

# HEART MATTERS

NON SCHOLÆ SED VITÆ

*Libraries of Hope Newsletter*

EVERYBODY IS A  
GENIUS. BUT IF YOU  
JUDGE A FISH BY ITS  
ABILITY TO CLIMB A  
TREE, IT WILL LIVE  
ITS WHOLE LIFE  
BELIEVING THAT  
IT IS STUPID.

--AUTHOR UNKNOWN

--It's December 1st and the holiday season is upon us! While you may think it makes sense to visit the Holy Land this month, I'll explain why the Month 4 topics have everything to do with Christmas. Jesus opened his ministry by telling a story of a sower sowing seeds. Seeds won't grow on hard ground that has not been cultivated.

As you study the story of Greece with its love of beauty and Rome that 'borrowed' that beauty and spread it throughout an empire, you will start to see how the ground was being prepared to receive the good news of the gospel and the kingdom of heaven as well as a way to cast the seeds. Plus, without an understanding of the world into which Jesus was born, it's difficult to understand why the Jewish people were so earnestly waiting for a Messiah for deliverance.

After the fall of the Roman Empire and the Dark Age that resulted, it was discovering the riches of Greece that led to a rebirth or Renaissance, which started in Italy. And the artists of Italy continued to send the gospel message forward in a time when books were rare.

Our tie into American history is simply recognizing the influence of one man of virtue, first in the life of Christ, and then in the life of George Washington. George Washington was often seen as a modern day Cincinnatus, a Roman figure who also relinquished power and went back home to his farm.

We begin a study of Plants and Trees in our Nature Study topic, a perfect tie-in to the Christmas tree. In the Plants and Trees nature book is a story of a 1000 year pine. What a story a tree has to tell! Or why not tell Hans Christian Andersen's story of The Fir Tree who was never content with what he had.

Our Mother's University topic easily ties into Italy as we gain a deeper appreciation of Art—particularly paintings.

I know you only get a quick introduction as we pass through these topics. But the more times you revisit these places, the deeper you will go. But Greece and Rome are particularly large topics—some time, when interest is high, you might consider summer months for a much deeper dive.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

--I've introduced some new features to our Well-Educated Heart Facebook group. Every Monday is Monday Gems day. This is a place to share a quote or an idea or an insight you have recently had with others. Whenever you are looking for a little inspiration, you can easily search #wehmondaygems.

Wednesday is for #wednesdaywehway. I keep telling you that WEH is different. Each Wednesday I will highlight a way that it is different than traditional ways of doing things and then invite you to share from your own experiences what you have learned.

Friday is Friday show and tell. The most often asked question is, "How do you do this?" Friday Show and Tell will be a great place to share as well as look for ideas. You'll soon see why the question is impossible to answer. It looks different in every home! In music, think of all the songs that have been created from 8 notes. The same idea applies here. In Catch the Vision you are given some principles to work from. Applying them has an infinite variety of faces. I encourage you to share from the rotation topics for that month to narrow the field a bit. Then you can pull up #fridayshowandtellmonth3 or whatever it is and find ideas to spark your own imagination for whatever topic we are on.

Just a reminder--the rotation is simply a system that allows us take in the whole world and everything in it. You may have your own system--there isn't a right or wrong one. But here, if you follow this one, it enables us to be working in the 'same room' so to speak each month.

The ideas you share may well spark an idea for someone else who is studying the same general topics.

I've been enjoying all that members of our group are putting out there!

--Belle Ame Center for Artful Living is now a 501c3 non-profit charitable organization. The vision of the Belle Ame Dream is beginning to spread. Please visit our new website at [belleamedream.org](http://belleamedream.org) and watch the video to see where we are at. Also I have an important message for you. I hope you will take a few minutes and listen! You can do so in this [new podcast](#).

Imagine a place where you can send your sons to work alongside men of noble character in learning to grow food

Art credit: A Landscape on the Pond by Adolf Kaufmann





“JOY IS NOT THE  
ABSENCE OF PAIN.  
IT IS THE PRESENCE  
OF GOD.”

Art credit: Flower Garden  
by Abbott Fuller Graves



and build homes and other skills that are being forgotten.

Imagine a campus--a home for our work. Imagine a place where you can send your older teens and young adults for an immersive WEH experience with other like-minded young adults in a place away from the noise of the world; a place of real and authentic things.

Imagine a place you can meet with other mothers to rejuvenate and refresh yourself; a place that still teaches the art of making homes.

Imagine a place you can bring your families--in the beginning to camp--and to work and to play and to pray and sing together.

Imagine a place where there are weeklong conferences in music and art and writing and storytelling, led by artists and writers who still invite God into their works.

Imagine a place that regularly shares events virtually as well as live to learn forgotten skills and knowledge.

Imagine a place where young people can learn to love by planting flowers.

Imagine a garden. Beautiful gardens. “You’re nearer God’s heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth.”

Imagine “a place where the broken-hearted will be healed, the captive will be liberated, and the blind will be made to see the Unseen things of the world--the Eternal things.”

This is all part of the Belle Ame Dream--Belle Ame Center for Artful Living.

“Organized mother love works miracles.” (Frances Willard)

--In line with the reason for the season, I found a book on the Life of Christ that has become a new favorite. It’s not on Internet Archive, so I decided to record it for my grandchildren. My husband, who edits my audios, also fell in love with it. It brings the story to life in such a beautiful way. We have posted it in Month 6 Holy Land in [fcbelmonde.org](http://fcbelmonde.org). Look for A Boys’ and Girls’ Life of Christ by J. Paterson Smyth. There are 50 chapters, but they are very short, just 5 to 7 minutes. So you can listen to two chapters a day and be done by Christmas. Or it is divided into 6 parts—listen to one part each day the week leading up to Christmas Day. This is my gift to you. Merry Christmas!

--I am reading a book about the life of Paul. I am on the chapter when Paul brought the message of the gospel to Europe. And the first to hear the message was a group of women down by the river. Chief amongst them was Lydia, seller of purple.

The author writes: "This is a story for women. One likes to get a glimpse of women in their relation to Jesus. Women were the last at His cross when He died. Women were the first at His sepulchre when He rose, and in all the stories of bigotry, and hatred and desertion in the gospels there is none of women hostile to Jesus nor of any woman deserting Him.

"Here women are the first members of His Church in Europe, and in all the ages since they have been the centre and heart of it. The men of Europe have talked and preached and stood more in the limelight, but it is the WOMAN IN THE HOME, TEACHING HER LITTLE CHILD, that has made the Christianity of Europe." (J. Paterson Smyth, The Story of St. Paul's Life and Letter)

Art credit: Women Fetching Water from the River by Joakim Skovgaard



"To learn anything new you must first open the child's mind and attitude. And nothing does that like the arts! The most valuable tools parents and teachers have in their teaching arsenal are absolutely free. Music. Dance. Theater. Art. Fun. Giggles. Wiggles."

"You gotta open the kid before you open the book."

--Dr. Rich Melheim, a big proponent of Art-based learning