

# **SAVING AMERICA**

**THE WAR THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED**

**MICHAEL JOLAYEMI**



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## EDUCATION: A PINNACLE FOR RESOLVING CONFLICTS



This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous and then you shall have good success.  
—Joshua 1:8

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, EDUCATION has been the key to the success of human development. The acquisition of knowledge helps to stimulate and develop the mental and moral growth of a society. Education points to what a man is, what he is not, and what he is likely to become. It is a method of discovering self and the true meaning of life. Any society's character and culture is a direct product of the kind of education it is exposed to. Most governments in the world consider education as an important instrument of change.

Manu Goel, in his article "The Importance of Education," said, "Education has an immense impact on the human society. One can safely assume that a person is not in the proper sense till he is educated. In other words, man becomes a rational animal when he is educated."<sup>83</sup>

Education is meant to stimulate the mental and moral growth of a person. It should draw out the potential in an individual, which in

turn enhances the well-being of society. Education gives people the correct direction in life. And our choice of education is important to the acquisition of God's knowledge and also reduces the godlessness in society.

We struggle daily with adulterated education, where truth is mixed with half-truths and falsehoods. This bastardized knowledge, rather than proffering solutions, adds to the conflicts on earth, because any knowledge that does not acknowledge God, rather than helping society, will add to the world's problem.

## **What Manner of Education**

At the beginning of creation, God commended education to the first family on earth, Adam and Eve, by giving them instructions on what they should do and what they must not do. That knowledge guided their relationship with each other and with God, and it kept them out of trouble. But Satan visited them and cunningly attacked the knowledge God had imparted to them. The perversion of that knowledge led the world's first couple to disobey God. As a result of that disobedience, the human race lost its direct connection with the Creator. Man and woman were no longer guided by the pure knowledge that is from God which is able to sustain the society.

A proper education develops the total person—soul, body, and moral values. It also reflects the importance of the person's relationship to his neighbor, the society, and ultimately with God, his Creator.

The aim of early education often from childhood was to instill discipline and morals for the good of the people. There was no difference between education and morality. The resolution of conflicts, personal or corporate, within a society was predicated on the level of education its people had acquired. When the Lord Jesus walked the earth, He was known to be a great teacher not only in words but in actions. At one of his teachings, it was recorded how people were amazed. The Bible says, "When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law" (Matthew 7:28-29).

The anchor for good education is the fear of God. “Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandment, for this is the duty of all mankind” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Human attempts to forge understandings in the face of conflict have not succeeded because they were not accompanied by the fear of God. “There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death” (Proverbs 14:12). Education is the source of support for human relationships with one another and with God.

Former US president Dwight D. Eisenhower corroborated this thought when he was chancellor of Columbia University in New York. He disagreed with Columbia University scholars who believed that the sign of a good education was mere scholarship. Eisenhower believed that scholarship without human virtue makes no sense.

Stephen E. Ambrose, in his book *Eisenhower: Soldier and President*, captured Eisenhower’s encounter with university scholars thus:

Columbia was an outstanding university with a brilliant faculty composed of highly sophisticated specialists who were dedicated to their research. They regarded Eisenhower as hopelessly naïve. When one scholar told Eisenhower that “we have some of America’s most exceptional physicists, mathematics, chemists and engineers,” Eisenhower asked if they were also exceptional Americans. The scholar, confused, mumbled that Eisenhower did not understand—they were research scholars. “Dammit,” Eisenhower shot back, “What good are exceptional physicists...exceptional anything, unless they are exceptional Americans?” He added that every student who came to Columbia must leave it first a better citizen and only secondarily a better scholar.<sup>84</sup>

## **Education is the Way to Truth**

Knowledge is the practical understanding of issues, the whole body of truth and facts, connoting comprehensiveness and profundity. No man can achieve success beyond the level of knowledge he possesses. He is limited by how much education he has acquired. God supports man’s search for knowledge, as He said in the Bible, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6).

In the search for knowledge, we find the truth. It is written, "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). The truth sets the human soul, heart, and mind at liberty from the conflicts that endanger humankind. Solomon opined that knowledge has the advantage of preserving the life of its possessor (Ecclesiastes 7:2). But some people do not understand what freedom entails. True freedom is not doing what you want to do but doing what you ought to do. And this kind of freedom can only be attained with the acquisition of the knowledge of God.

Knowledge without the fear of God often adds to human problems on earth. The medical profession was initiated to protect human lives, yet some of its members have terminated lives in the name of legal abortion. Why? The plausible reason is that the moral ingredients that make such knowledge useful have been removed.

Accountants, who have the social responsibility of keeping accurate books of financial records, have sometimes criminally altered and falsified records and have added to the economic problems of society because they acquired intellect and not education.

Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary said, "Martin Luther once warned Christians with these words: 'I greatly fear that schools for higher learning are wide gates to hell if they do not diligently teach the Holy Scripture and impress them on the young folk.' The great Reformer knew of the importance of Christian education and the development of Christian thinkers, but his great fear of schools as potential "wide gates to hell" is all too justified."<sup>85</sup>

A society can only work properly and achieve its purposes when its intellectuals acknowledge God and operate in the fear of God. Education is way into the truth only to the extent in which it mixes with the fear of God. Education without God is adulterated and it brings calamities such as stealing, bribery, corruption, and other wrongdoings, commonly referred to as white-collar crimes, perpetrated by people with impure knowledge.

Violent crime is a great distress to any society. No economy can survive in an atmosphere of shameful acts. The downturn in the world economy today has its root in the wickedness of society. Resources that could have been employed to enhance the social and economic lives of the people are channeled to fight this menace. We have the added

trouble of those who are saddled with the responsibilities to fight the evils but also lack the moral education to do a good job. They therefore often lose the war because they are equally guilty of similar crimes. This accounts for why the world is not getting any better.

## **America's Great Education Experience**

The United States of America has one of the best educational systems in the world. It was built on the Word of God. America did not become powerful and prosperous because of its size or population alone but by its good beginning of men who cherished the instruction of their Creator. China and the former Soviet Union are also blessed with size and population, but America towers above them all. The American nation has been distinct in its achievements over many decades because it is a society whose education was built on the knowledge of the Most High God.

Former President Ronald Reagan said, "We've come a long way since those first settlers reached these shores, asking nothing more than the freedom to worship God. They asked that He would work His will in our daily lives, so America would be a land of fairness, morality, justice, and compassion."<sup>86</sup>

The early settlers of America considered not only their mental and physical development but also the knowledge of God. They believed that education without moral principles is ineffective in raising any society. This was proved in the actions of the Pilgrims and the Puritans, the early educators in America.

The Pilgrims and Puritans labored to impart a powerful education that would liberate the mind and soul of the nation. They knew how critical the knowledge of God was to the hearts and minds of the people. They recognized that the only way to build a good country was to instill the fear of God in the hearts of its people. Hence the Bible was a high priority in their curriculum. They believed the Word of God to be indispensable to the success and effectiveness of education.

Edmund S. Morgan, in his book *The Puritan Family*, said about the Puritans: "They wrote hundreds of books explaining the exact conduct demanded by God in every human situation. They had, in fact, complete



blueprints for a smooth, honest, civil life in family, church, and state, and they were willing to live in wilderness in order to build a society according to those blueprints...In other words, the Puritans came to New England not merely to save their souls but to establish a ‘visible’ kingdom of God, a society where outward conduct would be according to God’s laws, a society where a smooth, honest, civil life would prevail in family, church and state.”<sup>87</sup>

The Pilgrims’ spirit was similar to the early apostles of Jesus Christ, who were committed to a life of consecration to the ministry of Jesus. In their obedience to the Word of God, the Pilgrims sought to perform their civic duties to their country and society. Whatever they did was done as unto the Lord, ensuring that their lives of witness for Christ were not destroyed.

For example, the first colony and first English democracy was created in the northern parts of Virginia in September 1620. The pact called the “Mayflower Compact” was signed, creating the colony. The following are in the signed compact: “In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc. Having undertaken, for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith and Honor of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the First Colony in the Northern Parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and of one another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together into a Civil Body politic, for our better ordering and preservation....”<sup>88</sup>

These two groups worked together to pass on basic moral knowledge to their children from the time they were born. They knew that every human is born with a sin nature, a condition of the human heart that does not regard God, and that this was the source of conflict in society. They therefore tried to give the child a foundation that would earn him or her a regenerated heart, which is a means of life sustenance.

Gordon S. Wood, professor of history at Brown University, wrote:

The Puritans felt sure that children were born without a fear of God—indeed with an original sinfulness and an obstinate pride that resisted God. They and their stubborn wills, declared John Robinson,

the Pilgrims' minister, must "be broken and beaten down; so that the foundation of their education being laid in humility and tractableness," they could be taught a proper awareness of God by parents, clergy, and others.

The seventeenth-century Puritans were obsessed with their children, but they did not sentimentalize them. A severe regimen to arm them against the lures of the Devil included family prayers twice a day, daily Scripture readings, and repeated explanations of church sacraments. Most important was catechizing—a personal process of questions and answers that formed for colonial children the most constant and ever-present means of instruction in the faith.<sup>89</sup>

## Importance of the Bible in Education

No other book on earth has been so fought and yet has remained relevant to society. The Bible was the ultimate resource book for the Pilgrims and the Puritans in the development of a solid foundation for education.

The book of books, the Bible, was the end and means of education for early Americans. Children learned letters and moral lessons from vivid tales and proverbs and absorbed the cadences of psalms and prayers. The epochal King James Version, new in 1611, remained the religious and cultural keystone in families like that of the Reverend John Atwood, nineteenth century Baptist minister and treasurer of New Hampshire.<sup>90</sup>

The issue of early education was so compelling for the Puritans that they promoted strict punishment for children's behavior resulting from a lack of moral discipline. Gordon S. Wood wrote:

"In the 1640s the government of Massachusetts Bay, realizing 'the great neglects in many parents and masters in training up their children in learning and labor,' empowered the local officials 'to take account from time to time of their parents and masters.....concerning their calling and implement of their children...and to impose fines upon all those who refuse to render such account.....'"

Virginia passed a similar law. In addition, Puritan Massachusetts declared parents and masters responsible for children's ability to read and understand the principles of religion and the capital laws of the country."<sup>91</sup>

Amy L. Matzat, in her article “Massachusetts Education Laws of 1642 and 1647,” wrote:

“We see that it was during this period in Massachusetts that religious concerns (e.g., learning to read in order to read the Bible) laid the groundwork for modern education. Although it was a response to an ecclesiastical quest in the new world, it was adequately catalyzed and necessity eventually turned itself into education being conceptually pursued in and of itself in America. The early immigrants were paving the way toward a better educational system, one brick at a time.”<sup>92</sup>

The early teachers and educators of this country were mainly clerics and priests who taught their students the importance of their personal existence, the existence of God, and the value of life.

Kay Kiser, a Ph.D research student at the University of Notre Dame–Indiana, wrote:

The Puritans formed the first formal school in 1635, called Roxbury Latin School, before the establishment of the first college in America, Harvard in Cambridge. Religion provided a stimulus and prelude for scientific thought. Of those Americans who were admitted into the scientific “Royal Society of London,” the vast majority were New England Puritans.<sup>93</sup>

Kiser added:

The large number of people who ascribed to the life-style of the Puritans did much to firmly establish a presence on American soil. Bound together, they established a community that maintained a healthy economy, established a school system, and focused on an efficient eye on political concerns. The moral character of England and America were shaped in part by the words and actions of this strong group of Christian believers called the Puritans.<sup>94</sup>

Harvard University, the oldest college in the United States, was established sixteen years after the arrival of the Pilgrims at Plymouth. In the early days of the college, courses and curriculum were developed based on the English university model but consistent with the Puritan

philosophy of the first colonists. Many of its graduates became ministers in Puritan congregations throughout New England. Harvard is regarded today as a citadel of knowledge. It has produced many great American leaders, including some presidents of the United States; namely, John Quincy Adams, John Adams, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Rutherford B. Hayes, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, and George W. Bush, Jr.

In Great Britain, the Church of England was responsible for most of the early schools up to the end of the nineteenth century, when free and compulsory education was introduced. The church therefore had the opportunity to instill education with the knowledge and fear of God. Britain became a world power that was able to colonize other nations through strong leadership knowledge.

One of the issues the Pilgrims had with Great Britain was the observance of Christian practices to the extreme, whereby anyone not practicing appropriately was punished by law. The Pilgrims considered good practice to be desirable, but acts of force were a violation of the people's rights to practice their religion.

Christianity as the official religion in Great Britain positively shaped the lives of the people. Intellectual leaders, such as Winston Churchill, passed through that great system and acquired knowledge with the fear of God, and this paved the path to greatness for their nations.

They affected other countries as well, particularly the developing nations. Their societies produced great men and women who went out as missionaries, inculcating moral values that successfully stamped out many demonic, ungodly, and primitive practices in those countries. They worked in rural communities, established schools, built hospitals and health centers, and created a society with high moral values. The peace that prevails in some parts of the world today can be traced to the work of early missionaries.

In some African nations, before the advent of Christian education, the birth of twin babies was regarded as evil. If a woman gave birth to twins, both babies were killed. When a king died, his servants were buried with him because the people believed that the deceased king would require the services of his aides in the afterlife. These evil practices were stopped when missionaries brought education to the people.

## God Intended Education for Human Relationship

God armed Moses, His servant and leader of the Jewish exodus, with the code of conduct known as the Ten Commandments. This moral instruction would guide the Jews on their journey to the Promised Land and in their daily lives after they arrived there.

God called Moses to Mount Sinai, where He gave him the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19–20). The Ten Commandments were transcribed onto scrolls, which Moses instructed the people to memorize and meditate on daily. These commandments have since become the foundation for all good laws and governments all over the world. The American Constitution mirrors the Ten Commandments.

Toward the end of his life, Moses handed the baton of leadership to Joshua with strong advice on the importance of education. He said, “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful” (Joshua 1:8).

## The Collapse of Education

Our society has continued to witness the killing and maiming of innocent persons because we have removed God from our education system. The social vices previously known only in irreverent societies are now common with us because of the liberal culture brought into our educational system by those whose hearts are occupied with the spirit of Satan.

Separation of church and state has been abused. You can separate religion from government, but you cannot separate people from their value systems. It is wrong to forbid people to practice their faith in public places simply because some do not agree with their beliefs. Government infringes on its citizens’ liberty when it tells people they cannot pray, read the Bible, or practice their faith in a public domain. Wherever God is removed, all forms of wickedness are usually used to replace Him.

The misinterpretation of the “separation of church and state” has resulted in the destruction of the value system that the early settlers

labored hard for. We are now mixing the knowledge passed on to us by our forefathers with ungodly culture. This has resulted in Americans living in fear at schools, on the streets, and even in their own homes.

Darrell Scott, who lost his daughter in the shooting spree at Columbine High School in Colorado on April 20, 1999, gave his testimony on May 27, 1999, before the House Judiciary Subcommittee. He said:

Columbine was not just a tragedy—it was a spiritual event that should be forcing us to look at where the real blame lies. Much of the blame lies here in this room. Much of the blame lies behind the pointing fingers of the accusers themselves....

I wrote a poem just four nights ago that expresses my feelings best. This was written way before I knew I would be speaking here today:

Your laws ignore our deepest needs.  
Your words are empty air.  
You've stripped away our heritage.  
You've outlawed simple prayer.  
Now gunshots fill our classrooms  
And precious children die.  
You seek for answers everywhere  
And ask the question "Why?"  
You regulate restrictive laws  
Through legislative creed.  
And yet you fail to understand  
That God is what we need.<sup>95</sup>

In 2008, the mayor of Los Angeles, California, Antonio Villaraigosa, publicly expressed concern about the activities of gangs in his city. In his state address on April 14, 2008, the mayor signaled his determination to wage war against the breeding centers of gangs. He identified one of the sources as a lack of moral teachings for the children. He focused attention on redirecting the lives of children through proper and functional education early in their schools. He proposed a reform within the schools that would engage students and take them away from gangs.

The mayor addressed six risk factors associated with gang activities:

- Poor parental supervision
- Early childhood aggression
- Delinquent beliefs, including acceptance of antisocial behavior, guilt neutralization, and disengagement
- Negative life events
- Having peers or friends involved in delinquent and deviant behavior
- Commitment to street-oriented peers

The mayor did a great job identifying the risk factors. But the process of finding controls to mitigate the risks was lacking. His comprehensive program included recruiting more policemen on the streets of Los Angeles. But it failed to reeducate or reorient our misguided youth and adult population. Law officers have continued to confront gangs.

The mayor's methodology of school reformation was not sufficient to solve the problems. Regeneration of the heart cannot be accomplished by anything other than the Word of God, the Bible. And children will only recognize the evils in gangs when their hearts are transformed.

The Bible records the admonition of God to His people:

Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.

—Deuteronomy 11:18–21

The antidote to society's menace is the return to the old foundations in which the American youths grew up with the words of God written boldly on their hearts. The current situation is pathetic; the psalmist said: "When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3).

Paul warned the Romans about the continuous destruction of the knowledge of God among the generations. If the destruction was not stopped, society was going to become wicked and dead to anything upright. He said:

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice.

They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

—Romans 1:21–32



It appears our society and most nations of the world have reached this dangerous level of decadence. Our education is controlled with knowledge of sin. Sins have become acceptable in our society and backed with signed laws in the land. Has God given us up to do what we want to do? If this is the case, we are simply waiting for the ultimate judgment and the result cannot be less than destruction.

## Hope for the Future

David, former king in Israel, recognized the importance of the Word of God in a person's life. He said, "How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:9–11).

The only book that has consistently influenced the lives of people in the world in a positive way is the Bible. Former President George W. Bush attested to this when he told some clergymen he'd invited to the White House that the reason he was in the Oval Office was that he had faith in Christ. In his book *The Right Man: The Surprise Presidency of George W. Bush*, author David Frum said:

In September 2002, Bush invited five religious leaders—three Christians, one Jewish, one Muslim—to meet with him in the Oval Office. He wanted them to know that the war on terror had not ended and that some of its hardest battles still lay ahead. Then he asked them to pray for him.

"You know," he said, "I had a drinking problem. Right now I should be in a bar in Texas, not the Oval Office. There is only one reason that I am in the Oval Office and not in a bar. I found faith. I found God. I am here because of the power of prayer."<sup>96</sup>

Targeting young ones at school is the most effective thing we can do to reform our society and produce better future leaders and citizens who will run our society to stardom in the fear of God. Solomon says, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Unfortunately, not many parents today

are in touch with societal values. The schools, therefore, must teach not only academics but also issues of character and human integrity.

I believe we will return to the standards of our early leaders if we take the following steps:

- Develop a school system that instills discipline in students and provides a constructive, godly education
- Reach out to churches, other religious groups, civil and liberty groups, and other nonprofit organizations for input on school curriculum
- Put moral-building books like the Bible in school libraries

Paul testified to the value of the Bible. He said, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

Children will appreciate the Bible if it is imparted to them early in their lives. This will ensure that what God has done for His people throughout history can be passed on to the generations that follow.

The Christian communities in our nation should fight to restore books of the Bible to our public school library and also give easy access for our children to obtain and read the Bible as they grow up in the schools. Our continued laxity in fighting to get our children to be taught in the fear of God is helping to raise an army of opposition against the knowledge and fear of God in the nation. The children will always be occupied with something; if we do not make efforts to occupy them with the instructions from God’s Word, they will be occupied with teachings on godlessness and sinfulness. If we continue to shape our young generations with disobedience to God, and unrighteousness, wickedness will take over our country and we will see no peace again.

Exploits in the old days’ warfare was achieved with the use of guns and other deadly weapons of war. The greatest weapon of war Satan and his disciples use to destroy societies and nations today is the destruction of the school system. The system on which the future of the nation is dependent has been hijacked by the devil. A nation without God in its education system will create a society that will destroy itself.

## Thoughts

The importance of moral education in the development of nations is high. When God is present in our knowledge, it impacts the growth of the people and society. The powerful people of the world yesterday and today and those that will attain power in the future are people who acknowledge God in their lives. The nations without God will continue to witness calamities, for the knowledge of God is the foundation of all true education. The Bible says: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Proverbs 9:10).