

Exploring the World of Mathematics

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Why Learn Math?

- Biblical Christians have always believed strongly in education.
- Why? It is essential for redeemed man to read, write, and count.

Why Learn Math?

- The Biblical Christian presupposes that on the basis of the Bible we can truly know God's verbal and written revelation.
- This knowledge is not exhaustive (e.g., the Bible does not reveal knowledge about quadratic equations), but it is knowledge that brings a true perspective to all aspects of the human endeavor, eternal and temporal.

Why Learn Math?

- Psalm 36:9 states, "In Thy light, we see light."
- Colossians 2:3 states, "... in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."
- *All aspects of wisdom and knowledge (not just the "spiritual" parts and including analytical knowledge like mathematical equations) find integrative meaning, purpose, and perspective in the full and complete revelation of God in Christ.*

Knowledge and the fear of God

- True knowledge can only be acquired by a reverent submission to the Living God.
 - Proverbs 1:7, "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction."
 - Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding."
 - Psalm 111:10, "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever."

Knowledge and the fear of God

- Man knows on the basis of fearing God.
- Man knows on the basis of the revelation that God has given in Scripture, in Christ, and in creation.
- Man knows only surface truth if he does not acknowledge God.
- Man knows truly *only* when he fears God.

Mathematics and God's Creation

- The Biblical Christian must know how to count in order to understand and develop the created order.
- Since all knowledge is based upon God and since the ability to count, like reading and writing, is God's gift to man, then it is imperative that we, as parents and teachers, seek to develop these gifts in our children and our students.

Mathematics and God's Creation

- There are many realms of mathematics.
 - The theory of number,
 - the practice of arithmetic, and
 - the description of the patterned order of creation.
- Since mathematics reflects the patterns of God's created order, then the language of that pattern is mathematics.

Mathematics and the Dominion Mandate

“God commands His children to subdue and replenish the earth and take dominion over it mathematics is essential in subduing and replenishing tasks Without a working knowledge of the patterns of God’s speech used in the creation, humans are powerless to replenish the earth and are in danger of being themselves subdued by it.”

Larry Zimmerman, *Truth and the Transcendent* (Florence,

Kentucky: Answers in Genesis, 2000), p. 65.

Why Learn Math?

- We learn math in order to catch a glimpse of God's creational speech.
- We use our knowledge of that speech to steward God's creation (i.e., to carry out the dominion mandate).

Why Learn Math?

- As we learn mathematics, we are one step away from discerning the patterned order of creation.
- As we learn this patterned order, we are one step away from encountering the Living God.

Why Learn Math?

- The astronomer Johannes Kepler (1572-1630) encountered the Living God as he explored the mathematics of God's creation.
- After he developed the law of the elliptical motion of the planets around the Sun, he fell to his knees and exclaimed, "My God! I am thinking Thy thoughts after Thee!"

Mathematics and the Nature of the Biblical God

“... in exploring mathematics one is exploring the nature of God’s rule over the universe, i.e., one is exploring the nature of God Himself.”

Vern Poythress, “A Biblical View of Mathematics,” in *Foundations of Christian Scholarship*, p. 184.

Mathematics and Language

“In mathematics, we have a universal language, valid, useful, intelligible everywhere in place and time.”

Edward Kasner, *Mathematics and the Imagination*

“Mathematics is a linguistic activity; its ultimate area is preciseness of communication.”

William L. Schaaf

Mathematics and Language

“Without this language (mathematics) most of the intimate analogies of things would have remained forever unknown to us; and we should forever have been ignorant of the internal harmony of the world, which is the only true objective reality This harmony ... is the sole objective reality, the only truth we can attain; and when I add that the universal harmony of the world is the source of all beauty, it will be understood what price we should attach to the slow and difficult progress which little by little enables us to know it better.”

Henri Poincaré, *The Value of Science Popular Science Monthly*, 1906, pp. 195-196.

Mathematics and Language

“Mathematics, too, is a language, and as concerns its structure and content it is the most perfect language which exists, superior to any vernacular; indeed, since it is understood by every people, mathematics may be called the language of languages. Through it, as it were, nature herself speaks; through it the Creator of the world has spoken, and through it the Preserver of the world continues to speak.”

C. Dillmann, *Die Mathematik die Fackelträgerin einer neuen Zeit*
(Stuttgart, 1889), p. 5.