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# Title: Christ, Our Teacher

Text: Genesis 1:27-2:9/Luke 2:46-47

Speaker: Pastor Chad Bresson

**Introduction** “We don’t need no education”. That bit of double negative from psychedelic philosopher Roger Waters in the 1970’s served as an anarchic and subversive protest against supposed education oppression in Britain’s post-war schools. Waters’ use of another double negative immediately following the first offered a solution to that supposed oppression, “We don’t need no thought control”. Use of the double negative serves Waters’ and Pink Floyd’s protest well. If you think about what is being said in the double negative, we do need education. We just don’t need the education currently being offered by the British crown. We need thought control... but not the kind the establishment offers. In the end, Waters’ solution to the education problem is the same as it has been since the early days of humanity. He himself will provide his own education. He himself will control his own thoughts.

Mankind has always been in need of education. Life needs wisdom. Someone must tell me what happens when I attempt to occupy the same space at the same time with a semi truck. Someone must tell me that the word “OK”, spoken with a certain inflection and with a certain look, may not mean what I think it means. More importantly, someone must tell me the meaning of life. Someone must tell me how it is I am made right with the Creator and what pleases Him. The question has never been whether or not man needs an education. The question is just \*who\* will provide man with that education. Is man left to educate himself? Or does he need outside help?

These are the questions that are before us over the course of the month of March. This morning we begin a series on theological education in the church or more specifically, theological education in OUR church. The title for this series is The Incarnation of Education. That title should help us shape our thinking over the coming weeks. We are about to embark on another chapter in the odyssey of Clearcreek Chapel. Before the year is out, we hope to have in place a theological education program that is designed to train leaders in our church and help us to be better students and evangelists of the word. For this morning, this evening, Sunday March 16<sup>th</sup> and Sunday March 30<sup>th</sup> we have set aside to answer these questions. This morning we will focus on Christ Our Teacher. Tonight, The Church: A Community of Learners, Sunday March 16<sup>th</sup>, an Introduction to the Antioch School and a Presentation of the Biblical Theology Study Center, and March 30<sup>th</sup>, a question and answer time for the elders on church-based theological education. Hopefully, this emphasis on Incarnational education will help us fine-tune a great strength we have here at the chapel, our Christ-centered teaching and preaching of The Word. I am praying this renewed emphasis on Bible study does not make us inward focused, but outward focused on kingdom expansion, whatever form that might take here at the chapel.

## Creator as Teacher/Creature as Learner

Let us open our copies of God’s Word to Genesis chapter 1. Before we start, I feel I should make mention here at the beginning that I am indebted to a couple of theologians on whom I’m leaning this morning. The first is Dr. Robert Pazmiño, author of “God, Our Teacher”<sup>1</sup>; and the

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<sup>1</sup> Pazmino, Robert W., *God Our Teacher: Theological Basics in Christian Education*, Baker Books, 2001

late Charles Dennison, long time pastor of Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Sewickley, PA<sup>2</sup>.

If we are to understand the necessity for theological education in the manner that the Bible presents it, we must begin at the beginning. Let us stand this morning: This is what God's Word proclaims to us.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." <sup>29</sup> And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. <sup>31</sup> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good... Down to verse 5... When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, <sup>6</sup> and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— <sup>7</sup> then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. <sup>8</sup> And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. <sup>9</sup> And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And down to verse 15: The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And down to verse 19: So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field.

Our quest to answer those basic questions about man's education begins where man began in the first 3 chapters of the book of Genesis and the garden of Eden. In these verses we find the Creator busy at work making the world and everything in it, including man. These opening chapters of Genesis paint for us a majestic picture in colorful detail of God's creative wisdom, power, and glory. And in his crowning creative action, God breathes life into a pile of dust, makes man in his own image, commissions him to fill and rule the earth, and enjoys sweet communion with His image in the cool of the day. As the Creature, man is bound to God for all of his sustenance. There is no want, for man has no need of anything. He is completely dependent and reliant on God for everything, including his own existence.

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<sup>2</sup> Dennison, Charles G., *Sermon on Genesis 2:8*, June 14, 1992

In fact, man exists through no effort of his own. It is God who has been active. Man knows nothing at this point except God's activity. And for our purposes this morning notice the flow of the text. God is active, but there is an expectation that man will be active as well.

## Man's education begins

Vs. 27 of chapter 1: **God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them.** In this verse, God creates man and woman in his image and man's education begins. God then explains to man what this image-bearing entails. Vs. 28 of chapter 1: **And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion.** Adam and Eve are not left to figure out for themselves just what an image-bearer is supposed to do. God here is saying, "I have made you in my image and you are to fill the earth with image bearers. The procreation that results from satisfaction with the mate I have given you, and your reign over creation as my representative is to circumvent the globe with my name. I made this earth to be filled with and to be ruled by image-bearing worshippers." But the education does not stop there.

## What does filling and subduing look like?

The natural question that arises from the mandate to fill the earth and subdue it is "well, what does that look like?" Adam and Eve are not left to figure out for themselves just what filling and subduing looks like. God is about to give them further education. Vs. 7 of chapter 2, recounting God's creation of man in further detail, Moses writes: **"then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature."** God creates man. And again, notice the flow of the text. Vs. 8: **"And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. <sup>9</sup> And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food."** So after God creates man, God plants a garden. This is the answer to his question: Adam, this is what filling the earth and subduing it looks like. God doesn't leave man to figure things out for himself. Adam and Eve don't look within themselves to figure out who they are, to find out the meaning of life, or to decide what they are supposed to do with their lives. Man does not provide his own education. He is a creature whose very life-breath came from outside of himself. From the very beginning, humanity must be educated from the outside in, not the inside out.

And then vs. 15: **"The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it."** God creates man in his image, educates man on the expectations of image-bearing, and then provides man with an example of what the mandate looks like in practice. Having watched God work, man is placed in the newly created sanctuary where God will dwell with man. Interestingly, man doesn't begin his dominion of the earth outside of the garden, but inside of it. He is to pattern his activity after God's activity and words. What he has seen and heard he is to now do. God is first the gardener. Man is to be a gardener. God is first an architect. Man is to be architect. Adam is to incarnate God's workmanship, beginning in Eden to the rest of the earth. And that workmanship is part and parcel to the creatures' worship... those words for work and keep are found later in the scriptures applied to the work and keep of the priests in the tabernacle and temple. God educates man on how man is to mimic God's activity.

## Education by Command

But the education doesn't stop there. Vs. 9 tells us that God placed two trees in the garden prior to man's placement in it. The first was the tree of life, and the second, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God, the Teacher, educates man in the form of one more command that sets a condition on his existence in the garden and his communion with His Creator, no less. Vs. 16: "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,<sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Man's education consists not only what he is supposed to do, but what he is not supposed to do. This is the first hint in the entire canon that there is a negative and alternative form of existence to be avoided and it's called "death". The Teacher has set up a test for the student. The Creator's education of the creature comes with an expectation that what is taught will not go in one ear and out the other. This is not mere education for education sake. This is not wisdom for wisdom sake. This education is for Adam & Eve's life. Even as the image-bearer incarnates education in paradise, there is an expectation of complete loyalty and obedience, a loyalty and obedience aimed at perpetuating the blessed communion between creature and Creator. The moment that Adam and Eve ignore the education that has been given them, they will die.

Thus, the educational pattern is established at the very beginning: The Creator educates, the creature learns. The smell of fresh grass and the crisp clean air of unadulterated creation is the pastoral scene for the world's first classroom. The Father educates the son. Do we hear echoes of Solomon's opening words in Proverbs 1: "Hear, my son, your father's instruction"? There is much, much wisdom to be found in the Wisdom who has spoken all things into existence and by His spirit has breathed life into the creature. Education is thus an inherent part of the communion between Creator and creature from the very beginning.

## Education in need of redemption after the fall

What kind of educational experience must it have been for Adam and Eve to walk in the cool of the garden, working and keeping the garden as image-bearing worshippers, learning from The Teacher himself? What it must have been for teacher and learner to participate in and experience education in an ever expanding harmonious paradise with the whole world as a classroom. But this educational enterprise did not turn out so well, did it? We arrive at Genesis 3 verse 1 and we can begin to hear the faint sounds of Roger Waters' subversive bass lines begin to fade in, setting the stage for educational upheaval and indeed cosmic rebellion against the Creator-Teacher.

An alternative form of education has been proposed and eventually it is accepted, an education that usurps the Teacher's role and rule, and puts the learner front and center. The knowledge of God has been traded for knowledge of good and evil. Man defiantly casts off the education that he has been given. Adam decides that he will be his own master of his own education. I will teach myself. The classic conflict of student vs. teacher is born here. Even the seemingly innocent Ferris Bueller candy coats this rebellion as some kind of teenage angst. It's not angst. It's rebellion. Indoctrination from the outside becomes something to be avoided, while the individual and even the community is asserted as the beginning and end of education and its wisdom.

In Adam's insurrection, the halls of learning have been transformed into man's monument to himself as teacher in need of no other. Man jettisons God from the educational process in the delusion that he has no need of an objective teacher with life-giving information. "We don't

need no education” means, yes, we need an education, but “no” we will not tolerate a Teacher outside of ourselves giving us that education. In fact, God’s education is slanderously and blasphemously framed as “an exercise of domination”, to quote the educational subversive Paulo Freire<sup>3</sup>. The student defiantly declares independence and autonomy from the Creator-Teacher and his classroom. God, the authoritarian tyrant teacher, has engaged in an education of “suppression” and “oppression” and is in need of overthrow. God is a barrier isolating man from “true knowledge”. There in the garden God, the all-Wise, all-Knowing, all-Loving Teacher becomes “just another brick in the wall”. Education has gone dark.

## A Teacher is promised

Fortunately, and I do mean this is the wonder of wonders in our good fortune, God does not leave man there. Into the darkness, into the anarchy, into the rebellion, The Teacher continues to teach.

Chapter 3, verse 8:

“And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup> And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” <sup>11</sup> He said, “Who told you that you were naked?”

In the midst of the educational overthrow, the Creator, the Supreme Educator who has been accused of being the oppressive tyrant, asks a question that pierces the darkness and cuts to the heart of the alternative education that has been erected against him: Who told you? Who informed you? Who educated you that you were naked? Where, pray tell, has that bit of information come from? Even in his rebellion, man cannot escape the reality that the Creator has embedded his information into the conscience of the creature. The lie is exposed for what it is. Adam only thinks he is autonomous.

It is in this context of Teacher and now fallen student, that God again educates and begins the process of redemptive education. Adam and Eve whose minds have been darkened by sin are now in need of a whole new kind of education. Mankind is now in need of regeneration, so that true learning can take place. And because the image of God in the student has been defaced, education will not be without difficulty. There will now be a “white noise” through which man will be taught, a “white noise” that clouds the conversation and clouds the intellect, and prevents men from hearing what is taught. And because that alternative form of education is ever present as the default position of the rebellious creature, it will have to be and must be countered as a worldview that arises against the Creator-Teacher. In the end it must be taken captive and destroyed. “We don’t need no education” must be exposed for the subversive humanism it is, while at the same time exposing those educational systems that are oppressive for what they are. The fall necessitated that man must be taught and educated in knowledge of the Creator-Teacher Himself.

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<sup>3</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 1970

## God speaks a Person

Into the darkness God speaks grace and God speaks a Person. Vs. 15: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” Here is the first hint that this redemptive education of man is not just downloadable information or the transmission of certain facts that somehow redeems him. This new education is a Person. Wisdom incarnate will fix the educational process.

## The education of Israel

This redemptive educational process that looks forward to something bigger and better is all over the Old Testament. The Creator-Creature educational pattern established in the garden is repeated between God, Moses and Israel for Israel’s salvation. Israel is not left to her own devices to figure out how she will be right with her God. What constitutes right relationship via the covenant comes to Israel outside of herself. Israel must be educated from the outside in. In Exodus 4:12, when Moses protests that he is not gifted to speak in front of Pharaoh, God tells Moses “I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.” This sets the stage for Moses to in turn teach Israel in the same way as God’s mediator between Himself and His people.

Over in Deuteronomy 4:1 Moses tells Israel, “And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. Vs. 5: “See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>6</sup> Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ And what God has patterned for Moses, Moses patterns for the people to teach their posterity: Vs. 9: “Make them known to your children and your children’s children— <sup>10</sup> how on the day that you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, the LORD said to me, ‘Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.’ Vs. 14: “And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess.”

Israel’s life in the land, indeed Israel’s salvation depended on education within the communion between God and His people. Israel, the learner, is dependent on God, the Teacher. God teaches his people in his activity and his word. The content of this education is and must be life changing. This education that comes to Israel through the proclamation of action and word is able to make Israel wise for salvation (2 Timothy 3:15). Through the education given by their covenanting God, Israel has a saving knowledge of God in the “fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom.” (Deuteronomy 6:2 with Proverbs 9:10)

And just like Adam, Israel is to pattern her educational activity after her Creator-Teacher. Just as the Israelites have been taught the fear of the Lord by God through Moses, they are to teach their children. Deuteronomy chapter 5 vs. 31, God says to Moses, “I will tell you the whole commandment and the statutes and the rules that you shall teach them...” Moses then says to the people in chapter 6 vs. 1: “this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you...”. And what Moses has taught them, they are to in turn, pass on, vs. 7: “You shall teach them diligently to your children”. The educational pattern is estab-

lished: from God to Moses to Israel to Israel's posterity. This education is the means by which their covenanting God whose steadfast love endures forever produces life and wisdom in His people. It is through this education that God will make a nation of learning worshippers who will spread his fame beginning in the Promised Land to eventually cover the whole of the earth. Israel's education is to be ongoing from generation to generation, an education that has its point of origination outside of their community, from the mouth of God into their lives. God teaches. Israel learns. The Creator-Teacher dwells with his people in sweet temple communion.

## Israel's rebellion

Yet once again, there is rebellion against the Teacher. The teacher has set up a test for the student and the student fails the test. From its very inception as a nation, Israel has been tempted by an alternative education that sets itself up against the one true God who humiliated and rendered impotent the gods of Egypt. Even in God's words to Moses there is an anticipation of what will transpire in the course of time: "Oh that they had such a mind as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments" (Deut. 5:29). And the reality is that they didn't always have this kind of a mind. In one of the best known Old Testament passages that is quoted more than once in the New Testament God says this, while Jerusalem is under siege in judgment (Isaiah 29:13-16): "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men,<sup>14</sup> therefore... (vs. 14) the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hidden."<sup>15</sup> Ah, you who hide deep from the LORD your counsel, whose deeds are in the dark, and who say, "Who sees us? Who knows us?"<sup>16</sup> You turn things upside down! Shall the potter be regarded as the clay, that the thing made should say of its maker, "He did not make me"; or the thing formed say of him who formed it, "He has no understanding"? See Israel hiding from the presence of God among the trees of the garden? Israel the student has no need of the teacher. "We don't need no education". Like Adam, Israel accuses the Creator-Teacher of being an oppressive tyrant: God, the teacher, has no understanding? "We don't need no thought control". Israel, the son, has exchanged his education of commandments from God for an alternative education of a "commandment taught by men." Israel decides that he will be his own master of his own education. God is the barrier isolating Israel from true knowledge. For Israel, God is just another brick in the wall.

## God promises a Teacher

And again, God speaks redemptively into the educational morass. Against the backdrop of what will be the destruction of Jerusalem, God says there will come a day when Israel "will sanctify my name; they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob and will stand in awe of the God of Israel."<sup>24</sup> And those who go astray in spirit will come to understanding, and those who murmur will accept instruction." (Isaiah 29:24) God is not content to allow Israel to toss aside life-sustaining education at the feet of the Creator-Teacher. Israel, the son, needs an education from outside of himself, from His loving father that will make him wise for salvation. God says there is coming a time when Israel will reverently and gladly sit at the feet of the Creator-Teacher and listen to and believe in the education received from the Teacher.

And this education is not just an academic exercise. This education will not have four walls with a blackboard and textbooks. This education will be in the form of a Person. God is not only going to give Israel a new education, He, personally, is going to dwell with His people as a

Teacher among them. In Isaiah 30, verse 19, God speaks of a day when “a people shall dwell in Zion, in Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry. As soon as he hears it, he answers you.”<sup>20</sup> And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher.<sup>21</sup> And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.” Disobedient Israel, in need of grace and mercy, is promised a Teacher who will come and break down the bricks in the wall that isolates the student from the Teacher. With the Teacher present among His people, the subversion will be no more. No longer accused of being the oppressive tyrant teacher, this Teacher will come binding the brokenness of His people and healing their wounds in the educational process (vs. 26). This Teacher comes bringing a life-giving and life-sustaining education that transforms the learner to walk in the way of the Creator-Teacher.

There will be no more anarchy in the education of His people... only peace, Isaiah 54:10: “For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you... vs. 13: “All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.” In compassion, grace, and love, God will not leave Israel to her own devices. The student will not always be at war with the Creator-Teacher. Even as Israel casts off the shackles of what she considers to be an oppressive education...even as Israel, indeed all of mankind, chants at full throttle, “We don’t need no education”, God promises a Teacher who will radically alter education forever.

## The Master Teacher Incarnated

And there was a day, when this Teacher stood among His people, no longer hiding himself anymore. In Luke 2 we find a young boy of twelve, who, Luke tells us, is filled with wisdom. During a visit to Jerusalem this boy goes missing and his parents finally find him in the Temple, Luke 2:46, “After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.”<sup>47</sup> And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.<sup>48</sup> And when his parents saw him, they were astonished.” This boy, Jesus Christ, at the age of 12 has taken his place among the teachers of the temple, those leading theologians and educators of his day. Not only is the Christ-child listening, and asking questions, this one who is bringing redemption to Jerusalem (Luke 2:38) is also giving answers. It might be remarkable to find a 12-year-old student in dialogue with the rabbinic teachers and scribes. But this is beyond expectation: the student is teaching the teachers. In the midst of Israel’s best, in the temple that symbolized God’s dwelling place, this one of whom angels declared salvation to Israel is teaching. With those teachers and with his parents and with Theophilus we are to be astonished and amazed that the Creator-Teacher has taken on flesh and bones. All eyes are on the Teacher. The Teacher is no longer hiding himself from His people. The Teacher, against the backdrop of the Temple, is God come to dwell among His people. As he dwells, he educates. It is this One taking his place among Israel’s now astonished teachers who Incarnates education to a people in desperate need of an education outside of themselves. And thus a new education begins for God’s children who will be taught by God himself.

The picture Luke paints for us in that temple scene recurs again and again throughout the rest of the book. Luke 4, Christ returns from being tempted of Satan in the wilderness, vs. 15 “And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all... vs. 16 “as was his custom, he went to the syn-

agogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read... vs. 20, “And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him... (hear the language of Isaiah 30:20), Luke 4, vs. 31, “And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath,<sup>32</sup> and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority...” chapter 5, verse 3: “Christ sat down and taught the people from a boat,” vs. 17 of the same chapter, “on one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there,” chapter 6, verse 6: “on another Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching.”

Humanity was in need of a teacher and Christ came teaching. All of those basic questions of our human existence are answered by Christ and in Christ. Who are we? Why are we here? What is it that will make us right with our Creator? How is it that we can glorify God? We’ve tried to answer these questions ourselves. And we have failed miserably. The world is a messed up place. We are a messed up people. We chose anarchy. And anarchy is what we received. The defiant students, casting off God as the tyrant-teacher, cannot answer these questions themselves. We gave God mutiny. And he sent us an education from above.

## The content of Christ’s teaching

Wisdom Incarnate, an Education from God that has taken on flesh moves from manger to cross bringing new life to a new people. But what is it that Christ was teaching? What is the content of the education he provides to His people? What is it that transforms the student and the educational process? Christ himself summarizes this for us in Luke 4, a teaching moment, by the way, that did not end so well for Jesus. The content of Christ’s education comes from the Old Testament: In verse 17 we read: “And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,<sup>18</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”<sup>20</sup> And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.<sup>21</sup> And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

What is the education from above that regenerates a new creation as the Word is preached? We have it in this passage, a direct quote from Isaiah 61:1 and 2: good news to the poor, liberty to the captives, sight to the blind, liberty for those who are oppressed, and the year of the Lord’s favor. What is the effect of this education come from God? Do you hear these words this morning?? Good news, liberty, sight, relief, and God’s favor. If ever there was an educational formula with the power to regenerate, to redeem, and to restore the God-honoring, God-glorifying Teacher-student relationship lost at the fall, this is it in a nutshell. True learning from the Creator-Teacher takes place in the context of the gospel, and this is it: Good news, liberty, sight, relief, and God’s favor. The learner is completely dependent on the Teacher for life sustenance. Christ, Our Great Educator, brings good news, liberty, sight, relief, and God’s favor through the education that He provides. There is no more isolation. There are no more bricks in the wall. Through the good news, liberty, sight, relief, and God’s favor the Teacher is forever united to the student. The year of jubilee for the students extends into forever.

Is it any wonder then, that in Luke 10:39, we find Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus as the example of where the church must be in the educational process of the new creation? Mary gets it. Mary listens to Christ’s teaching because He the Teacher, and His teaching are the gospel of life. It is

only in her Teacher, that she the student finds her soul's sustenance and satisfaction. And before we go any further, that's the passage where we will be tonight.

What are we supposed to draw from this?

## **Conclusion**

First, all education must begin with Christ, The Creator-Teacher who is Wisdom Incarnate. In Christ "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). The Wisdom who spoke all things into existence is the beginning point for all learning. Much is made today in our postmodern church of living the life of wisdom. While wisdom is worthy and certainly biblical pursuit, we must insist that Christ and His Word are definitive for that pursuit. If we start anywhere else, we have wittingly or unwittingly, capitulated to the worldly wisdom that is grounded in mutiny.

Second, there is an alternative education from an alternative teacher that sets itself against Christ. No matter how "wise" it may seem, the subversive view of education shakes its fist at the Creator-Teacher. There are ways to rationalize such educational models with the best of intentions. But make no mistake, this kind of education leads to damnation. We must be cognizant and aware of the temptation for the student to usurp the authority and the place of Christ our Teacher. We must not be seduced by the notion that education begins in the community and works its way outward and upward, but that it begins in Christ and works its way downward and inward.

Third, in Christ, God the Teacher and man the learner exist together in one Person. As both Teacher and Learner, Christ models and patterns educational activity for the church. Not only is Christ our starting point for the educational process, if we desire to know what it is that we are to be doing in teaching and learning, we will follow Christ's steps as Teacher and Learner. The Creator-Teacher, who died and rose for his people, dwells among his people to educate them with the gospel of life and in so doing gives his people life. It is in Christ our Teacher that we find wisdom for living.

Last, just as Jesus has incarnated education from God, so too the church is to follow in that pattern, incarnating education in word and deed. In patterning our educational activity after Christ's, we further the expansion of the kingdom and the glory of his name in our church, in our homes, and in the world.