

FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAITH

THROUGH THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000

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Every Square Inch

(Articles 12 and 13: Education and Stewardship)

“There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, **Mine!**” – 19th-century Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper

Article 12: Education¹ - “Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ’s people. In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.”

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

Key Verses:

Matthew 22:37-40: “Jesus said to him, — ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” (Not in article)

2 Timothy 2:15: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

1. Enlightenment and Intelligence

- Jesus is the Source of all wisdom and knowledge.
- All truth is God’s truth.

2. Responsibilities in Education

- Parents are primary educators in faith.
- Churches support education similar to missions.

¹ From the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000>.

3. Balance in Education

- Balance between academic freedom and responsibility.
- Freedom is limited by Christ's pre-eminence and Scripture's authority.

4. Educational Program Goals

- Develop a biblical worldview.
- Equip individuals for Christian service.

Article 13: Stewardship² – "God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth."

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21, 42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

Key Verses:

Matthew 6:19-21: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

2 Cor. 9:7: "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."

1. God's Ownership

- God is the source of all blessings.
- Christians are stewards of time, talents, and possessions.

2. Giving Principles

- Give cheerfully and systematically.
- Use resources to advance God's kingdom and to help others.

3. Stewardship as Worship

- Stewardship and worship involve every aspect of life, and we do both for the glory of God.
- Stewardship is not just about money, and worship is not just about singing.

Practical Applications:

1. Pray for homes that teach God's truth, our church's teaching ministry, parents who homeschool their children, teachers in Christian and private schools, teachers in public schools, and Baptist colleges and seminaries.
2. Thank God for what He has entrusted to you as His steward and ask Him to help you be faithful to manage His resources.
3. Identify an area in your life (time, abilities/talents, money, spiritual gifts, influence) that you can steward better for God's glory and to expand His kingdom.

² From the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000>.