



Whose Great Recognition?

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What is the Great Recognition?

- “God, the Holy Spirit, is Himself the supreme Educator of mankind”
- “In things Natural and Spiritual”
- The educator “recognises the divine co-operation in the direction, teaching, and training of the child”




Is it true?

- “we must not accept even an inspiring idea blindly”



The Old Testament




“The Lord has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, ability, and expertise in all kinds of crafts.”

Exodus 35:31 (NLT)




“Then the Spirit of God came powerfully upon Saul, and he, too, began to prophesy.”

1 Samuel 10:10 (NLT)




“God gave Solomon very great wisdom and understanding, and knowledge as vast as the sands of the seashore... He composed some 3,000 proverbs and wrote 1,005 songs. He could speak with authority about all kinds of plants, from the great cedar of Lebanon to the tiny hyssop that grows from cracks in a wall. He could also speak about animals, birds, small creatures, and fish.”

1 Kings 4:29, 32-33 (NLT)



“Then David gave his son Solomon... the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind for the courts of the temple of the LORD and all the surrounding rooms...”

1 Chronicles 28:11-12 (NIV)



“The farmer knows just what to do, for God has given him understanding. A heavy sledge is never used to thresh black cumin; rather, it is beaten with a light stick. A threshing wheel is never rolled on cumin; instead, it is beaten lightly with a flail. Grain for bread is easily crushed, so he doesn't keep on pounding it. He threshes it under the wheels of a cart, but he doesn't pulverize it. The LORD of Heaven's Armies is a wonderful teacher, and he gives the farmer great wisdom.”

Isaiah 28:26-29 (NLT)



“

... he who teaches
knowledge to humankind,
does he not chastise?”


Psalms 94:10b (NRSV)



“

[God] gives wisdom to the
wise and knowledge to the
scholars.”

Daniel 2:21 (NLT)



“To these four young men
God gave knowledge and
skill in every aspect of
literature and wisdom.”

Daniel 1:17 (NRSV)



The Deuterocanonical Books



“

I pray to God that my thoughts may be worthy of what I have learned, and that I may speak according to his will. He is Wisdom's guide; he gives correction to those who are wise. We are under his power and authority—we ourselves, our words, all our understanding and skills.


It is he who gave me true knowledge of the forces of nature: what the world is made of; how the elements behave; how the calendar is determined by the movements of the sun, the changing seasons, the constellations, and the cycles of years.

He has taught me about the nature of living creatures, the behavior of wild animals, the force of the winds, the reasoning powers of human beings, the different kinds of plants, and the use of their roots as medicine.

I learned things that were well known and things that had never been known before, because Wisdom, who gave shape to everything that exists, was my teacher. ”




The New Testament



“There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can't bear it now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.”

John 16:12-13 (NLT)



“Every good and perfect gift
is from above... the wisdom
that comes from heaven is
first of all pure...”

James 1:17, 3:17 (NIV)




Church History



John Calvin

1509-1564





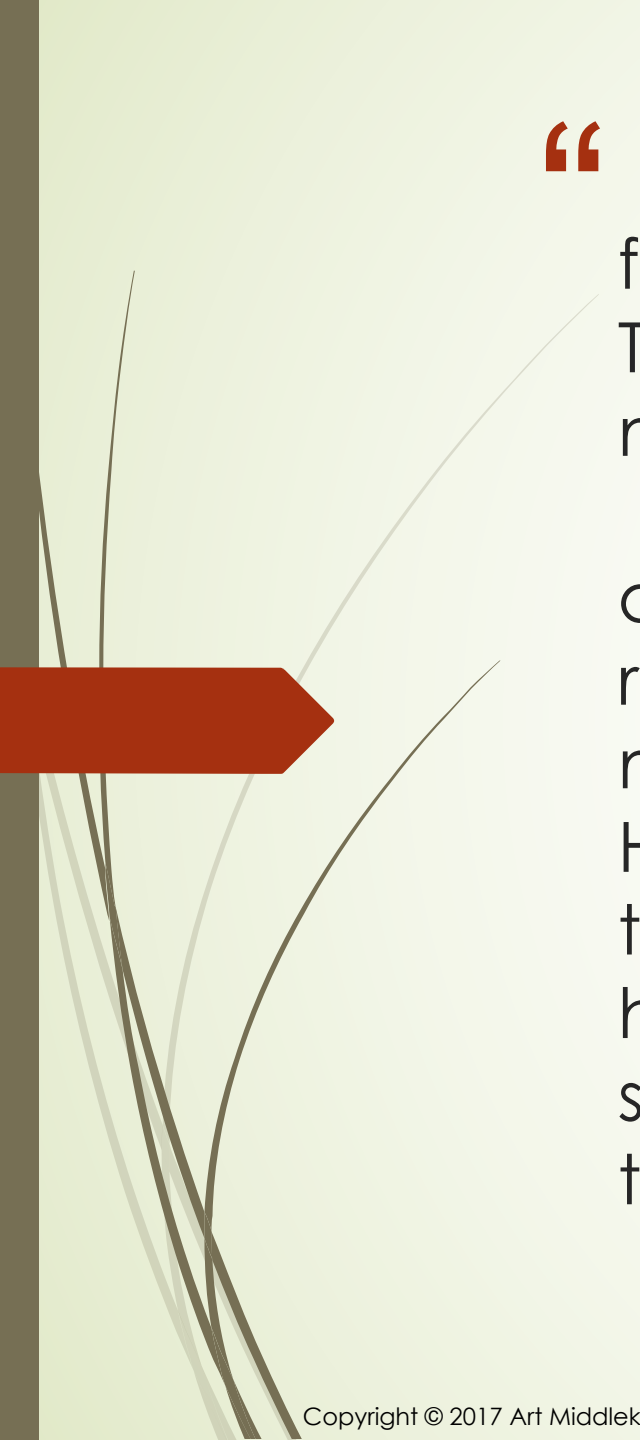
“ For if the skill and knowledge required for the construction of the Tabernacle behoved to be imparted to Bezaleel and Aholiab, by the Spirit of God, ... it is not strange that the knowledge of those things which are of the highest excellence in human life is said to be communicated to us by the Spirit. Nor is there any ground for asking what concourse the Spirit can have with the ungodly, who are altogether alienated from God?... He fills, moves, and invigorates all things by the virtue of the Spirit... But if the Lord has been pleased to assist us by the work and ministry of the ungodly in physics, dialectics, mathematics, and other similar sciences, let us avail ourselves of it, lest, by neglecting the gifts of God spontaneously offered to us, we be justly punished for our sloth... in every distinguished act there is a special inspiration. ”

Institutes of the Christian religion (Vol. 1, p.318- 320)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

1772-1834





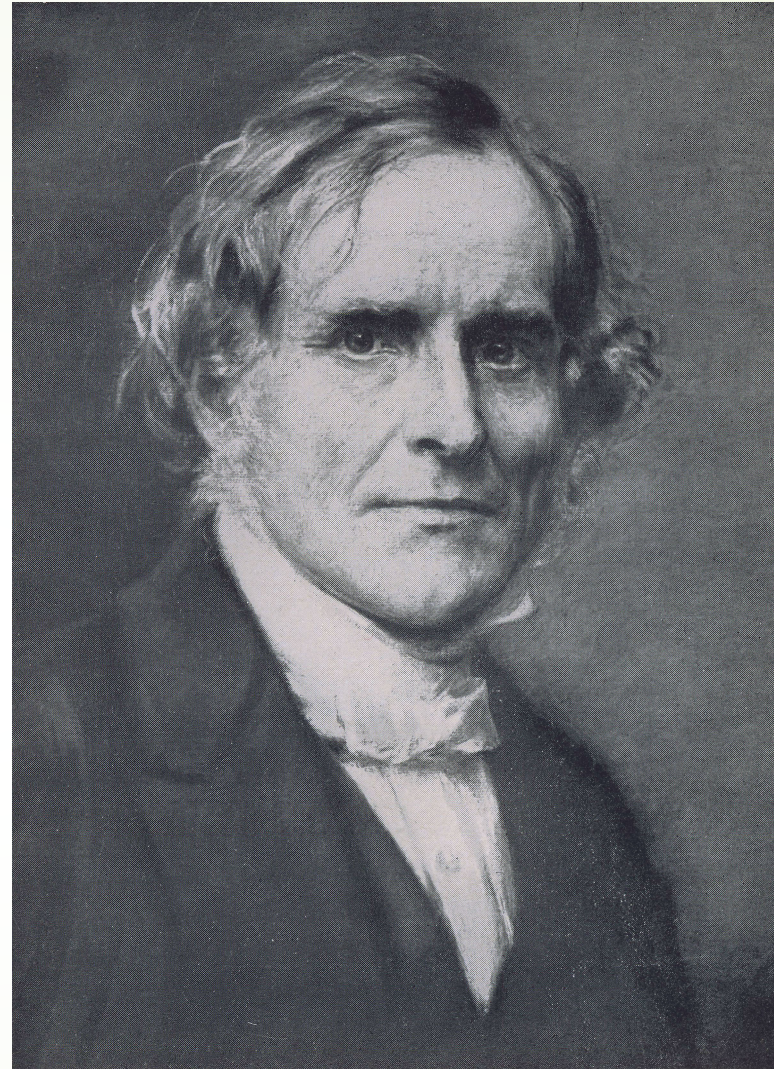
“ ... is not he the ... truly happy man, who seizing first and laying hold most firmly of the great first Truth, is guided by that divine light through all the meandering and stormy courses of his existence?...


It cannot be deemed foreign from the purposes of our Disquisition ... to attract the attention of our readers... even to the *worldly* interests of mankind... How many such instances occur in History, where the *Ideas* of Nature (presented to chosen minds by a Higher Power than Nature herself) suddenly unfold, as it were, in prophetic succession, systematic views destined to produce the most important revolutions in the state of Man! ”

A Dissertation on the Science of Method, p. 25 (1818)

Frederick Denison Maurice


1805-1872





“They have believed that when He described the Comforter whom He would send from the Father, as the Spirit of Truth, He was not speaking of a relation, or of a property of their conceptions, but of a living and personal Teacher and Guide.”

What is Revelation? A Series of Sermons on the Epiphany, p. 348 (1859)

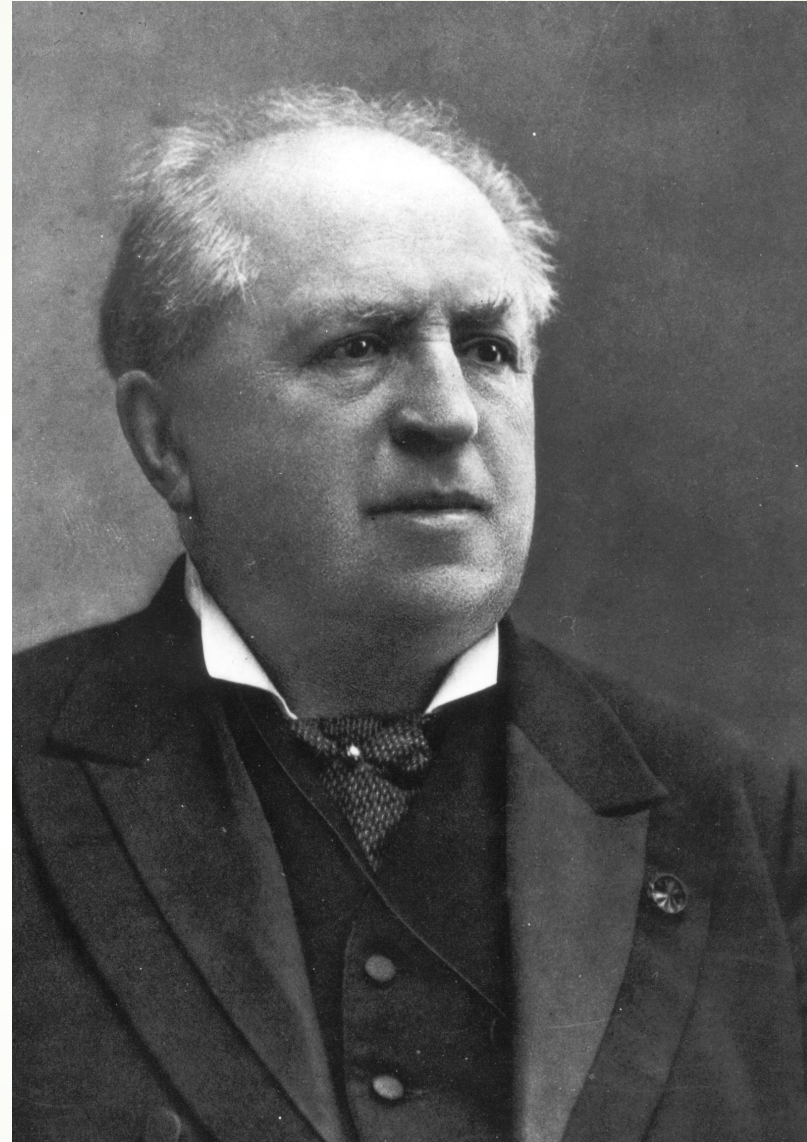



“It is to the spirit within that God makes any of His discoveries. Only with this spirit can a man seize any truth, or enter into communion with it. Newton might have seen a thousand apples fall from the trees on which they hung; there was one which led him to perceive the law of the universe. The object that was presented to his outward eye became the instrument through which an idea was presented to the man himself. A universal truth shone through that special instance. His devout and humble mind would have acknowledged at once that God had led him to the one through the other.”

What is Revelation? Series of Sermons on the Epiphany, p. 2 (1859)

Abraham Kuyper


1837-1920





“We cannot help but remain exposed to ... danger, as long as this darkening of human understanding receives no counterweight in the illumination of that understanding by the Holy Spirit. Apart from common grace, the decline of science would have become absolute without that illumination by the Holy Spirit.”

Wisdom & Wonder: Common Grace in Science & Art. (p. 52) (1905)



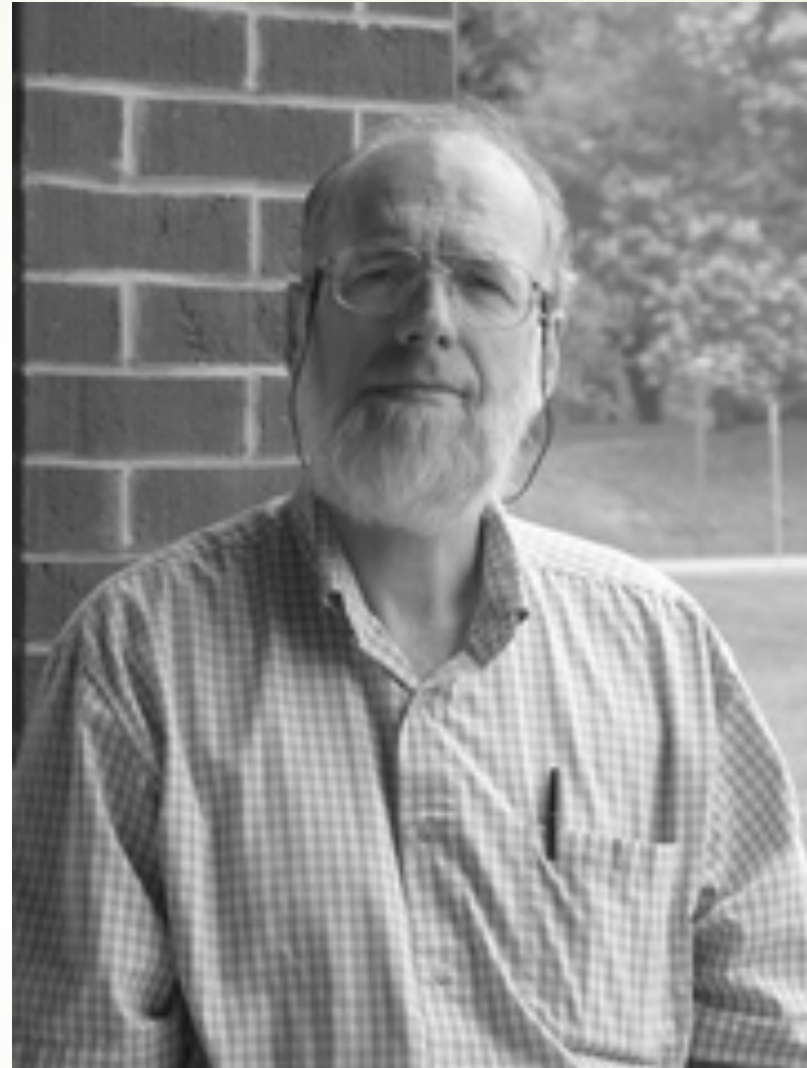
“ ... when the prophet Isaiah portrays the life of the farmer, ... it is perfectly clear that these themselves constitute no part or portion of particular grace. Rather, they are a strengthening of the light of common grace...”


Wisdom & Wonder: Common Grace in Science & Art. (p. 83) (1905)



Albert Wolters

1942-





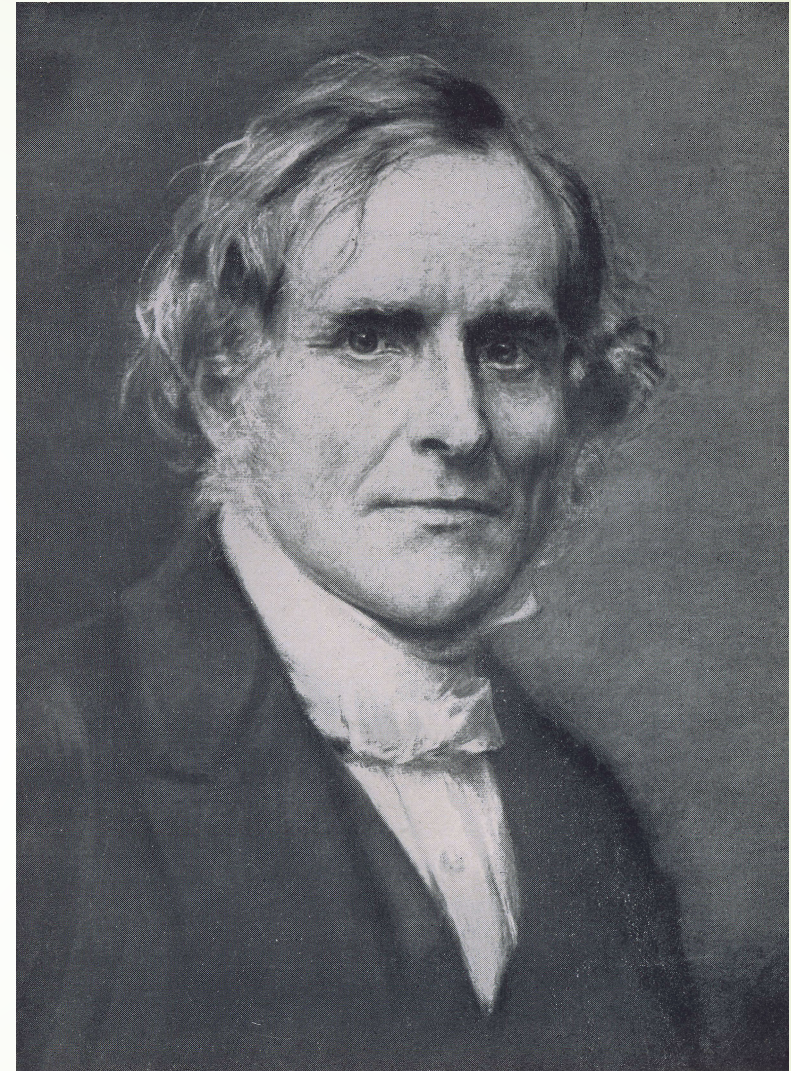
“This is not a teaching through the revelation of Moses and the Prophets, but a teaching through the revelation of creation – the soil, the seeds, and the tools of his daily experience. It is by listening to the voice of God in the work of his hands that the farmer finds the way of agricultural wisdom.”

Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview, p. 28 (1985)



Charlotte Mason's Great Recognition

“ The woman receives, not from her husband, not from her physician, not from her spiritual adviser, not from the books which she consults, — all these may help somewhat, if they do not hinder, — but from the **Spirit of God Himself**, the intuitions into her child's character, the capacity for appreciating its strength and its weakness, the faculty of calling forth the one and sustaining the other, in which lies the mystery of education, apart from which all its rules and measures are utterly vain and ineffectual. ”



Lectures to Ladies on Practical Subjects, p. 8 (1855)

HOME EDUCATION:

A COURSE OF LECTURES TO LADIES,

DELIVERED IN

BRADFORD, IN THE WINTER OF 1885-1886.

BY

CHARLOTTE M. MASON, *Charlotte M. Mason*

2. 2. 2.
SOMETIME LECTURER ON EDUCATION AND TEACHER OF HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY AT THE
BISHOP OTTER COLLEGE, CHICHESTER.


LONDON:

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH & CO., 1, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1886.


“ But this statement is no new thing. The Society originated in the little manual called ‘Home Education’ which contains the whole in the germ and every succeeding expansion and elucidation has appeared in the Parents review and has for the most part been read at the Annual Conferences of the Union. ”

i68p2cmc393 (1904)




“ ... in venturing to speak on the subject of Home Education, I do so with the sincerest deference to mothers, believing that, in the words of a wise teacher of men, ‘the woman receives from the **Spirit of God Himself** the intuitions into the child’s character, the capacity of appreciating its strength and its weakness, the faculty of calling forth the one and sustaining the other, in which lies the mystery of education, apart from which all its rules and measures are utterly vain and ineffectual.’ ”

Home Education, pp. v-vi (1886)



“With deep reverence be it said that the Holy Spirit Himself, the Lord and Giver of Life, when he undertakes the education of a human being, operates according to law, works out those very principles of education which are proposed to parents, in fact, plays the part of parent to the willing and obedient soul.”


The Draft-Proof (1888)



“ [Coleridge] gives us an illustration of the rise and progress of an idea: — ‘... How many such instances occur in history, when the ideas of nature (presented to chosen minds by a Higher Power than Nature herself) suddenly unfold, as it were, in prophetic succession, systematic views destined to produce the most important revolutions in the state of man!’


... and how well does it correspond with that key to the origin of ‘practical’ ideas which we find elsewhere :— ‘Doth the plowman plow continually to ... open and break the clods of his ground? ... For his God doth instruct him aright, and doth teach him...’ ”

The Parents' Review, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 41-42 (March 1891)



“The whole tendency of modern biological thought is to confirm the teaching of the Bible: the ideas which quicken **come from above**... All our teaching of children should be given reverently, with the humble sense that we are invited in this matter to **co-operate with the Holy Spirit**; but it should be given dutifully and diligently, with the awful sense that our **co-operation** would appear to be made a condition of the divine action; that the Saviour of the world pleads with us to ‘**Suffer the little children to come unto Me,**’ as if we had the power to hinder, as we know that we have.”

The Parents' Review, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 143-144 (April 1891)



“ ... here is the **great recognition** which the educator is called upon to make. God, **the Holy Spirit, is Himself** the **supreme Educator of mankind**...

He openeth man's ear morning by morning, to hear so much of the best as the man is able to bear.

Are the ideas suggested by the Holy Spirit confined to the sphere of the religious life?

No; Coleridge, speaking of Columbus and the discovery of America, ascribes the origin of great inventions and discoveries to the fact that '**certain ideas of the natural world are presented to minds, already prepared to receive them, by a higher Power than Nature herself.**'

Is there any teaching in the Bible to support this view?

Yes; very much. Isaiah, for example, says that the ploughman knows how to carry on the successive operations of husbandry, '**for his God doth instruct him and doth teach him.**' ...

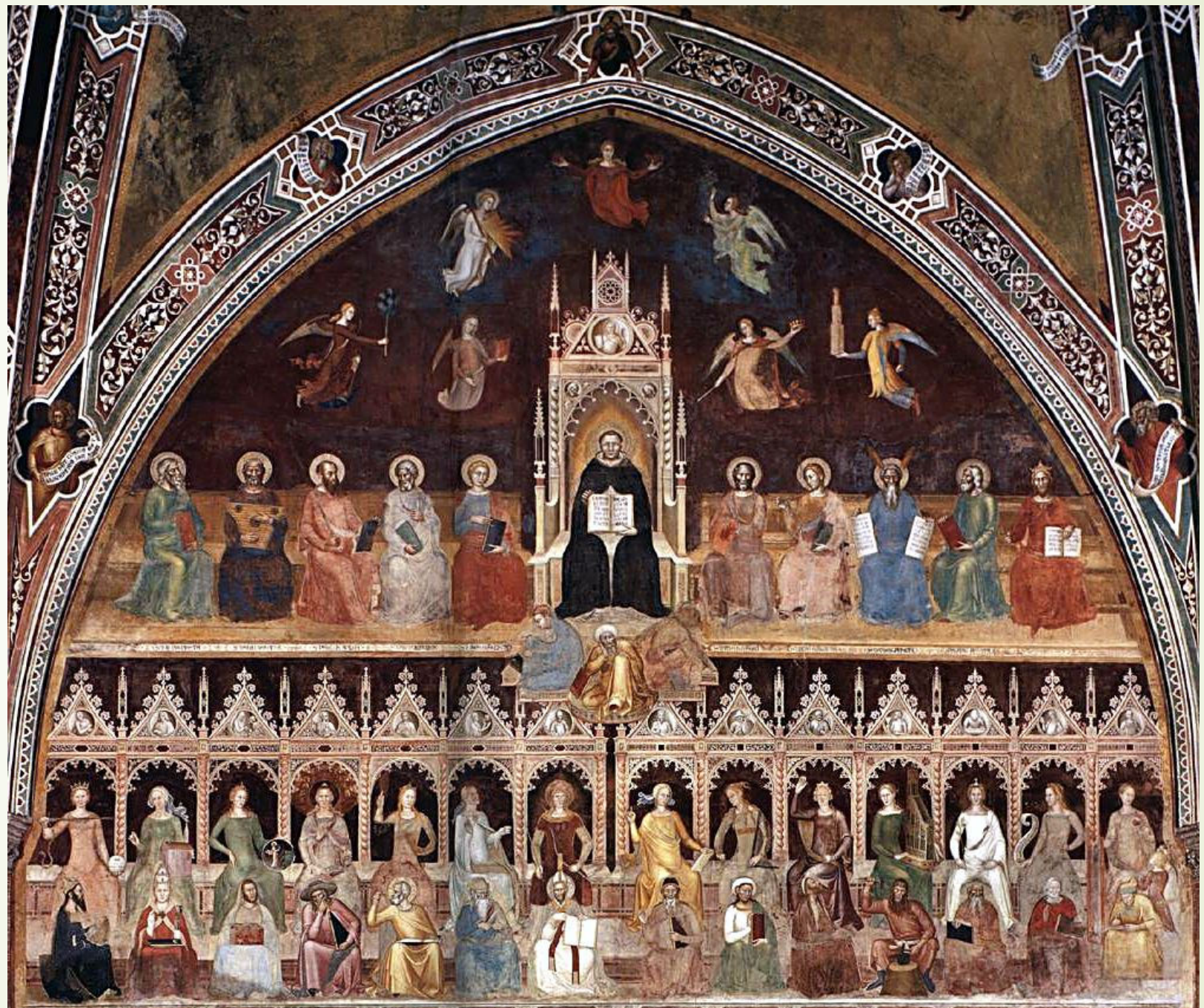
What practical bearing upon the educator has this doctrine of ideas?

... above all, he recognises the **divine co-operation** in the direction, teaching, and training of the child.”

The Parents' Review, Vol. 3, No. 5, p. 357-358 (July 1892)

Late 1893 or Early 1894








“Optavi, et datus est mihi sensus. Invocavi, et venit in me Spiritus Sapientiae, et preposui illam regnis et sedibus.”


“I desired and was given understanding. The Spirit of Wisdom came to me. I regarded her more highly than any throne or crown.”

Wisdom 7:7-8a, based on GNT



“But we hold that all education is divine, that every good gift of knowledge and insight comes from above, that the Lord the Holy Spirit is the supreme educator of mankind, and that the culmination of all education ... is that personal knowledge of and intimacy with the Supreme... We hold, in fact, that noble conception of education held by the mediaeval church, as pictured upon the walls of the Spanish chapel in Florence.”

The Parents' Review, Vol. 5, No. 12, pp. 925-926 (February 1895)



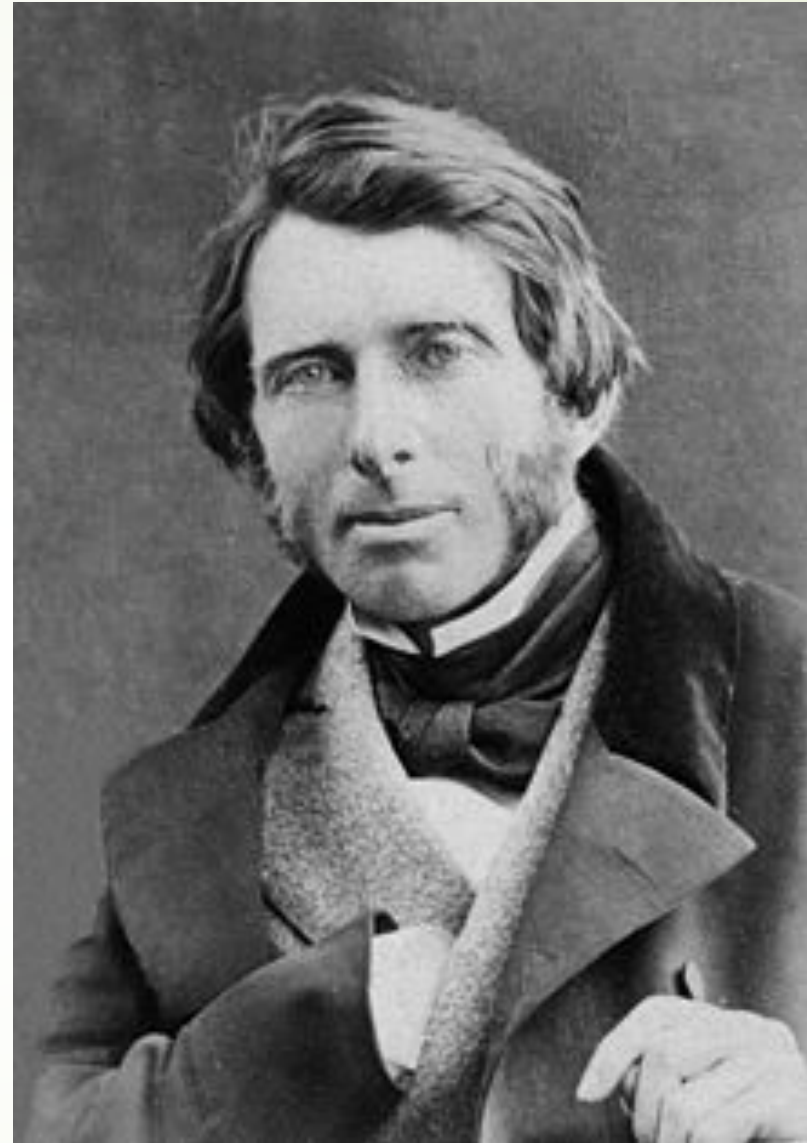
“...the Great Recognition, that God the Holy Spirit is himself, personally, the Imparter of knowledge, the Instructor of youth, the Inspirer of genius, is a conception so far lost to us that we should think it distinctly irreverent to conceive of the divine teaching as co-operating with ours in a child's arithmetic lesson... But the Florentine mind of the middle ages went further than this: it believed ... that every fruitful idea... was a direct inspiration from the Holy Spirit...”


The Parents' Review, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 53-54 (March 1896)



John Ruskin

1819-1900






“On this... side of the chapel, [is] represented, by Simon Memmi's hand, the teaching power of the Spirit of God... in the world, according to the understanding of Florence in his time.”

Mornings in Florence. (p. 127) (1881)



“the teaching power of the Spirit of God”

- First appears in Mason's writings in 1896, after the trip to Florence
- Always appears in quotation marks in Mason's writings
- “Great Recognition” **never** appears in quotation marks in Mason's writing



“Knowledge is for us a thing of shreds and patches ... The **Hebrew** had a more august conception... The scholastic mediaeval mind, probably working on the scattered hints which the **Scriptures** offer, worked out a sublime *Filosofica della Religione Cattolica*, pictured... in the great fresco painted by Simoni Memmi and Taddeo Gaddi...”

The Parents' Review, Vol. 25, No. 4, pp. 270-271 (**April 1914**)

Scriptures Cited by Charlotte Mason to Support the Great Recognition

- 1 Samuel 10:10
- 1 Chronicles 28:11-12
- Isaiah 28:24-26
- John 16:12
- James 1:17
- James 3:17

“ [Mason] has herself told us that she has drawn her philosophy from the Gospels ”

Agnes Drury, *L'Umile Pianta*, 5/14, p. 64

Chronology of References

	Great Recognition*	Holy Scriptures	F.D. Maurice	S.T. Coleridge	Florentine Fresco
1886			●		
1888	○		○		
3/1891		●		●	
4/1891	○	●			
1892	●	●	○	●	
1895	●	●			●
1896	●	●	○	○	●
1914		●		●	●

* The following never appear in quotes in Mason's writings:


Great Recognition
Supreme Educator of mankind
Divine co-operation



Did Maurice, Coleridge, Calvin, or a fresco in Florence teach this?

“ Let the mother wrap the thought as an illuminated scroll round her new-born child, and let her never contemplate any kind of instruction for her child, except under the sense of the divine co-operation. ”

The Parents' Review, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 55 (March 1896)




“ [Mason] was prepared to defend her philosophy publicly and engage in debates over new ideas within educational theories. She ensured that her theories could develop alongside new physiological and psychological research, however well meaning the attempts were to publicly locate her theories within those of famous male educationists.”

Women, Education, and Agency, Stephanie Spencer, p. 121 (2009)




Why would the Holy Spirit do this?




“The Holy Spirit imparts life in all its forms throughout God’s creation, unites believers to Jesus Christ, indwells each believer, convicts believers of sin, applies the saving work of Jesus to the believer’s life, guides the Church into truth, fills and empowers believers through spiritual fruit and gifts given to the Church, and gives understanding of the Scripture which He inspired.”

To Be a Christian: An Anglican Catechism by J.I. Packer, p. 27 (2014)



“But we hold that all education is divine, that every good gift of knowledge and insight comes from above, that the Lord the Holy Spirit is the supreme educator of mankind, and that the culmination of all education ... is that personal knowledge of and intimacy with the Supreme... We hold, in fact, that noble conception of education held by the mediaeval church, as pictured upon the walls of the Spanish chapel in Florence.”

The Parents' Review, Vol. 5, No. 12, pp. 925-926 (February 1895)



“ ... moral education, is too delicate and personal a matter for a teacher to undertake trusting to his own resources. Children ... want a great quantity of the sort of food whose issue is conduct, and that is why poetry, history, romance, geography, travel, biography, science and sums must all be pressed into service. No one can tell what particular morsel a child will select for his sustenance.”

Towards a Philosophy of Education, p. 59 (1921/1925)



Thank You

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Appendix A

The Theology of F.D. Maurice



“Maurice’s overwhelming conviction was that the ground of religious truth lay in the doctrine of creation. One of his favourite biblical books was the Gospel of John (this was a very characteristic enthusiasm of late nineteenth-century Anglican theologians), and it says there of the Word of God, in the opening chapter, ‘All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.’ (John 1:3) Maurice took that statement quite literally. All that is, is made by God... As the Christian God is a God of love, humanity’s creation is marked by a deep longing for union with God. Sin, conversely, for Maurice is not so much a fundamental flaw in human being—though he did accept the traditional concept of original sin—as a consequence of rebellion against God’s will for us, an obstinate refusal to recognize and accept his desire for union with us.”

To Build Christ's Kingdom: F. D. Maurice and His Writings, J. Morris, p. 13 (2007)



“ in a series of lectures and sermons, published as *What is Revelation?* (1859), he sought to stress both the transcendence of God and the fact that God has made himself known to us in such a way that we can say we know God as he is in himself. The lynchpin of Maurice's argument was, however, not so much the doctrine of revelation itself, as the doctrine of the Incarnation. The whole point of this, Maurice was saying in effect, was that the unknowable God had made himself known in a human person. A fully Trinitarian belief recognized that the intimacy the first disciples had known in their relationship with Jesus Christ was secured for all the followers of Christ in the life of the Spirit. Through faith, then, Christians are brought into a relationship with a real person, Jesus Christ, a person with whom it is possible to have a relationship in a sense comparable to that of other human relationships. ”

To Build Christ's Kingdom: F. D. Maurice and His Writings, J. Morris, p. 18 (2007)



Appendix B

Two narratives



Narrative #1

1. The fresco is primarily about knowledge
2. Aristotle developed a theory of knowledge
3. Thomas Aquinas integrated Aristotle's theory of knowledge with Christian theology
4. The Florentine Dominicans depicted Aquinas's theory of knowledge
5. Charlotte Mason saw the fresco and it changed her paradigm
6. It led her to embrace Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophy
7. Mason's ideas are best understood as a development of this Greek tradition

This narrative is **not** supported by the facts



Narrative #2

1. The fresco is primarily about the Holy Spirit
2. F.D. Maurice developed a theology of the Holy Spirit based on the doctrines of the creation, the incarnation, and the immanence of the Triune God
3. Mason was influenced by Maurice's incarnational, evangelical Anglicanism
4. Within this theological framework, Mason developed the Great Recognition based on her reading of Scripture, her reading of Coleridge, and her own sanctified imagination and creativity
5. When Mason saw the fresco, she felt that her theological insight had been marvelously confirmed
6. Mason's ideas are best understood as a development of this Hebrew tradition

This narrative **is** supported by the facts