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# Discovery

*Scripture & Science for Kids*



# Christians and Slavery

## Kyle Butt

When Christ came to the Earth, slavery had been around for thousands of years. Some people were slaves because they were criminals and slavery was their punishment. Others became slaves because they owed people too much money to ever pay back. And still others were born as slaves. Many people during Jesus' time believed slaves were not as important as people who were free. They believed slaves were more like animals and were not as valuable as other people.

Jesus' teachings showed that slaves were just as valuable as other people and should be treated with respect. In Matthew 7:12, Jesus told His followers to do to other people what they would want other people to do to them. That meant they were to treat slaves exactly like they would want to be treated if they were slaves.

When we look at the early Church, we see that the Church obeyed Jesus and treated all people, even slaves, with respect and dignity. The apostle Paul wrote that in Christ: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Did Paul mean that everybody looked alike in the Church and that there was



no physical difference between men and women? No. He simply meant that anyone could be saved. No group was any more important than any other group. Men were no more important than women. Jews were not more important than Greeks. And free people were not more important than slaves.

In the early Church, slaves could even become elders if they obeyed God. Can you imagine a person who owned slaves meeting with a church where one of his slaves was an elder? You can be sure that such a situation would show that slaves deserved respect just like everyone else.

Since all people are made in God's image, we are all equally valuable to Him. Through the teachings of Christ, people learned how to treat others, even slaves, just like they would want to be treated. Only Christ's teachings could have brought about the abolition of slavery that eventually occurred.



# GLADIATORS AND CHRISTIANITY CLASH

Gladiator shows were brutal fights between slaves. The Roman government forced these slaves to fight each other to the death. Sometimes they would fight with swords and spears. Sometimes they would flood the arena and fight from ships. At other times they would fight from chariots. Sometimes gladiators would be made to fight ferocious wild animals. Most of the time, the fights ended when the gladiators were brutally murdered by another gladiator or a vicious animal.

## Kyle Butt



The Roman people loved watching these men die. Thousands of Roman citizens would pack the stadiums to see gladiators fight. Sometimes, hundreds or thousands of gladiators would die in one day. And sometimes, the gladiator fights would be held every day for months at a time. Tens of thousands of gladiators died over the years.

When Jesus' teachings began to spread, his followers realized that the gladiator shows were not good. The killing of gladiators was murder, Christians said. Furthermore, the gladiator shows taught people to be cruel, heartless, and to treat their fellow human beings like animals. Many of the early Christian leaders taught their fellow Christians not to attend the gladiator shows because they glorified cruelty and sin.

In fact, the story is told about Telemachus—a man who was known as a Christian. In about A.D. 404, he attended a gladiator show. When he saw the cruelty and violence of the show, he jumped into the arena and tried to stop the gladiators from killing each other. The crowd was so angry with him for attempting to stop the fight that they stoned him to death. When the emperor of Rome, Honorius, heard of Telemachus' bravery, he outlawed all gladiator shows throughout his empire.

Although some historians are not sure that the story of Telemachus is true, there is no doubt that Christians, following the teachings of Christ, played a large part in helping the government to see that gladiator shows were immoral and cruel. It is wonderful to see all the improvements in society that those who follow the teachings of Jesus have helped to accomplish over the years.



# CHRISTIANITY AND AMERICAN SCHOOLS

Dave Miller

For the first 150 years or so, America grew and prospered beyond all other nations. America is, in fact, the envy of the world because of its many advantages. Think of the many great advances in medicine, computer technology, space exploration, home conveniences, food variety, automobiles and other forms of transportation—and the list goes on and on. From 1776 up to World War II, America was able to accomplish astounding things. While some major troubles are looming for the nation, America is still able to do some pretty amazing things.

One of the greatest features of American life has been her schools. People from all over the world have always wanted to come to America to be educated. America has been known worldwide as a country where any person can go to school—no matter how poor—and get an education that would allow that person to prosper. American schools, even on the frontier when the nation was growing westward, provided an important service to the average citizen. Much of America's progress and success has been due to education.

What many Americans no longer realize is that, from the beginning, a very important part of schools was Christianity. In fact, the founders of America's schools stated plainly that the purpose of education is to teach kids Christianity so they will be decent citizens. They believed that if you mold young people to be moral, decent, and upstanding according to Christian principles, they will be blessed by God and will be able to advance civilization in positive ways.

Sadly, after World War II, American schools began teaching children that they came from ape-like ancestors through evolution, rather than by God's creation as the Bible says. They began teaching children it is okay to experiment with sex.

They removed the Bible and prayer from the classroom. Many other changes have taken place that have made many schools places of bad influence. America has shifted from a

nation that saw its very survival as dependent on the spread of Christian principles through the schools, to a nation that has expelled the teaching of Christian principles from the public school system.

The Founders would be very sad. The first college in the Colonies was Harvard College, founded in 1636. Look at the 1636 student rules for Harvard students:

Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well **the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ** which is eternal life (John 17:3) and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom as **the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning**. And seeing the Lord only giveth wisdom, let every one seriously set himself by prayer in secret to seek it of Him (Prov. 2,3). Every one shall so exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day that he shall be ready to give such an account of his proficiency therein.



Dr. Benjamin Rush

Wow! What a difference from schools today! Physician and signer of the *Declaration of Independence*, Dr. Benjamin Rush, said: "[T]he only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid in **religion**. Without this there can be **no virtue**, and without virtue

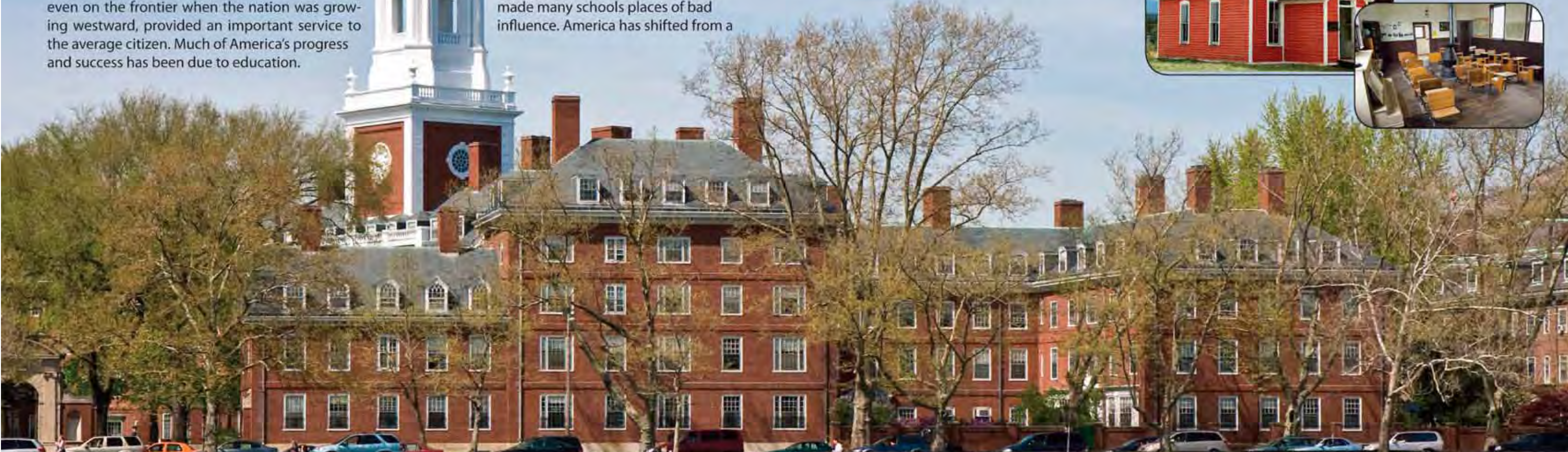
there can be **no liberty**, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments." Noah Webster, the man who gave Americans a standard dictionary, agreed: "In my view, **the Christian religion is the most important** and one of the first things in which all children, under a free government, ought to be instructed."



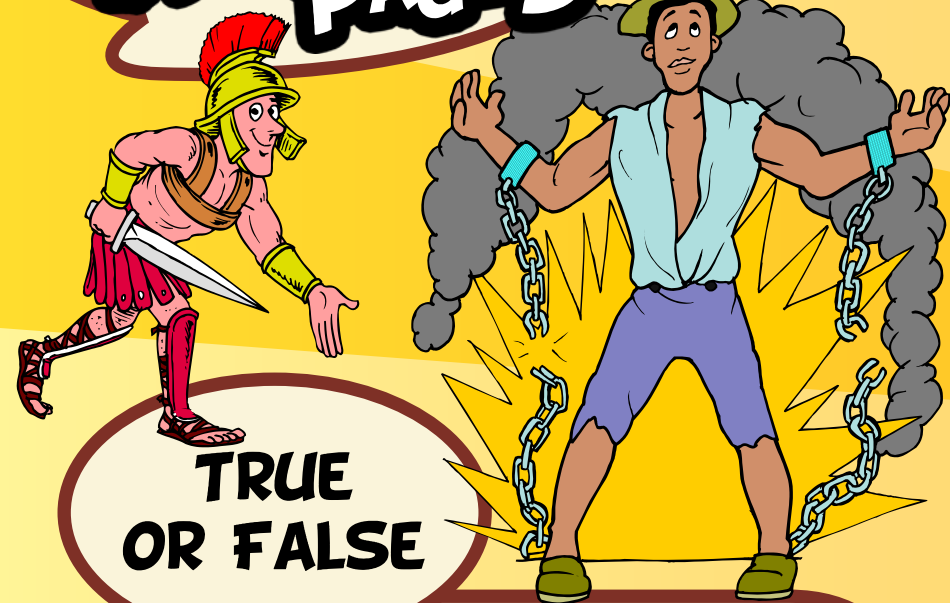
Noah Webster

America has been great for one reason: Most Americans believed in the God of the Bible and Christian principles. As Americans move away from that foundation, America will cease to be great. The words of God to Moses at Mt. Sinai ought to serve as the guiding star for America's schools: "Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children" (Deuteronomy 4:10). "Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord" (Psalm 34:11). Without the fear of

the Lord instilled in the nation's youth, all will be lost (Deuteronomy 5:33; 6:1-18; Jeremiah 7:23).



# ACTIVITY PAGES



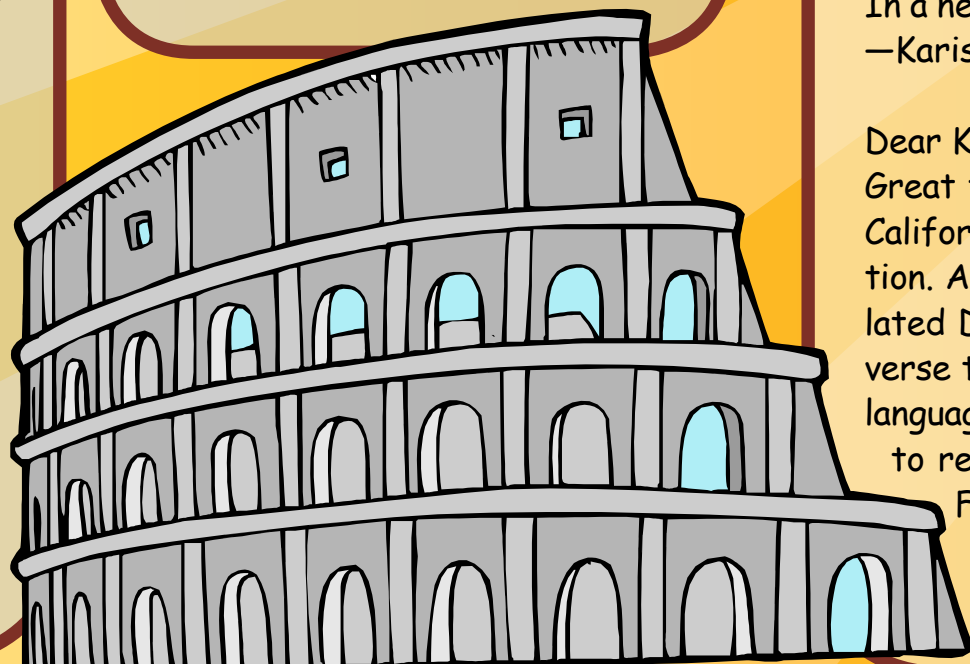
## TRUE OR FALSE

- Those who follow the teachings of Jesus have helped to improve society in many ways over the years.
- When Christ came to the Earth, slavery had been around for thousands of years.
- The founders of America's schools stated plainly that the purpose of education is to teach kids Christianity so they will be decent citizens.
- In recent years, America has largely expelled the teaching of Christian principles from the public school system.
- Followers of Jesus Christ must not conform to the world (Romans 12:2), but live as the light of the world.
- Jesus' teachings showed that slaves were just as valuable as other people and should be treated with respect.
- In Matthew 7:12, Jesus told His followers to be mean to other people.
- Men are more important than women.
- Since all people are made in God's image, we are all equally valuable to Him.
- As Americans move away from biblical teachings, America will cease to be great.

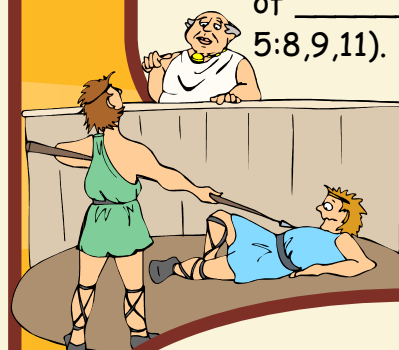
## MATCHING

- \_\_\_ Gave Americans a standard dictionary
- \_\_\_ A very important part of schools in America from the beginning
- \_\_\_ Brutal fights between slaves
- \_\_\_ Believed to have helped put an end to gladiator shows
- \_\_\_ Another name for Tabitha
- \_\_\_ One of the men who was put forth as an apostle to replace Judas
- \_\_\_ Paul wrote to Christians in this city to "cast off the works of darkness, and...put on the armor of light."
- \_\_\_ Physician and signer of the Declaration of Independence

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| A. Dorcas        | E. Bible teachings |
| B. Benjamin Rush | F. Rome            |
| C. Telemachus    | G. Noah Webster    |
| D. Barsabas      | H. Gladiator shows |



- "Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My \_\_\_\_\_, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may \_\_\_\_\_ their children" (Deuteronomy 4:10).
- "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither \_\_\_\_\_ nor free, there is neither male nor \_\_\_\_\_, for you are all \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).
- "You are \_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth)...and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of \_\_\_\_\_, but rather \_\_\_\_\_ them" (Ephesians 5:8,9,11).



## ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER

Dear Digger Doug,

In a newspaper, it says Tabitha in the Bible is really Dorcas. Is this true?  
—Karissa, Redlands, CA.

Dear Karissa,

Great to hear from you. I love to know that children all the way out in California are reading our magazine. To God be the glory. You have asked an excellent question. Acts 9:36 says: "At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did." This verse tells us that Tabitha is Dorcas. Why is that? Well, "Tabitha" is a name in the Aramaic language that means "gazelle." In Greek, the word for "gazelle" is "Dorcas." It is important to remember that many of the Bible characters sometimes had several different names. For instance, in Acts 1:23, one of the men who was put forth as an apostle was named Joseph, sometimes called Barsabas and surnamed Justus. But all three of the names were for the same person. Thanks for the question.

## COMPLETE THE BIBLE VERSES

NKJV



- Write down the instruction of Jesus found in Matthew 7:12 and explain how obeying this teaching will make the world a better place.
- Describe what American schools used to be like compared to how they are today.





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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

# Do Not Be Conformed

**Eric Lyons**

Through the centuries, God's people have positively influenced the world in many ways. Christians have established hospitals and schools, as well as nursing homes for the elderly and children's homes for the orphans. Through the spread of the teachings of Jesus Christ (example: Matthew 7:12), His followers have helped put an end to the evils associated with slavery, elevated the value and role of women in society, and, in general, helped a fallen world become a more tolerable place in which to live.

As good of an influence as God's people have had upon the world, however, all too often many Christians allow the world to have a very negative influence on their lives. Instead of walking "in the light" (1 John 1:7) and being the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14-16), many "Christians" have been deceived by the devil's devices and become "full of darkness" (read Matthew 6:23). Satan has convinced many saints that sin (in general) is stylish and amusing.

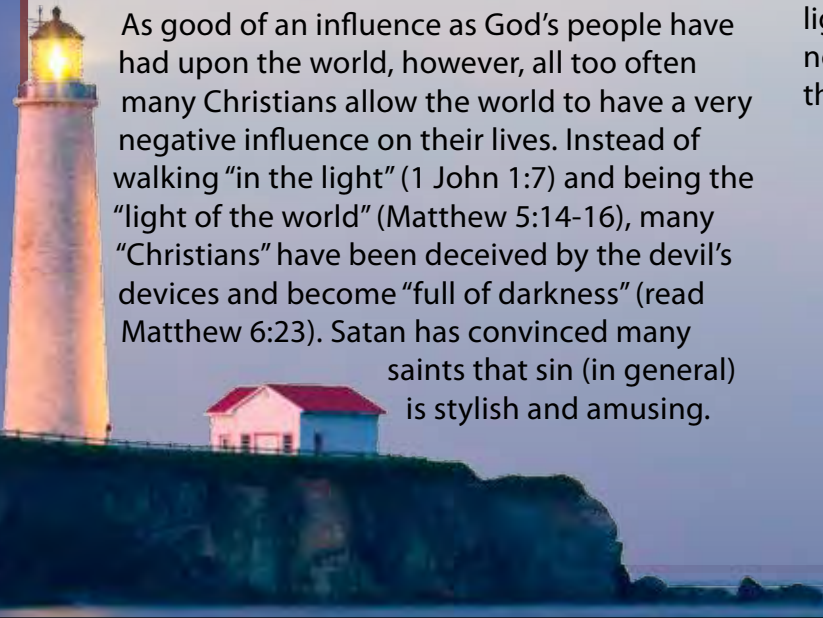
For example, a very popular song in recent months (even among some Christians) contains the following lyrics: "Livin' in sin is the new thing (yeah).... I don't see the harm.... Livin' in sin is the new thing.... What we do is innocent."

What kinds of sinful things are a number of Christians finding "innocent"? Namely, the evil works of the flesh that the apostle Paul lists in Galatians 5:19-21, including fornication, impurity, lewdness, and drunkenness. Much of the music that Christians listen to and the television that Christians watch have desensitized them to the ungodliness of sin.

Christians need a great awakening! God is holy and sin is destructive. God's people have to "cast off the works of darkness, and...put on the armor of light" (Romans 13:12). Followers of Jesus Christ must not conform to the world (Romans 12:2), but live as the light of the world.

*"You are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth)...and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them"*

(Ephesians 5:8,9,11).



## ANSWERS

COMPLETE THE BIBLE VERSES: 1. words, teach; 2. slave, female; 3. light, darkness, expose; MATCHING: 1. G (Noah Webster); 2. E (Bible); 3. H (Gladiator shows); 4. C (Telemachus); 5. A (Doras); 6. D (Barsabs); 7. F (Rome); 8. B (Benjamin Rush).  
 TRUE OR FALSE: 1-T; 2-F; 3-T; 4-T; 5-T; 6-F; 7-F; 8-F; 9-T; 10-T.  
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