

First Principles

Newsletter of Principia, a non-profit educational institute

December 2002

2002 in Review

This was a **year of tremendous growth for Principia**, both in effective outreach around the world and inwardly as our mission became clearer and more refined! Our business plan was completed and we received our official 501(c) (3) status from the IRS. Four new board members were added. God sent us a secretary/bookkeeper, a director of development and publications, and four curriculum writers!

Rebuilding the Wall of Christian Education was written, illustrated, translated into four languages, and printed.

Feed My Lambs paraschool curriculum was designed and the first 12-week unit written. The staff of a local Christian paraschool is waiting to be trained and will pilot the program in January, 2003. It will then be translated into Spanish to be piloted with Food for the Hungry International in the Dominican Republic. There are plans to translate it into Portuguese and French when God supplies the finances. There is great interest in this project from leaders all over the world.

Taking First Principles to the Nations:

- ◆ 1,323 pastors, educators, and ministry leaders from 25 countries on four continents received Principia's training.
- ◆ Ten leaders are being individually discipled by Dr. Youmans.
- ◆ Two schools have committed to being a demonstration school and Principia training center in their country.
- ◆ Excluding educators from the United States, directors of over 60 day schools, seminaries, colleges, and universities received training.
- ◆ Dr. Youmans corresponds daily with multiple leaders from 58 countries via email — a very time consuming activity but essential for building and maintaining international relationships.
- ◆ The *Feed My Lambs* project was piloted with Food for the Hungry International's country and child development directors in Latin America.
- ◆ Dr. Youmans recorded several radio series, one in San Antonio, Texas and the other in Asunción, Paraguay, a five-part series for Christian women to be distributed in Spanish around the world.
- ◆ An undetermined number of national and international ministries have been impacted.

Principia in France

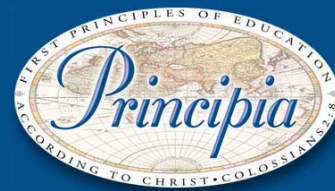
by Elizabeth Youmans

Although I have a French Huguenot heritage, it is God who put France in my heart! In the past eighteen months, the Lord has opened the door for Principia to impart principles and methods of Christian education in France on three different occasions. Wonderful relationships have been established with leading French educators and leaders from other francophone countries, as the Lord has providentially brought us together for His greater gospel purposes. It is an honor to associate with French Christian educators. My walk with God has been deeply touched by their lives and testimonies, which reveal their strong commitment to Christ in educating the rising generation with a Biblical, Christian worldview. Despite educational challenges and the grim faces of poverty, persecution, rigid government laws, and the spirit of the anti-Christ, our brothers and sisters in France persevere. To understand their plight, it is necessary to place them against the backdrop of their history and current events.

The Milieu

The French Republic is the largest country in western Europe. She has the fifth largest economy in the world and is a core member of the European Union. France is one of the most beautiful countries and boasts the majesty of the Alps, the beauty of the Mediterranean, and the charm of her river valleys dotted with châteaux and vineyards. Her variety of scenery, historic sites, and art treasures accompanied by a very sophisticated and cultured lifestyle make France unique. However, when the spirit behind the facade of France is discerned, she must be seen as one of the greatest mission fields in the world.

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Our Mission:

Disciple leaders by Biblical principles
for individual, educational,
and cultural reformation

France has a heritage of biblio-centric education.

French Christian history includes such giants as Bernard of Clairvaux, Olivet, Calvin, and Ramus, as well as Richelieu, Descartes, Voltaire, and Rousseau. Complex and riddled with many contradictory events, French history is wrought with papal dictatorship, royal extravagance and cruelty, and the horror of religious wars. Protestantism fought a noble battle in France, testifying in word and deed by pen and blood. Despite massacres, imprisonment, and violent atrocities, France has a long history of biblio-centric education that began in the 4th century with the Vaudois, who fled the torment of Diocletian and the paganism of Constantine's new church to the foothills of the Alps. They brought their Scriptures with them and taught all their children to read and memorize vast portions of the Bible. Though hunted and persecuted for 1,000 years, they survived and were faithful to teach their children the Word of God. They translated the Scriptures into their language which became the foundation for Olivet's translation.

However, no Christian educators anywhere ever carried out their mission to teach youth how to reason with the Word of God under more duress than the Huguenot teachers of the 16th and 17th centuries. Calvinistic teaching put principles into practice in 2,150 elementary schools, 25 colleges (high schools), and 8 academies or universities that trained pastors by 1561. Every Huguenot church had a school! But with the 1572 St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, the decades of Religious Wars, and Louis XIV's tragic Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 came the closing of all Protestant schools and the eradication of the Huguenots from France.¹ What perhaps was the zenith of Christian school education terminated abruptly in one day!

Since the Era of Enlightenment, the last 200 years of French secularization have produced a country that is gospel hardened! Today over 43 million Frenchmen have no real link with the church as the barriers of rationalism, rampant involvement in the occult, intellectualism, and individualism prevent the gospel from even being heard. In June 2001, the French Parliament passed the Anti-Sect Bill which severely restricts the freedom of religion in France. "Mental manipulation" is now a criminal offense punishable by prison terms and stiff fines.

From her days during the Reformation, France now has only 14 Christian day schools in the whole country (down from 20 schools several years ago). Christian teachers in France lead a life of sacrifice and persecution. With few exceptions, the small French church has no vision to support education. There remains yet a deep wound from the Forty Years Religious War. This remembrance keeps both men of faith and secular educators rejecting all forms of religious education! Therefore, the passion for Christian education emanates from the hearts of individual fathers and mothers! The French Christian home is the site of most of their schools with small enrollments of five, ten, or twenty-five students. The names of their schools reveal the spirit of their mission: the Olive Grove; Immanuel; School of the Potters; the Vineyard; the Sheepfold; the School of Timothy; the School of the Rainbow; the Tree of Life; the Collège Daniel; and the School of Perseverance (Guadeloupe). Pray for the French.

¹ Kiene, P. (1998). *A History of Christian School Education*. Colorado Springs, CO: A.C.S.I. ch. 11.

In the Carpenter's Shop

Strasbourg, France April, 2002

Strasbourg is located in Alsace, a unique region in France on the border of western Germany, whose national identity has passed from French to German to French many times throughout her history of wars. It is the Protestant region of France, and Strasbourg was once home to Guttenberg, Calvin, and other Reformers.

From my time in Lyon as a keynote speaker at the National French Christian Education Conference in 2001, I was invited to Strasbourg by homeschoolers, Gilbert and Sabrina Suard. The Suard's had just moved back to France with their four children from Jerusalem, when Sabrina attended the conference, heard my lectures, and emailed for additional help. She ordered *The Noah Plan* curriculum and immediately employed the notebook method.

She began teaching subjects by Biblical principles and was so inspired by her research as she developed her curriculum, that her enthusiasm overflowed to others. While in Switzerland last summer, we spent a day together and planned a Principia Training Séminaire for April, 2002. With French intercessors bathing the endeavor in prayer, participants came from many regions of France and six countries.

The setting for the training was a converted carpenter's shop. This became a major theme throughout the week, as I had brought several images of young Jesus in the carpenter's shop with which to teach. The Spirit of the Lord was present to deliver many leaders from the bondage of false philosophies and to enlighten their minds with Biblical principles of teaching and learning. The testimony of what transpired is best expressed by their comments:

"Thank you for saying 'Yes' to the call of the Lord on your life! You have blessed us and France tremendously!"

"Thank you so much for transforming my mind, my spirit, and my soul. I wait to welcome you in the Ivory Coast."

"Thank you for being God's messenger and bringing His Word to us! Thank you for revealing God's character and eternal counsel for teaching and learning, and for bringing the light to our lives, our families, and our nations! These contributions are tremendous and will bless the nations through the Gospel! Thank you for revealing what God designed you to be. It is a great encouragement to us and we love you for it!"

"Before the séminaire, I was frightened that I can't teach well, but I made an alliance with God to go on. Now I can see! Now my mind is changed! Your teaching is from the heart of God. I now understand why God said to me, 'It's through the children that French parents will find Him.' May God richly bless you!"

"Thank you so much for your rich teaching, so varied in principles and full of life. I have received much and now it is my responsibility to communicate it, not just be one who 'hears and forgets,' but one who must apply these teachings with the Lord's help."

In the Château

Guebwiller, France
October, 2002

The invitation to present a week's training at Dr. Luc Bussière's Collège Daniel followed my time in Strasbourg. Luc is the leading French Christian educator, whom I met several summers ago in the south of France at an education conference. For sixteen years, he and his wife, Manuela, have been used of the Lord to plant the vision of French Christian education in many francophone countries and to train teachers through their three-month training program called "Formation Mathurin Cordier."

The Collège Daniel is located in an historic château on the beautiful Alsatian wine route at the foot of the Guebwiller vineyards. It was originally the home of a wealthy vineyard owner; became the site for a school; passed into the hands of the Nazis during WWII to train German youth in Hitler's infamous Jungvolk (Hitler saw young Germans as the key to the success of the nation.); was inhabited by the French Bible society; and finally purchased by M. Bussière for his Christian collège and home. The Collège Daniel has 100 students, a team of leaders, and a varied faculty, many of whom live in the château.

My week at the foot of the vineyards was bathed in a spectacular array of rainbows, as God's message of mercy was displayed in the sky! Three continents were represented with participants from many regions of France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Chad, and Guadeloupe. The invitation requested practical applications and tools of developing curriculum by principles. I spent one week imparting the principles of teaching and learning, the notebook method, tools of Christian history, literature, composition, the fine and performing arts, and developing curriculum with the Word of God.

The lectures were audio taped and Luc transcribed each session into French on his computer and assembled the documents along with the handouts into a handbook. His comment to me after the seminar was, *"Many have come to us over the years and given us work enough for a week. You have come to us for a week and given us enough work for many years!"* A final comment from the château:

"Many have been challenged and all were inspired. We had a meeting with all the team and the fruits of your coming are so good. You have given us inspiration, courage, vision, and wonderful tools!"

Principia Advisor, Daniel Neuhaus

Principia is honored to have a French educator on our advisory council — Monsieur Daniel Neuhaus. Daniel is an A.C.S.I. regional director in France, on the board of directors of EurEKA, and has supported our ministry from the beginning. He is a well-respected Christian educator, and his wife, Sonya, homeschools their three children. Daniel is tri-lingual and teaches at the

Collège Daniel in their secondary school (collège). He has prayed for our ministry, faithfully attended each Principia training program, and he and his wife have hosted me in their Saint Louis home. Thank you Daniel for your counsel and faithful support.

Recent News

***His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor,
Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace!!
- Isaiah 9:6***

Dr. Evie Tindall, Regent University School of Education professor and reading specialist is a new board member. Evie supports Principia in many ways and has contributed to the design of *Feed My Lambs*.



Bryan Youmans, Principia's vice-president, and Brazilian Simone Hara, former Regent graduate student of Dr. Youmans and Principia director of development and publications, were united in holy matrimony November 16, 2002. The couple now resides in Chesapeake, Virginia.

Keith and Linda Andrus, founders of Ethicom, a Christian marketing, advertising and design company will be working with Principia to design marketing tools for 2003.

Holiday Greetings from Principia

**May the Spirit of Christ abide
with you and your family
throughout the holidays!**

Joyeux Noel

Feliz Navidad

Feliz Natal

Frohliche Weihnachten

Hauskaa Joulua

Salamet Hari Natal

Buon Natale

Geseende Kersfees

Gledelig Jul

Prettige Kerstdagen

Mboni Chrismen

Veseloho Vam Rizdva

***You will bear a son, and you shall name
Him Jesus. He will be great, and will
be called the Son of the Most High. . . .
and His kingdom will have no end.
- Luke 1:31-32***

