**Why the University Should Matter to the Church**

Episode #6: How to be a Student at University

Biblical | Theological | Historical | Philosophical | Practical | Example

**Student Stories** A few of my experiences. My two questions for students: “What do I want out of this course?” and “What am I willing to do to get what I want out of this course?” “School” came from the Latin / Greek *schole* meaning “leisure.” Billy Graham, John Wesley = study then ministry. Qs: How can I best utilize my time? What is the best use of my opportunity? What place is best to prepare myself for life? Who can I ask to help me in my vocation as a student? Consortium of Christian Study Centers.

**Scripture Lesson** Acts 19.8-10, “reasoning.” “Reasoning" (Acts 17:2; 18:4, 18:19; 24:25) or "public preaching," (Acts 20:7, 9.) “In the school of one Tyrannus” = a space for learning. Students bear responsibility for Honesty (trusted sources) Transparency (ethics) Evenhandedness (v. bias) Wisdom (not just info) Titus 2:1 – 3:10 apply biblical teaching to your studies.

**University Reminders** 2 Important Points: (1) As soon as you’ve asked a question, you’ve biased your research & (2) ask yourself the question, “What am I \*not\* hearing?” Do you ever ask, Could I be wrong? Have I looked at all sides? Am I broadminded? Do my biases mislead? Are my sources correct? Five influencers: (1) Big Tech (2) Federal Bureaucracy (3) Universities (4) Hollywood (5) Social Media

**Studies are sacraments** to God (Heb 13:15) Studies offer discipline of concentration, which, in turn, enables the believer to wait attentively for God to speak. “Every school exercise is like a sacrament” [Simon Weil “Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God”] History can be the best way to make a point. [Jesse Owens story] People do this all the time: we are too close to our own history and too far away from others’ to properly, exactly interpret how to view history.

**Current State of the University** (1) Subjectivism: Everything is fluid, in a constant flux, there is no absolute, reality is left to the individual person perceiving it. There is no “truth” & “facts” are subject to the interpreter. (2) Emotivism: Any ethical claims cannot be declarations based on objective facts or logic but are simply expressions of feeling. Subjectivism becomes emotivism based solely on preferences or desires. (3) Whataboutism: Unless the voices agree with the position or narrative of a certain group, any comparison is seen as a violation or an attack. Historical evidence subtracts any perspective other than the accepted. (4) Scientism: (a) Leaving out supernatural or (b) pressured by an identity narrative that goes against biology. “Evidence” is made to fit the accepted POV no matter what is real. (5) Religion: confidence, trust, and loyalty is given to a catechism or liturgy for worship. Adherence, commitment to a system or structure with its own prophets, priests & kings. (6) Pulpit Preaching: Professors in their pastoral roles shepherd their students to reconfirm commitments to belief. InDOCTRINation happens everywhere. All have dogmas to which we give allegiance. Universities are no different.

**Christian Conduct on Campus** Maintain connection with your local church. Your local church should maintain connection with you. Connect with university Christian groups. Find professors / mentors who are Christians. Christian campuses may have profs with whom you disagree. Know your weaknesses, find campus encouragement. Don’t believe the first thing you hear. Know the difference: broad- versus open-minded. Have alternative sources of news. Stand firm in the faith, let all you do be done in love. **Why go to university?** Defend “encourage each other w/ sound doctrine refute who oppose it” (Titus 1.9)
Discipline “be attentive that you may gain insight” (Pr 4:1) Discovery “teach a righteous person and she will increase in learning” (Pr 9:9) Dedication “Listen to your father, mother buy truth, do not sell” (Pr 23:22-5) Discernment “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Pr 1.7, 9.10). [C. S. Lewis, “Learning in War Time,” *The Weight of Glory*] https://markeckel.com/thoughtful-christians-in-culture/ Week #6