



FOR THE LAST DAYS

If you are a Christian
thinking about College ...

I AM NOT SURE ITS OK THESE DAYS

to snap Canadian Christians sharply to attention over stuff they are not getting, which means that that is pretty much an obligation now, so here goes.

If you are a Christian thinking about college but feel you are a rather delicate young person not ready for a wake-up call, please put this down: this is not for you. (Actually, if that is the case, education is not for you, as you might well conclude from a recent article on college for Christians called "The Siege of Undergrad" [21 May 2009], which should leave you plenty worried.) But if you plan to – as people say – 'get an education,' you need to hear about Lance.

Lance thinks that College is the place to start living. And he thinks that **LIVING MEANS DOING PRETTY MUCH WHATEVER BECKONS HARDEST** and just seeing how that goes, after which there's the crash and burn (learning experience), and ... well it all works out in the end, right? Life lessons. Lord have mercy. All good.

Of course Lance hasn't read **ARISTOTLE** or **AUGUSTINE** or **AQUINAS** or **ECKHART** – or, really, any of the people who actually studied life and would have told him that what he is doing in his

four-year experiment in 'living' is practicing the habits that sap life. Handicapping himself for when life begins, yet again, after college. Life lessons? Try opposite of life: Gomorrah U, turning from grace, something like that.

He hasn't read these old guys because in that crazy course calendar there were just waayy too many things that, well, beckoned harder. (Financial Management is important – that's going to help because we all have to deal with money; Propaganda and the News is going to help, because – duh – we all read news; Globalism and the Post-Industrial Corporation is *essential* right now; Psych is key, because we all have to cope with how we tick; and The Sociology of Intimate Relationships is just way cool.) Maybe next term.

But next term, when he signs up for Philosophy, his professor is not necessarily going to zero in on the wake-up call that those old dudes had for young people they truly believed were in danger of **NOT BECOMING HUMAN. CHRISTLIKE. LIKE THE MAN.** For some profs that 'becoming human' stuff is just good for a laugh (some funny-voiced mockery always goes over big), or useful, because it nicely sets up the *real* lecture on how these ancient grandfathers were so against life/pleasure/sex/self-determination. And in

any case Lance doesn't always make it to class because – heck – freedom is sweet.

OK. But what if Augustine (4th-C dude) or Aristotle (4th-C BC dude) is right? What if Addison (18th-C English chap) is right?

In 1709 **JOSEPH ADDISON** was writing about the choice each young person has to make between a life of “gratification” (indulging every beckoning desire) and a life that God would not disdain at the Last Judgement. (You haven't forgotten that's coming up have you?) Addison said he was writing for “those who are still in the deplorable state of non-existence, and whom I earnestly entreat *to come into the world.*” Until we are formed, he said – human, he said – we are “embryos **STRUGGLING TOWARDS BIRTH.**”

If you care about the global corporation, the news, war in the world, mental disorders (depression, compulsion, addiction), and other things you and I both care about then pause to think: might it be that we have *too many half-made people running around?* Too many indulgers?

What if someone gave a course in *being human* and nobody came?

Yeah, that talk is just crazy, I know. (Etc.)

But what if Augustine and Aristotle and Addison are right? Are you in a position, *heading into college*, to brush them off? Will the prof who mocks them *help you* to weigh their words for yourself? Doesn't it all deserve some serious attention (formerly called ‘study’)?

Don't goof with this.

Don't be among the 17% of Canadian youth who don't think a good education matters. And don't be among the 72% who **HAVE NO IDEA WHAT A GOOD EDUCATION IS** and what they are supposed to be doing at college.

The reason they don't know is that purveyors of education are so openly eager to make them happy. (Do yourself a favour and compare restaurant ads with college ads. Happy beautiful people: check. But where is the equivalent of the steaming plate, where is the picture of the goods? It's all about *you*. **DOES ANYBODY THINK IT MATTERS WHAT YOU STUDY?**)



It matters.

The university was invented by Christians. Did you know that? Now *why do you think they did that?*

How does a ‘human being’ think? How does a follower of Christ think? That is what you need to know. The other stuff, the experience that is all about you – *your tastes* (the Xbox; falling in love, sort-of; downloads; the cool course) and [flip disk over] *your career* (how to succeed; job prerequisites; grad-school prerequisites) – will be long gone on Judgement Day. Rotted away. “Moth and rust.”

WHEN IS IT TIME TO START SERIOUSLY PREPARING TO STAND BEFORE THAT THRONE A HUMAN BEING, in the image of God? “Treasures in heaven,” man. “Heaped treasure for the last days.” *Just what do you want an education for, if not for that?*

Forget what you have heard: **COLLEGE IS NOT ABOUT YOU**. This is not ‘your time’ at last. If you pick the right school, do it right, college is about what people have to know not to become a disappointment to the one who matters, not to become a piece of the problem here below. Childhood is up; it's time to start thinking about this.

You may not think so, of course.

Plato said that “*the tiresome thing about ignorance is precisely this, that no one who does not believe that he needs a thing desires what he does not believe that he needs.*”

Edward Tingley | Dean

Augustine College, Ottawa

www.augustinecollege.org