



Vertical Gyro

"Keeping Things Right Side Up"

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Stuck For An Answer?

Several years ago, at 35,000 feet somewhere over Texas, my fellow pilot and I were involved in a deep discussion about his being an agnostic. At one point he turned to me and said, "OK, so tell me. Why do *you* believe in God?" I offered him some personal experiences. He couldn't relate. I laid a few Bible verses on him. He wasn't buying. "Anything else?" he asked.

I was stuck for an answer.

I've since come to realize that most people are in the same boat – and so are their kids. I start out a class I teach at our church by asking folks the same question my co-pilot asked me that day – and am usually met with deafening silence. That encounter led me to start asking myself some pretty profound questions about why I believed what I claimed to believe. My search for answers led me into areas of study I had never considered important before – theology and philosophy most notably – and to learn to think seriously about what is true and how we can know it. I soon found that the science I had always loved did nothing but confirm the implications of those other areas of study. The whole world became clearer. My faith became more real. I wasn't stuck for an answer anymore.

There is a battle going on in our culture that goes deeper than the hatred and violence we see reported in the news every night. It is a battle for the hearts and minds of every one of us. It is a battle for what we claim to believe. It is a battle about what is true, about what is moral, about what it means to be human, and about how what we call our faith reflects each of these. It is a battle in which we are all engaged whether we realize it or not. Sadly, most of us are ill equipped to fight this battle. In ways that mostly go unnoticed, we have all been hoodwinked into accepting ideas that not only reject the common teachings of our common faith, but thousands of years of common sense about how the world operates. Because ideas have consequences, our society is suffering the repercussions. I think it's worth talking about. My aim is to challenge my little corner of the world to wake up to the big Truth issues that are facing us all; to see them in the culture; to recognize how they have infiltrated the church; to confront the way the world has taught us to think, and to stop the process before it engulfs us all in a sea of secular relativism.

The battle begins in our minds and is reflected in our lives. The two are not mutually exclusive. We can have an authentic faith without having to check our brains at the church door. We don't have to avoid tough questions or shy away from the challenges our culture brings us. In fact, we are told not to do that. But recognizing those challenges, deciphering them, and offering intellectually honest responses and alternatives to the "ways of the world," does not come easily or naturally. It requires training. And that is what I aim to provide.

I avoid getting bogged down in non-essential doctrinal questions or denominational differences. Though those may be important, they do nothing to confront the real problems in our culture – the foundational issues that determine how we view the world. These are the topics that all of us need to talk about – especially with our kids. I am prepared to speak, lead seminars or classes, or just participate in open topical discussions about these issues and I'm asking for your help with getting started. If your church, school, or some group you belong to is open to such a discussion, I simply ask that you refer me to them. You can find detailed information about what I can offer on my website if you're interested.

Go to truehorizon.org and click on "Vision" to see what it's all about.

I don't know where this endeavor will lead but I feel compelled to start heading in that direction. My aim for now is to gain experience, references, and an audience. I plan to generate this newsletter periodically to update those who may be interested. Check out the website. And please remember me in your prayers. I will need them! Thanks to all of you in advance ...