

# the MEL GABLERS' *Educational Research Analysts Newsletter*

Need  
Trinitarian  
Theme

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## CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL U.S. HISTORY TEXTBOOKS REVIEWED

**A**re Christian school textbooks better than public school textbooks for Christian schools? As a test case, we reviewed the Teacher's Editions of the two most popular Christian high school U.S. History textbooks, A Beka's *United States History in Christian Perspective: Heritage of Freedom*, and *United States History for Christian Schools* by Bob Jones University Press (BJUP). As always we judged subject-matter content, not teaching aids. Standard review criteria were the same as for public school U.S. History texts, though in addition we expected these Christian books to explain underlying Biblical principles as well. Page 8 of this newsletter tallies those books' superiorities to public school U.S. History texts and their deficiencies on Biblical principles.

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**Page 8 of this newsletter tallies their pluses and minuses.**

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Unlike some public school U.S. History texts, these Christian books have no pattern of pejoratives stigmatizing conservatives and superlatives idealizing liberals, no moral equivalence between the West and Communism in the Cold War, no anti-family innuendo, no disproportionate subject-matter coverage pandering to trendy special interests. Instead they relate antichristian philosophies to America's late-20<sup>th</sup> century moral and spiritual decline. The A Beka book even defies political correctness by explaining that nature-worship, animism, and superstition kept the Indians from taming the wilderness like the Europeans did, and by debunking the racist myth that Indian wars meant Indians fighting only whites, not each other.

*Our first time ever*

*A Beka and BJUP are works in progress.*

So why do some Christian schools not use Christian books? Often, they say, because public school texts teach superior critical thinking skills. Yet about 75% of public school Teacher's Edition answers to "critical thinking" student text questions are *verbatim quotes* from the student text narrative. This is rote memorization by another name. The great American public school textbook critical thinking hoax is just marketing hype. Still, these Christian publishers will never match public school textbooks at multiplying teaching aids. They must rout them in Christian education by the rightness of their Biblical U.S. History transformation. They are not there yet. A Beka and BJUP high school U.S. History books are better at some things ... but wanting in this.

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**God's Word beckons them to Biblical U.S. History transformation.**

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These Christian U.S. History books must stress trinitarian shared sovereignty in government, must cite Biblical principles which restrain man's sovereignty there. More important than American leaders praying or invoking God's name is, Did they govern by Biblical principles? Time for Christian Social Studies texts to own the Bible as a political and economic guide as well as a moral and spiritual rule. God's Word beckons them to wholly cease from secular conceptualizations, to articulate Biblical principles, to vaunt their Christocentrism, to profoundly reinterpret U.S. History, to shame Christian schools that shun them. Trinitarianism is the best interpretive key to U.S. History – its most coherent organizer – because Jesus Christ is Lord.