

Chapter 6

Great Minds Are Developed

Let's begin this chapter by envisioning ourselves as infants, gazing deeply into our mother's eyes and taking in the warmth of her smile. In this tender moment, she cradles us gently in her arms, as if we are a priceless treasure—something she has waited so long to hold for the first time.

Can you imagine what thoughts might be swirling in her mind as she contemplates the future? She may wonder about the path we will take, what kind of person we will become, and the unique talents and qualities we will develop as we navigate life. As we grow older and engage with the world around us, we instinctively find ourselves in a role of observation and imitation. We watch how others interact, learning from their actions and responses to various situations. This process is essential for our development.

With each passing year, we evolve, piecing together our identities and beliefs. Throughout this journey, we often seek role models—individuals whose values and characteristics resonate with us and guide us as we explore what it means to be our true selves. As we mature, we replace our role models with new ones. Upon completing our education (school and college), we sometimes feel ready to start planning for a family, beginning by securing a good job and making provisions to support it.

Some people may develop a desire to learn more about the world around them. For example, Albert Einstein, a well-known professor, encouraged others to think outside the box and introduced them to the vastness of life itself. What stood out about him was his unique mind for mathematics. It is said that he was a troubled student because he suffered from a speech impairment, when, in reality, it was discovered that he was a dreamer and explorer, even sometimes solving a problem while sleeping on it.

Einstein would notice things others overlooked and wonder about, and, like many historically influential men who shaped our culture, he desired a secure world with good morals and harmony. They say he was fascinated by light and had a wild imagination about what it would be like to travel along one of its beams and explore an unknown universe. Thus, he became a talented, great scientist with the world as his student.

Great men like Einstein were known as great thinkers, but wait: the Greek scholar Socrates was also a great thinker and is credited with teaching the well-known scholar Plato. Plato was

known as a great thinker. He, like many others, desired a safe world where good morals were practiced with peace and harmony. It is said that Plato taught Aristotle, who then tutored Alexander the Great. Today, world leaders and executives of prominent corporations draw on Plato's teachings to remain open to new ideas and prepared to adapt to a changing world, while maintaining their productive platform as the foundation of their success.

Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States, can credit his quest for knowledge to his studies of Plato and other great minds. As we read Jefferson's famous words in the Declaration of Independence, we see some of Plato's teachings unveiled. The Declaration of Independence includes a clause written by Jefferson: "We hold all truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that their creator endows them with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Plato was a great thinker who believed in and pursued his love of Wisdom and Knowledge. He believed in the people's right to be accessible and think for themselves. Plato opposed tyranny and prioritized moral character and justice in those who would hold leadership positions, and he believed in a good education and stability for the populace, thereby building a better society. This provides a glimpse of the scene and setting in which the Apostle Paul found himself when invited to speak in Athens, as recorded in Acts 17:16.

Here in Athens, Paul found himself in a city full of idols, and the philosophers of that day lived to hear and learn of new ideas and ways of thinking. While visiting Mars Hill, Paul preached an unusual sermon about the way to the unknown God, which sharply contrasted with and challenged their contemporary beliefs. The city of Athens was a renowned center of learning at the time, producing great free thinkers. Paul's companions had left him alone with these philosophers as he was there to await the arrival of Timothy and Silas.

Paul spoke about the resurrection; most of the city rejected his teachings; however, he encountered no physical resistance and was not forced to leave. He preached his heart out in Athens, but there is no record of any change among the people. The leaders in Athens had no regard for whom or what one worshiped, believing everyone was entitled to do as they wished.

Today, look at the moral decay of our society, which has lost its vision of where anything goes with no restraints. It should serve as a wake-up call that the end is near. I am talking about a lazy society with government leaders who wink at sexual sins and allow the production of such songs as "If loving you is wrong, I don't want to be right." If you are disturbed by the moral decay of our society and its leaders, you are thinking like some of the great minds the Apostle Paul encountered in Athens. Athens produced the minds of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. These great

men desired a free, moral, and stable society, but wanted one without a God or creator that would require them to stand and give an account of their lives after death.

This is called “secular humanism,” which holds that man and his achievements are his salvation; in other words, man is his own Savior. Some well-known TV celebrities have made similar statements, declaring man his own Savior. The world is searching for profound answers to its pressing challenges, yet many of God's followers remain passive in their pews. They seem to be constrained by rigid religious traditions and a lethargy that stifles spiritual awakening.

To summarize, numerous remarkable individuals throughout history have provided compelling testimonies of how their encounters with Christ dramatically changed the course of their lives. These testimonies highlight the transformative power of faith and reveal that the true essence of life can be found only in a relationship with Christ, often referred to as the giver of life.

Being anchored in Christ inspires believers to awaken their faith and actively participate in the world around them. This engagement is not merely about assimilation into cultural norms; rather, it encourages believers to make a meaningful impact on society while maintaining their distinct values and beliefs. By becoming positive influences in their communities, they can share the message of hope and love exemplified by Christ, while ensuring they do not allow the world's pressures and distractions to compromise their faith.