



MACHE 2009 Annual Conference Saturday Workshops

Workshop: Preparing to Withstand College Culture

Speaker: Frank Ludwig and Paul Ludwig

Session: VI **Time:** 3:00 p.m.

The culture conflict is not about the clash between conservatives and liberals although those are the most commonly used terms. The true conflict stems from how we define *truth* and what we recognize as its source; whether you believe the source to be human or divine and whether you believe truth itself to be relative or real. The average Christian home schooler tends to line up on a different side of that debate than the average college administrator, professor or textbook author. Some conflict is inevitable and it is wise to anticipate a challenge to your faith and prepare to defend it.

What do Christians Believe?

Religious individuals are more likely to be orthodox in their view of the truth than nonreligious individuals. Christian claims align very well with a view of morality and the truth as being real and outside us.

Christian claims to the truth:

- We believe in a personal Creator God.
- We believe that God wants us to know the truth.
- We believe that God has provided us with the means to know the truth.
- We believe we have a responsibility to witness to the truth.

What do *they* believe?

Humanism aligns very well with a view of morality and the truth as being from within ourselves and therefore subject to human approval and revision. Education in general and especially higher education is dominated by the progressive relativist viewpoint.

Humanist claims about truth:

- Truth is a concept constructed by humanity.
- Since humanity created the concept humanity has the right to determine truth.
- Everything is subject to change over time; individuals, cultures and species.
- Truth and morality must also be subject to change to remain relevant.

What happens when the two come together?

The two viewpoints cannot comfortably coexist. There is a tension between these worldviews that only disappears if one side or the other ceases to take their viewpoint seriously. Very intelligent and well meaning people will wish to free the young Christian of what they firmly believe is an inaccurate, outdated and repressive worldview.

- You will be of a minority viewpoint.
- Your faith will be challenged.
- The arguments are persistent and often persuasive.
- Many fall away and you will need support if you want to maintain your faith.

Session Content:

Some of the challenges that a Christian student is likely to encounter are presented below. We will discuss these challenges from the viewpoints of parent/professor and child/student. We will also suggest strategies that may be employed to preserve a Christian world view in an overwhelmingly secular environment.

Introduction: What does it mean to make the decision to go to college?

- A. Learning means changing
- B. Imitation is a natural human response
- C. You may not be the first to recognize change

Areas of Challenge in the *College Experience*:

- I. Limited Positive Social Opportunities
 - A. Loneliness
 - B. Pressure to participate
 - C. The lure of popular entertainment choices for college age people

- II. The classroom environment
 - A. College Identity
 - B. Teachers
 - C. Fellow students
 - D. Text books and “instructional” material

- III. Personal Challenges
 - A. Separation from support structure
 - 1. Family
 - 2. Friends
 - 3. Church
 - B. The costs and rewards of independence
 - 1. Freedom
 - 2. Responsibility
 - C. Financial pressures

Additional resources for the Christian student may be found at the following internet sites.

- <http://www.ccci.org>
- <http://www.intervarsity.org>
- <http://www.leaderu.com>
- <http://everystudent.com>

Support in this presentation is cited from the following:

- Hamilton College National Youth Polls at: <http://www.hamilton.edu/news/polls/default.html>
- The Pew Research Center for People and the Press at: <http://www.people-press.org>
- The Gallup Organization at: <http://www.gallup.com/>
- The Barna Group at: <http://www.barna.org/>