

CULTURAL APOLOGETIC SERIES

*The apostle Paul
IN the beginning
the heavens and
2 And all things
form, and
was*

The Christian Mind: The Key to Cultural Relevance & Renewal

By S. Michael Craven

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This is the sixth booklet in the Cultural Apologetics Series.
Others include:

- *Where the Battle Rages: The Sexualizing of America*
- *Why Is Marriage Important? The Reasonable Defense of Marriage*
- *Thinking Critically, Acting Compassionately: A Christian Perspective on Homosexuality*
- *Modern Sex Education: The Indoctrination of a Generation*
- *Pornography: The Deconstruction of Human Sexuality*

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Renewing Your Mind

A tyrant once said, “It is the luck of rulers when men do not think” and Proverbs 2:12 underscores this truth by saying, “Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse.” This begs the questions: What role, if any, does the intellect have in our faith? What role does scholarship have in our sanctification, and finally, what role does intellectual discourse play in renewing the culture?

Beginning where we should, in scripture, it is clear that God places a high value on knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. Proverbs 4:4-7 says, “Lay hold of my words with all your heart; keep my commands and you will live. Get wisdom and understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them. Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her and she will watch over you. Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost you all you have, get understanding.” The Lord says, “Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding” (Proverbs 3:13). The Bible prescribes understanding as a protection against sin: “The

woman Folly is loud; she is undisciplined and without knowledge. She sits at the door of her house, ...calling out to those who pass by, 'Let all who are *simple* come in here!' she says to those who lack *judgment*. 'Stolen water is sweet; food eaten in secret is delicious!' " Proverbs 9:6 admonishes us, "Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding."

The prophet Hosea delivered this charge against apostate Israel, "...my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests..." (Hosea 4:6). Hosea later issues a general warning that, "a people without understanding will come to ruin!" (Hosea 4:14).

In 1 Peter 1:13 we are told "Therefore prepare your *minds* [emphasis mine] for action..." James 1:5 states directly that, "*If* [emphasis mine] any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians, "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise..." (Eph 5:15). In his letter to the church at Philippi Paul prays, "That their love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight" (Phil 1:9).

Lastly, Romans 12:2 tells us, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. *Then* [emphasis mine] you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."