people. The literacy rate for people in early Massachusetts and Connecticut was between 89 and 95 percent. Higher than it is now. They founded colleges, they taught their children to read and write before the age of six, they studied art, science, philosophy and other fields as a way of loving God with their mind, as a way of building mental strength and acumen so that they could devote themselves to the study of the deep things of God and thereby be greatly enriched. Pastors and scholars like Jonathan Edwards were activists who sought to produce well informed people and train them in a number of disciplines. The minister was seen as an intellectual, he was seen as a spiritual and biblical authority in the community. As Puritan, Cotton Mather, once said, "Ignorance is the mother, not of devotion, but of heresy." In the middle of the 1800’s things began to change dramatically and they have been changing, unfortunately, ever since. Today emotion, intuition, entertainment, personal interpretations, feelings and experiences dominates. Pragmatism with its simplistic approaches is of no help.

There is a movement toward anti-intellectualism with the idea that there is no real truth and no real facts, it’s just a matter of what you believe. Here at The Master’s College we believe there is truth and the truth is from God and is without error. It is the foundation of all education, all wisdom, all learning and it is the grid through which everything that occurs in life must be interpreted. 2 Corinthians 10 says that we are destroying fortresses. We as Christians are engaged in spiritual warfare. It’s not chasing demons, for they have their ruling powers and their hosts of demons, it’s that the truth of the gospel, the truth of the gospel which is the power of God and the power of God is the power of the truth. Isaiah 11 says that the Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, the Lion shall lie down with the Lamb, there is peace in the land. But the beast is running rampant, its antlers are a form of Christianity, a form of Christianity which is not understanding rightly the Word of God. God is rational and His Word is rational.

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rational. It is clearly revealed truth. It discloses, reveals, manifests, makes known what is actually true. God has revealed to us the idea, the pattern, the truth about everything in Scripture that matters and affects our lives. Not only that which is actually prepositional truth, but that which can be and must be said about truth. Scripture. The Bible doesn’t say everything that could be said about science, but it tells us God is the Creator and how he created. The Bible doesn’t say everything that could possibly be said about manufacturing but it says a lot about how God made machines. It doesn’t say everything that could possibly be said about the state but it says a lot about the institution of marriage. And how you’re supposed to work. There are so many implications that can be drawn out of Scripture. So God is rational and so are his servants. Not only are they both in what it states and what it implies. We have the responsibility then to come to a rational understanding of the truth of God and then to go out into the world and use that rational understanding to live our lives in a way that’s going to benefit the greatest blessing of God upon our lives and the most usefulness as we come across the great fortifications of deception that make up so many of the issues of our time. We have to get rid of our inferior faith can not rest on the wisdom of men, it has to rest on the power of God, yet we do speak wisdom. We’re not saying that we have all the wisdom. It doesn’t rest on the wisdom of men, but it isn’t mindless. We do speak wisdom among his people, the people of God, the people of Christ, the people of God, however, not of this age, not of this world, not of this sphere, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. They are in the sight of our Lord, all the heavenly hosts, all the philosophers, leaders and wisdom is temporary — it is all going to perish. We are in wisdom but it’s not the wisdom of the world. God’s wisdom is eternal. “We speak God’s wisdom.” What a statement! Paul says, I am not interested in the wisdom of the world. I am not interested in attending the world’s university, I’m not interested in attending in the world’s classes, in sitting under the world’s masters, to tell you. You can’t know what God is thinking, you can’t know what God is thinking, and we can’t even understand or know what God is thinking. We speak God’s wisdom. We recognize that it is a hidden wisdom, hidden from everyone except the Lord. But we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the world was created. It’s a great statement. Do you know that only those who were predestined by God to know true wisdom know it? And it’s not hidden from them to God. The world is ignorant, the world is devoid of the truth. Verse eight says: “The wisdom which none of the rulers of this world of this age has understood.” They don’t get it. If they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. The Jews of anybody should have known the wisdom of God. Since they had the Old Testament, the Law and Prophets, the Holy Writings, but even they didn’t know him. Why? Because verse nine says it’s not available to them. You can’t discover this wisdom by experimentation or observation. You can’t perceive it, or gain it by looking and listening. It’s not available outside of yourself. Scripture is the only way, the only way in which they have not entered the heart of man.” It’s not available inside you. You can’t find it intuitively, in your own experiences, or in some empirical, experience, or perception, opinion. It’s not perceptible inside of you. Verse nine says, “all that God has prepared for those who love Him.” They can know that there’s a Creator, through reason. They can know that there’s a moral law, but they can’t prove it to others. They cannot know what God has planned in His salvation purpose. So you have a whole world of people absolutely ignorant of the truth. Therefore they are ignorant of the initial true wisdom that unlocks all the true wisdom. True wisdom begins with fearing God, with knowing Christ. Then that puts you in the door of the library of wisdom, which is available to those who turn to the Lord Jesus Christ. Then you spend the rest of your life perusing all that is in that library. Vene ten is such an important verse, “For to us, God revealed this wisdom.” Can I tell you something folks, we are not like the world. The world doesn’t know the wisdom, we do. We are a very unique and select people, and God predestined that He would grant to us this wisdom and glory for our glory. What an incredible thing. “For to us God revealed Him through the Spirit.” And then He says, “For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.” The Holy Spirit, who is a member of the Trinity knows God because He is God. He knows the deep things of God, the profound things of God because He is God. In verse eleven Paul gives a little analogy, “Who among men knows the thoughts of God except the spirit of the man?” You don’t have any idea what I’m thinking if I don’t say anything; but I know what I’m thinking. Nobody knows what man is thinking except the Spirit in that man, even so, nobody knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.” My Spirit knows what I am thinking, because my Spirit is one with my thought. God knows what He is thinking because His Spirit is one with Him. You can’t know what I’m thinking, and we can’t even understand or know what God is thinking. We speak God’s wisdom. We recognize that it is a hidden wisdom, hidden from everyone except the Lord. But we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the world was created. It’s a great statement. Do you know that only those who were predestined by God to know true wisdom know it? And it’s not hidden from them to God. The world is ignorant, the world is devoid of the truth. Verse eight says: “The wisdom which none of the rulers of this world of this age has understood.” They don’t get it. If they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. The Jews of anybody should have known the wisdom of God. Since they had the Old Testament, the Law and Prophets, the Holy Writings, but even they didn’t know him. Why? Because verse nine says it’s not available to them. You can’t discover this wisdom by experimentation or observation. You can’t perceive it, or gain it by looking and listening. It’s not available outside of yourself. Scripture is the only way, the only way in which they have not entered the heart of man.” It’s not available inside you. You can’t find it intuitively, in your own experiences, or in some empirical, experience, or perception, opinion. It’s not perceptible inside of you. Verse nine says, “all that God has prepared for pattern of God, the mind of God put in words. In normal language, involving real people in actual history. Without secret meanings and categories and some kind of transcendental insights. God has spoken and Paul says God used us to put the spiritual thoughts into actual words. In verse fourteen he says, “But a natural man.” What is a natural man? Somebody who is not converted, not spiritual, just another person in the world that doesn’t accept the things of the Spirit of God. He might pick up a Bible but he doesn’t accept it. Why? They appear foolish to him, it all sounds foolish. They mock it, despise it and laugh at the Scriptures. The natural person in the world, no matter how educated, no matter how erudite he might be, cannot find the truth outside of himself by observation, intuition, or even understand the truth when he is given the revelation. It’s locked out. You can take the Bible and put it in the hands of an evolutionist who doesn’t know God and he will think it’s foolish. And so they mock the Bible even though they have one because the Bible is spiritually apprehended, that is to say, you have to be alive spiritually to understand it. And that’s what verse ten says, “that he who is spiritual.” What does it mean to be spiritual? It doesn’t mean to be a super spiritual it just means to be a Christian. Your spirit is no longer dead, it’s alive. You now have the life of God in your soul. You pick up a Bible and it’s a whole different thing. What is foolishness to a Ph.D. is powerful truth to an ignorant, converted fool. What is folly to a philosopher is profound to a ditch digger who knows Christ. You really understand spiritual truth, but no one else understands it. Nobody can really see the real you. You walk down the street and look like everybody else, but they don’t realize you understand the secrets of the Universe. You know why we’re here, where we came from, who made us, the beginning and the end of human history, you understand moral law, God is and the unfolding of His plan in the world. You have an eternal perspective, you’re an unbelievable commodity, but they don’t get it. And even if you bring it up they don’t get it. Why? Verse sixteen, “Who has known who has known the mind of the Lord that He should instruct Him, but we have the mind of Christ.” That young people, is one of the greatest statements ever made in the Bible, we have the mind of Christ. Sometimes I hear people say, “you know I wish I had the mind of Christ wish...” You do. What do you mean I do? Do you have a Bible? You have the mind of Christ. Having the mind of Christ isn’t a technical matter, having the mind of Christ isn’t transcendental. When you have the mind of Christ it simply means you know exactly how God thinks, how Christ thinks. Having the mind of Christ or intentions means that you have complete access to it. You don’t have to depend upon your limited observation skills. You don’t blindly approach the Scriptures because you own a Bible and you have the spirit of Christ in you, right? He becomes the resident truth teacher. This is really incredible! Young people, the right context in which to study everything in God’s created world, to study everything that has happened in the history of humanity, and to study all of human life and the socialization and everything else that’s going on, is to study it with people who have in great measure come to a rich and profound grasp of the mind of Christ. That’s what makes The Master’s College so special. It’s what makes it what it is. We’re not running around trying to find some expert to give us his view and then we can vote on whether we agree. We don’t take polls around here. We don’t say...”

Well we don’t do that because 62 percent of the students are against it.” We just have one source it’s the mind of God. Since He’s given us His mind this is where we start for everything. That’s wisdom. An incredible gift! You can understand the world and everything about it. Everything from inanimate creation through the plant life all the way up into human life and socialization, history and everything that’s involved in this massive wonderful universe that God has made. You will never fully, truly and rightly understand that apart from seeing it through the grid of the revealed mind of Christ. That’s what true education is. It takes you out of the mundane and trivial and the temporal’s what going to perish and burn and puts us into the eternal. What a privilege, what a privilege.

Excerpted from the chapel message given on 10/23/98 at The Master’s College. If you are interested in purchasing TMC Chapel messages, call (805) 259-3540, ext. 300.
Moved by the Compassion for Mission

“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.” At The Master’s College we believe educating the next generation of spiritual leaders requires a face-to-face exposure to lost and hurting people. Sermons on evangelism often result in little more than another set of well-taken notes. Christ was moved with compassion for the lost as He moved among them, looking upon their broken lives. Sight results in compassion. It has remained the college’s commitment for the last thirteen years to not only tell students about their responsibility to reach the lost, but put them in contact with the lost. Obedience coupled with compassion is the motivation of the missionary. Today’s students are justified in existing guilt-based appeals to mission. We must lead them to embrace Christ’s call of compassion.

This year students responded in record numbers to our volunteer-based missions conference. Five hundred students on thirty-two teams hit the streets to engage individuals with the Gospel which meets their true needs. Always working with and through local churches, these teams served from ski resorts to suburban backyard clubs. Not only is the experience of going critical to the development of a student’s world vision, but the responsibility of calling their peers to follow them into service an important element of our strategy. Student led teams have proven to be the most powerful means to ownership of missions among the student body. Not only do students see the example of faculty and staff, but their own friends and roommates moving among the lost. We thank God for how He continues to shape us all as students of the Master.

Master’s Students Share Their Faith

Mission programs reaching out to SCV community

Kellie Cunningham, a third-year student at the college, is one student who returned to the program each year and each has taken her on a new journey of faith. Her first was to a soup kitchen run by a church in Palmdale.

There, she and fellow students would prepare for the meals of homeless and hungry at dinner time. During the meal, they would entertain children and their families with a worship program that included songs and skits.

This year, Cunningham spent the week at someplace a bit more familiar — Grace Community Church in Panorama City — her home church. There, church members were gearing up a new program to acquaint school-aged children in the neighborhood with Christian teachings. It introduces them to religion and God, she said. The Master’s students went to spread the word throughout the community. While talking to people may seem an easy enough task, going door to door these days can present challenges, especially in rougher neighborhoods.

“If I don’t get criticized by things easily,” she said. “I’m not afraid.”

That focus is what draws Cunningham to the program. She loves the opportunity to share the common bond of faith with Christians of other communities, but also see their faith affect others.

I go back because it’s so neat to see lives changed, and just a short time,” she said.

For one week each year, the students of The Master’s College get a glimpse of life at their fellow Christian churches around the state and in some cases, the world. The school’s annual week-long missions program gives students the opportunity to share their faith and put what they’ve learned as Christians to work.

The program was started several years ago and was intended as a week of sharing. Those who had served on missions would meet with master’s students on campus to share their experiences and encourage others.

After a while the program changed and students began going out into the community on missions of their own.

While participation in the program is encouraged, it is not required. The program has become quite a success.
Dr. Robert Trujillo is an Assistant Professor of Biblical Counseling. He has had a broad range of experience in the field of applied psychology. He has also served as the director of training for several graduate programs. He has instructed undergraduate and graduate students, and is well aware of the philosophical and practical limitations and myths that characterize the field of psychology.

Dr. Ross S. Anderson is an Associate Professor of Biochemistry. His expertise lies in the areas of cellular and molecular biology. He taught Biochemistry and helped direct the research projects of graduate and medical students at Baylor College of Medicine. At Lamar University, he taught advanced Physiology, Cell and Molecular Biology, Histology, Immunology, and Endocrinology as well as directed the research projects of graduate students seeking a Masters Degree in Biology. Dr. Anderson's research interests include structure-function studies of DNA polymerizing enzymes, serotonin receptors of the mammalian eye, and the synthesis and expression of synthetic genes. He has authored or co-authored several publications in major, peer-reviewed journals. Dr. Anderson is a member of the American Chemical Society, Sigma Xi Research Society, and the Human Anatomy and Physiology Society.

Mr. Jo Suzuki is an Assistant Professor of English. His area of specialization is postmodernism and contemporary rhetorical, critical, and cultural theories. He is currently completing his dissertation toward a Ph.D. in Humanities from The University of Texas at Arlington majoring in rhetoric. Mr. Suzuki's dissertation title is "ex-Rhetoric: "teaching for/against Techno-Capitalist Classroom."

Dr. Michael Button is an Associate Professor of Mathematics. He is a member of the Mathematical Association of America and the American Mathematical Society. During the summer of 1992, he went to a mission English teacher to the Kiev State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages in Kiev, Ukraine.

Dr. Shirley Carpenter is the Chairperson for the Department of Teacher Education and also an Associate Professor of Education. She has served as a member and held various offices in the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA). She has been a guest lecturer and instructor for Graduate Level Administrative Courses at Cal Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, CA. Administrative experiences have included K-8 Principal and Superintendent in Cambria, CA and Principal and Assistant Superintendent of Education in the Pleasant Valley School District. Her teaching experience includes both elementary and secondary in various California school districts. She holds a Clear General Elementary Teaching Credential (Life) in California as well as her Administrative Credentials.

The Master's College Recognized as the Best in Foodservice

Bon Appetit at The Master's College was recognized as one of the top two schools that care 'The Best in Meeting Their Students' Expectations in the Area of Foodservice.'

Recently the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities decided to form a group to help solve continuing issues in the area of campus life and academic programming. The group, called the College Coalition Quality Retention Project (CCQRP), set out to find those institutions who are great examples of innovation, quality, and overall campus enhancements in order to meet the needs of the campus community.

CGRATULATIONS!!

Playoff-bound Mustangs Highlight Fall Sports

A REVIEW OF THE 1998 FALL SPORTS SEASON

If reaching the playoffs is a sign of success, then count the fall sports teams at The Master's College as very successful in 1998. One squad qualified for postseason play for the first time, another made it back after a one-year hiatus, while the third continued to make it an annual tradition.

Despite playing the most rigorous schedule in school history and winning only four games, the Lady Mustang soccer team persevered and made the playoffs for the first time in the program's seven-year history. Second-year head coach Dudley Hitchman watched as his team struggled at both ends of the field for much of the campaign but was elated with playing beyond the regular season, where the team lost to U.S. International University in the first round. Junior forward Marianne McCaillard (Acton, CA) led the Mustangs in scoring with six goals while junior forward Heather Haldread (Santa Clarita, CA) was close behind with five tallies.

In her second season at the helm of the women's volleyball team, Coach Karen Peterson was able to mesh the old with the new in her system and it showed as the Lady Mustangs produced a 17-14 record, appeared in the NAIA Top 25 ranking for the first time ever, and returned to the playoffs. The Lady Mustangs were amazingly consistent and came away with victories over several Top 25 opponents. When they beat Westminster College on October 29 they entered the national rankings at No. 18 for a one-week stay. The upcoming season came to a disappointing end in the first round of the regional playoffs as the Mustangs fell to the second-ranked team in the country, Fresno Pacific University. Junior middle blocker Kim Gibson (Mission Viejo, CA) and sophomore outside hitter Beth Barrington (Ukiah, CA) led the Mustangs in virtually every statistical category and earned NAIA All-First West Region honors, while freshmen Kati Lehe (Crest, NE) provided instant stability at the all-important setter position.

On the soccer field, eight-year head coach Jim Rickard led his young Mustangs to their sixth consecutive winning season and their ninth regional final in ten years. However, the road to the nationals was blocked again by Westminster College, who defeated the Mustangs for the third time in eight regional finals. During the course of the season, the Mustangs, with only three seniors, defeated four Top 25 teams and Rickard, the winningest coach in school history, recorded his 100th career win. The 13-6-3 squad was led in scoring by senior midfielders Erik Benitez (Stockholm, Sweden), who finished with 28 points, while freshman forward Antron Bruegeman (Glendale, AZ), who had a team-high 11 goals, and sophomore midfielders Riany Brooke (Glendale, AZ) tallied 27 points a piece. Senior midfielder Paul Dojo (Moortop, CA) and senior defender Jared Kira (Moortop, CA) earned NAIA All-West Region First Team honors while Bruegeman and Benitez were selected to the second squad.
John MacArthur

January 13-15 Winter Enrichment Conference Cedarville, OH Contact: Paul Dixon 937-766-2211

February 19 Real Evangelism Conference First Baptist Church Arnold, MI Contact: Bailey Smith 770-368-0099

20-24 World Missions Conference Briarwood Presbyterian Church Birmingham, AL Contact: Tom Cheesy 205-978-2208

March 10-14 Shepherds Conference Grace Community Church Sun Valley, CA Contact: Rob Ziegler 818-909-5589

April 7-9 Shepherds Conference The Bible Church of Little Rock Little Rock, AR Contact: Lance Quinn 501-227-4980

9-10 Soli Deo Gloria Conference Little Rock, AR Contact: Don Kister 412-221-1901

Wayne Mack

January

1-14 South Africa
29-31 Clearcreek Chapel Springboro, OH 937-885-2143

February

12-14 Christian Life Church Salem, Indiana Contact: Keith Pausen 812-883-5334

April

16-18 Berrien Bible Church San Carlos, CA Contact: Rick Carbonneau 650-592-5252

Monte Brooks

December

10 Northwest Christian College

William Varner

January

5-7 Crown Valley Community Church Acton, CA

16 Second Baptist Church Pottstown, PA

February

7 and 21 Crown Valley Community Church Acton, CA

Feb. 28 First Baptist Church through Hemet, CA March 3

Betty Price

February

26-28 Crossroads Baptist Church Bellevue, WA Contact: Paulette Gledhill

April

23-25 Grace Bible Church Marysville, WA Contact: C.J. Wernerssen

Tom Halstead

Every Sunday Interim Pastor Faith Community Church Fillmore, CA

January

22-23 Emmanuel Baptist Church Mt. Vernon, WA