

EDUCATION

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Purpose

An Introduction to a Biblical Philosophy of Education



Catasha H. Fields

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A Note to the Reader

“Education Meets Purpose” began with an assignment. When Pastor Caesar LeFlore invited me to speak on the topic, “Education Meets Purpose,” at the Pulling the Fire Alarm on Government Schools Conference in August 2026, I began to think deeply about those three words, pray intentionally, and examine the Scriptures concerning the very foundation of education.

Those three words caused me to ask some foundational questions: What is education? What is purpose? Which comes first? And ultimately, why does education exist in God’s economy?

As I wrestled with those questions, I began bringing together long-held biblical convictions that have shaped my understanding and practice of Christian education for many years.

What emerged was more than the framework for a speech. I began to see the foundation of what I am prayerfully developing as a *“Biblical Philosophy of Education”*—one rooted in the truth that purpose begins with God, truth is revealed through Christ, understanding is illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and education must ultimately serve the purpose and glory of the Creator.

This booklet is not intended to present that philosophy in its completed form. Rather, it is an introduction—the beginning of a larger work that I intend to continue developing through prayer, Scripture, study, and reflection.

My hope is that these pages will cause you to wrestle with the same foundational questions. Before we debate where children should be educated, how they should be educated, or what they should be taught, perhaps we must first return to the beginning and ask: What did God intend education to accomplish in the life of the person He created?

It is there, I believe, that **Education Meets Purpose**.

The Foundational Question — Which Comes First? Education or Purpose

According to Merriam-Webster, education is defined principally as the process of teaching or becoming educated, and as the knowledge and development resulting from learning. Where did the word originate? The word's origin lies in Latin, with two distinct verbs: *ēducāre*, which means “to rear,” “to bring up,” or “to nourish,” and *ēducere*, which means “to lead out” or “to bring forth.”

By the 1530s, the word “education” entered the English language, with the meaning of child-rearing and training; by the 1610s, the definition included methodical schooling and training for work.

Purpose is “the reason something is done or used” and also “an aim or goal,” as defined by Merriam-Webster.

The standard dictionary definition of education can tell us what education does: it describes it in terms of teaching, learning, acquiring knowledge, developing abilities, or systematic instruction.

But why does education exist? Or can we properly define education without first defining the purpose of the person being educated?

There is a profound, sacred intersection where these two massive ideas meet. And when they meet, they don't just cross paths—they become one complete blueprint that guides how educators shape the classroom, how parents are commanded to steward and nurture the child, and how the ministers of the faith are called to shepherd the soul.

Therefore, we must ask ourselves a foundational question.

Since education and purpose intersect, which comes first? Which one predates the other? **I believe it to be purpose.**

Purpose precedes education because the Creator's intent for the creation naturally precedes the development of the creation. Scripture establishes this principle in Ephesians 2:10, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Therefore, when we bring those ideas together, something powerful emerges long before the child is instructed; there is divine intent. Before there is curriculum, there is calling. Before there is education, there is purpose that already exists.

Consequently, education exists to equip the individual to understand, steward, and walk in the purpose for which God created them.

The Scriptures reveal the powerful emergence of these two concepts, moving us beyond what the dictionary can tell us or what classrooms can teach us, and transforming our understanding of creation, divine intent, knowledge, wisdom, truth, revelation, stewardship, and calling into a beautiful masterpiece.

So, what then is education? And what is purpose?

- A dictionary can define education, but can it explain why man *should* be educated?
- A dictionary can define purpose, but can it *identify* the Creator's purpose for man?

“Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.” -Psalm 8:2-5

If God has endowed each person with an intrinsic purpose, then the pursuit of understanding this God-given purpose must precede any meaningful consideration of the purpose of education. Can the intent of the Creator be understood merely by His creation? No. The Creator must reveal His intent to His creation.

We are not wandering aimlessly without the revelation of God's creative intent. The Bible speaks on this wise: that God has revealed Himself throughout all the things He has made.

Also, He has given us His written Word, which is illuminated by the power of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus called the Spirit of Truth, through whom the Father desires His nature, truth, commands, and purposes toward us be embedded on the tablets of our hearts and minds so that we may know and walk in His truth.

After that, we truly attest that the premise of a biblical philosophy of education must begin with the revelation of God if it is to be truly biblical. So, then, a biblical philosophy of education must precede the school, the curriculum, the teacher's instruction, or even our understanding of how students learn.

Consequently, education neither originates nor fulfills its purpose apart from the Creator. It is neither self-defining nor does it exist to serve its own ends independently, but must ultimately be subject to the revelation of the One who gives it meaning and direction.

And Romans 1:19–20 explicitly declares that. “Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”

Therefore, from a biblical perspective, education cannot be separated from the source of true wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. Proverbs 2:6 declares, “For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” And Proverbs 1:7 establishes that “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.”

And purpose is descriptive to the hearer: “...Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” -Psalm 139:13-16

These conceptual ideas are essential truths that work together to train and equip a child's mind or conscience. But why do we train them? It is for that which has been predestined for the time allocated on earth, to faithfully occupy, steward, and walk in dominion authority for the glory of God. As stated in Genesis 1:26-28 and Psalm 8:6-9, humanity is called “...to subdue it: and have dominion...upon the earth.”

In the next few sections, I will provide a brief introduction to this blueprint and explain how we must align our instruction, our parenting, and our ministry so that education serves the eternal purpose of every child.

Purpose — The Abode of Intent

Having established that the biblical philosophy of education truly begins with God's intent, revealed by Him rather than invented by man, we now turn to what this means for us as parents and educators. How do we recognize, cultivate, and nurture the divine purpose within each child entrusted to our care?

In light of these truths, we are compelled to examine a foundational question: If purpose predates education, what, then, is purpose?

“Purpose is the abode where one carries the intent of why one was created.”

When I say “*abode*,” I don't merely mean a physical place. An abode is a dwelling place, a place of habitation, somewhere something resides. In this context, I mean a sacred dwelling within every person where God's original intent resides. And what resides within this abode? God-given purpose.

From a biblical perspective, this means that before the foundations of the earth were laid, before a child ever has the capacity to understand who they are, God already knows them.

Before they discover a talent, choose an occupation, enter a classroom, or receive instruction from a teacher, the Creator has already established His intent concerning His creation.

The Psalmist declares:

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” -Psalm 139:13-14

God built a specific architectural design for every single child, knitting them together in their mother’s womb with a divine intentionality.

Therefore, purpose is not something a school manufactures, a parent invents, a teacher assigns, or a child merely decides for themselves; it is a sacred, spiritual place within a child where that divine blueprint lives.

Purpose precedes awareness. God knows before we know the calling carried within our soul.

This is what I mean by the **Abode of Intent**: the child comes into this world already known by God, fearfully and wonderfully made, bearing His image, and subject to an intent that originates beyond themselves.

When God called me on this beautiful journey of homeschooling, the Holy Spirit began to enlighten my understanding over the years that each individual child is unique, fearfully and wonderfully made, and carries a divine purpose within them.

As I taught and observed children, I began to understand more deeply that education should not be about manufacturing an identity for a child, but helping cultivate the person God created.

This means that the children God has given us are not blank canvases upon which we are to paint our own ambitions. They are His workmanship. They are His sovereign designs, fashioned by Him to carry His divine intent into the earth. We are not to build the abode. The abode is already designed. We are not called to manufacture purpose, but to uncover it.

Purpose originates with God. Our responsibility is to prayerfully steward the child, helping them understand not only who they are, but Whose they are, and that their true identity must ultimately be found in Christ Jesus.

The Metamorphosis of the Person

Through the lens of nature, we are given a beautiful picture of the development in the process of metamorphosis. Scientifically, metamorphosis is the biological process in which a butterfly undergoes distinct stages: egg, larva or caterpillar, pupa or chrysalis, and adult butterfly, resulting in a radical change in body structure and form.

The butterfly does not determine its own created design. That design precedes its development. Yet what has been designed must unfold through a time-appointed process.

Likewise, the human person passes through stages of natural development, but there is also spiritual transformation that natural development alone can never accomplish. Jesus declared that a person must be born again.

Scripture teaches that in Christ we become a new creature:

“...old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” -2 Corinthians 5:17

The Apostle Paul further describes this distinction between the natural and the spiritual:

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.” -1 Corinthians 15:45-46

Christ, the last Adam, is the quickening Spirit. Therefore, the gift of salvation originates in the mind and will of God, given to those who receive Christ as Lord and Savior.

Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, was given according to the eternal purpose of God to reconcile us to the Father, make us new, and bring us into spiritual alignment, so that we can rightly know Him and increasingly understand how we are to walk before Him.

The blueprint originates with God. Transformation brings the person into proper alignment and relationship with the One who holds the blueprint.

Parents as Stewards of the Abode

A child cannot fully understand or occupy the intent of why they were created without proper cultivation and nourishment. From that posture, parents should pray intentionally, discern, and observe the calling, giftings, talents, interests, burdens, and skills developing within their children.

Why? Because the traits that are visibly observed may be *flickering flames* of something greater, signposts pointing toward capacities the Creator has placed within the child.

Yet, we must exercise discernment. A gift is not necessarily the fullness of one's purpose. A talent is not automatically one's calling. An occupation is not necessarily one's identity.

Therefore, when parents are prayerfully discerning their child's calling, purpose, and gifting, we must not confuse these things with mere assignments, careers, and occupations, or worldly ambition.

God-given purpose reaches deeper. Calling, gifting, and purpose are part of a lifelong journey to discover how the Creator intends for the life He has given us to be faithfully stewarded.

Even ambition must submit itself to God. Our aim cannot simply be achievement for the applause of this world, but a life that yields Kingdom fruit for the glory of God.

This changes what we consider the weightier matters of education.

Academic excellence matters. Reading, mathematics, science, history, language, and the development of intellectual ability matter greatly. But these things must remain in their proper order.

The child does not exist to serve academics; academics must serve the formation of the child.

- The transcript is not weightier than the soul.
- The occupation is not weightier than the calling.
- Achievement is not weightier than obedience.

Therefore, parents, not the state or any other entity, are called and commanded by God to steward, cultivate, nourish, and, when necessary, redirect those developing traits through the power of the written Word of God.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 commands parents concerning the words of God: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children..."

Notice that biblical instruction does more than touch the intellect. It must touch the palate. Parents must cultivate within their children a taste and hunger for righteousness, to love what God loves, desire what God desires, recognize what is true, and develop an appetite for the things of God. **This is the stewardship of the soul.**

God Knows Before We Know

So what does Scripture say existed in the mind and will of God concerning a person before that person could know anything about themselves?

God tells Jeremiah:

“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee...” -Jeremiah 1:5

The Apostle Paul writes that God:

“...hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love.” -Ephesians 1:4

And again, Scripture speaks of God:

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” - 2 Timothy 1:9

Therefore, to “*carry*” God-given purpose, to possess this **Abode of Intent**, does not mean that a child enters the world already understanding the fullness of God’s plan.

Rather, from birth through natural development, and ultimately through the transformative work of salvation in Jesus Christ, there is a lifelong process of knowing God, being formed by His truth, discerning His will, cultivating what He has entrusted to us, and faithfully walking in that which He has purposed.

This is why education cannot manufacture purpose. Education must cultivate the person who carries it. And when parents understand this sacred stewardship, education takes its proper place in a child’s life—not as the author of the child’s identity or the creator of their destiny, but as a servant in the process of equipping them to understand, steward, occupy, and walk in the God-given purpose for which they were created.

It is from this posture that we can now ask: **If purpose is the Abode of Intent, what role does education play in helping the child understand and walk within it?** That brings us to the next part of the blueprint: *Education — The Conduit.*

Education — The Conduit

So, if purpose is the abode—the divine place of intent—what, then, is education? Too often, the world treats education like an assembly line, designed merely to produce workers for a finite economy.

Children enter, information is deposited, achievement is measured, credentials are awarded, and eventually workers emerge prepared to serve the marketplace.

But if purpose predates education, education cannot merely exist to prepare a child for an occupation. We are called to a higher understanding. We must look beyond what education has become and examine what it was intended to accomplish.

“Education is the mechanism or conduit that transports, delivers, or imparts the vast knowledge of the seen—the visible—or unseen—the invisible—things in the world to the student, who then conceptualizes it through their intellectual faculties to create a transformative tapestry.”

The Conduit of Knowledge

Consider the mechanics of this definition more closely. Education functions as a conduit—a pipeline through which knowledge flows from one generation to another.

Yet this conduit is not limited to the transmission of observable facts. It carries knowledge concerning both the seen and the unseen, the visible and invisible realities of God's creation.

The visible things are those tangible wonders we can observe, examine, calculate, investigate, and experience: the intricate design of a cell, the movement of the planets, the history of nations, the structure of language, the laws governing the physical world, and the tremendous diversity of living things.

They are the fingerprints of God's handiwork throughout creation. But true education does not stop with what the physical eye can see.

The conduit carries the student further. There are realities that cannot be placed underneath a microscope or weighed upon a scale: the abstractions of justice, the weight of morality, the nature of truth, the reality of faith, the beauty of righteousness, and the eternal things of God.

Romans 1:19-20 declares:

“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead...”

The seen points us toward the unseen. Creation testifies that there is something beyond creation. Therefore, as educators, parents, and ministers of the faith, our task cannot merely be the transmission of facts.

Education should help the learner apprehend the divine realities of God's handiwork while directing the understanding toward the Creator who gives that world meaning.

Science should not stop with the creation while ignoring its Creator. The laws of mathematics should awaken us to order, consistency, pattern, and reason. The arts reveal man's extraordinary capacity to create because humanity itself bears the image of the Creator.

Every discipline contains knowledge to be explored, but none should be permitted to become sovereign over the truth from which knowledge ultimately derives its meaning.

The Ultimate Teacher

But we must be careful not to misunderstand the true nature of this conduit. Education, in and of itself, cannot produce wisdom. Mere information cannot transform the heart.

- A person can possess an extraordinary amount of information and remain devoid of wisdom.
- A person can memorize facts and still be unable to discern the truth.
- A person can become academically accomplished and yet never understand the purpose for which they were created.

Therefore, the conduit is not the ultimate Teacher.

Jesus told His disciples:

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things..." -John 14:26

And again:

"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth..." -John 16:13

Every teacher, every parent, and every pastor is only a steward of education. The **Holy Spirit** remains the ultimate Teacher, leading every willing heart into truth. We may plant, we may water, but only God grants understanding and growth.

Notice how that echoes 1 Corinthians 3:6:

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

Therefore, education becomes life-giving not merely because information has successfully traveled through the conduit, but because

the Spirit of God illuminates truth within the mind and conscience, giving understanding that information alone cannot produce.

The Transformative Tapestry

But consider what happens when knowledge travels through the conduit and reaches the student. The student is not merely a passive vessel waiting to be filled with information and sent away.

The student has been fashioned in the image of a creative God and endowed with God-given intellectual faculties—the ability to reason, imagine, question, discern, connect, remember, understand, and create.

Knowledge reaches the learner, and something begins to happen.

They weave.

A thread of history meets a strand of science, language joins mathematics, experience meets knowledge, spiritual truth enters the pattern, questions produce understanding, and understanding begins producing wisdom. And slowly, a transformative tapestry emerges.

This tapestry is not a paper that receives a grade and is eventually thrown away. It is not merely the accumulation of credits upon a transcript or letters behind a person's name. True education should produce something far more enduring: the transformation and equipping of the mind and conscience.

Knowledge changes the learner, and the learner begins weaving what has been learned into an integrated understanding of God, self, creation, truth, responsibility, and calling. The tapestry becomes an armor of wisdom.

But why does the student need this tapestry? Why should the conduit pour such a vast body of knowledge into the learner? Not merely for an examination, graduation, college, or a career. The student needs this tapestry because they must eventually step beyond the classroom and walk in their calling.

Education becomes equipment for the life to which they have been called. Purpose gives education its destination. Education equips the person for the journey.

When Education Serves Itself

What, then, happens when the conduit is disconnected from the purpose for which it exists? Education becomes distorted when it ceases to serve God's truth and begins attempting to define truth for itself.

Romans 1 continues beyond the revelation of God through creation and describes what occurs when humanity possesses evidence of God but refuses to honor Him as God. Humanity becomes vain in its imaginations, its foolish heart is darkened, and: “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools...” -Romans 1:22

Paul continues:

“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator...” -Romans 1:25

Herein lies the danger of education severed from divine purpose. When the conduit no longer submits to the Creator, it does not become neutral. It becomes vulnerable to the philosophies, ambitions, ideologies, and desires of fallen humanity.

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” -Colossians 2:8

- What should have been a conduit of *certainty* has become a conduit of *confusion*.
- What should have cultivated *wisdom* has instead cultivated *foolishness*. What should have helped a child understand *creation* now teaches the child to *worship creation* rather than the Creator.
- And what should have *served* the child's God-given purpose has begun to *demand* that the child serve the purposes of the educational system itself.

This is why education cannot be its own master.

Education is a servant.

It neither creates the child nor determines the ultimate reason for the child's existence. Therefore, it possesses no inherent authority to manufacture identity, assign ultimate purpose, or redefine truth independently of God. The child was not created for education.

Education was given to serve the formation and equipping of the child. And this is why academics, although tremendously important, cannot be the ultimate measure of whether an education has succeeded.

A child may possess exceptional academic credentials and still lack wisdom, discernment, character, or understanding of who they are in Jesus Christ.

Biblical education must therefore concern itself with the whole person, the intellect, the conscience, the character, the gifts, the calling, and ultimately the soul.

When Education Meets Purpose

Now the blueprint begins to come together.

- Purpose is the Abode of Intent.
- Education is the Conduit of Knowledge.
- The student is the Weaver.
- Wisdom becomes the Transformative Tapestry.
- The Holy Spirit is the Ultimate Teacher.
- Purpose tells us why the child was created.

Education helps equip the child to faithfully walk within their God-given purpose. And when the conduit remains submitted to the Creator, knowledge is no longer merely information to be accumulated.

It becomes material to be transformed into wisdom—wisdom that equips the child to faithfully steward the life, gifts, calling, and time the Holy God of Israel has entrusted to them.

This is where the conduit finally connects to the abode.

This is where **Education Meets Purpose**.

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Purpose

An Introduction to a Biblical Philosophy of Education



Education was never meant to manufacture purpose—it was meant to serve it.

This introductory booklet lays the foundation for a biblical philosophy of education that begins with God's eternal intent, honors the child as His masterpiece, and restores education to its rightful place—as the conduit that equips the child to walk in their God-given calling.

Purpose is the abode.

Education is the conduit.

This is where Education Meets Purpose.

*“Train up a child in the way he should go:
and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”*

— PROVERBS 22:6

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A devoted wife, mother, homeschool educator, and minister of the Gospel, Latasha is passionate about equipping families to embrace their God-given role in the education and discipleship of their children. Her heart is to see this generation rise with purpose, confidence, and a love for God's Word.

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