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Book Review: *Prepare to Thrive: A Survival Guide for Christian Students* – Part 2

By Dan W. Reynolds, PhD

This is part 2 of a review of the book *Prepare to Thrive: A Survival Guide for Christian Students* (Answers in Genesis, 2022)¹ by Patricia Engler.² Engler discusses what students will likely encounter in the culture and classes of college and how to keep the faith despite the opposition. She explains in detail how students can grow strong spiritual, intellectual, and interpersonal foundations against anti-Christian propaganda, faulty assumptions, logical fallacies, and self-defeating secular philosophies promoted on campus. She explains how to develop critical thinking skills for analyzing false claims about Christianity, the Bible, and evolution. She shows how students can separate fact from interpretation. Engler interweaves her own college experience into the book. The book consists of fourteen chapters and five appendices spanning 308 pages.

Engler works for Answers in Genesis in the US as an apologist, speaker, and writer. She earned a BSc from a liberal university in Canada. Engler was inspired to become an apologist after hearing a talk by Ken Ham when she was fourteen.

This article will summarize the book, chapter by chapter.



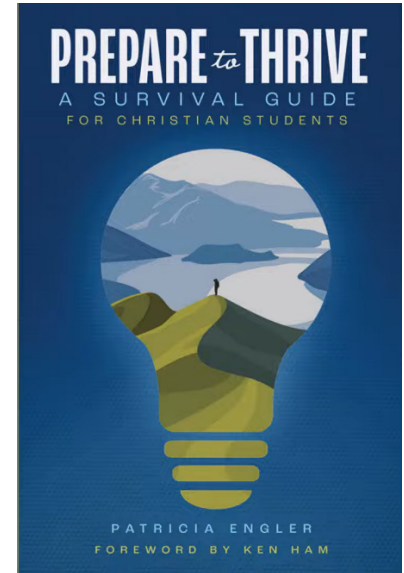
Patricia Engler

Chapter 8: Interpersonal Foundations

Engler says Christian students need a support network of like-minded believers. She identifies three relevant Christian communities: campus ministries, local churches, and godly adult mentors. These three groups were mentioned by most of the students she encountered during her “360-in-180” travels.

Engler recommends students join a solid Christian group on campus. Such groups can provide encouragement, prayer support, accountability, and outreach opportunities and can facilitate foundation building. These groups can help students recharge their spiritual batteries. Good campus ministries practice what they preach. She warns that students should be wary of false teachers and doctrines. Make sure the leader’s teachings and lifestyle align with the Bible. Students need to be biblically literate in order to discern truth from error.

There are potential compromises students may encounter. Does the group regard Genesis as history? Do they think being good will get you into heaven? Do members of the group act just like the world? Engler reminds students that we become like those we spend time with. Hanging out with the wrong crowd may result in compromised beliefs, actions, and boundaries. If a good group can’t be



¹ Engler P (2022) *Prepare to Thrive: A Survival Guide for Christian Students*, Answers in Genesis, Petersburg, KY
² Reynolds DW (2024) Book review: *Prepare to Thrive: A Survival Guide for Christian Students* – Part 1. [https://tasc-](https://tasc-creationscience.org/sites/default/files/media/file/2024-01.pdf)

found, students may need to get their Christian fellowship from family, church, and mentors. Once a good group has been identified, students may encounter a cliquish culture that is hard to break into. Engler recommends finding and joining a group early on before cliques form. She suggests attending meetings with someone not already in the group. She encourages students to volunteer in planned activities and welcome others to the group. Groups must intentionally create a welcoming atmosphere. Newcomers should be encouraged to contribute to the group, not just benefit, sharing love rather than just seeking attention.

Students should find and join a local church soon after arriving on campus. Engler says the local church exists to promote prayer, worship, training in scripture, encouragement, spiritual growth, community outreach, godly relationships, and discipleship. Engler found that most students she met during her travels felt church involvement was critical to their spiritual health during college. Studies have shown that students who do not find a church in the first month on campus are not likely to attend church at all. Engler says students do better when someone from their home church connects them with a church near their campus. She recommends students start church hunting well before their arrival on campus.

Engler makes several recommendations on what to look for in a local church. The church needs to emphasize biblical teaching and stand on God's Word. The church needs to have more than exciting music. Look for real community, biblical answers, solid discipleship, and the teaching of apologetics. Engler says students *do* have enough time for church. She reminds students that their spiritual health should be one of their highest priorities. She recommends lingering after services—try to meet someone. She recommends joining a small group in a large church. Students should volunteer for and participate in service projects and outreach.

Students should seek godly, older adult mentors. Engler found this emphasized by students across cultures. Mentors can help students with their walk with God; provide a listening ear; serve as a role model; coach students vocationally; and help them find answers to tough questions in life, their faith, and career choices. Mentors can pray with students and teach them the Bible. Mentors are people who believe, teach, and live according to the Bible. Students should seek someone who proves God is faithful. According to Engler, mentors come in three varieties: the Sage, the Ally, or the Responder. A Sage is someone who is wise in spiritual matters and possibly in one's career field. Allies love you, feed you, pray for you, and encourage you. Responders are people you can call at any time to talk with about anything. In searching for a mentor,

Engler recommends looking for someone you want to be like. Ask them if they are willing to meet with you. Students should interact with older adults at their church. Students can serve alongside older adults. They should ask older adults to pray for them. Reading Christian biographies can sometimes substitute for a mentor. Older adults wanting to be mentors can invite students over for lunch, share their testimonies and stories of God's faithfulness, look for ways to serve alongside young people, talk to campus ministry leaders on how to get involved with students, look for young people going into their field, show they are available, or take a prayer walk around a university campus praying for students, faculty, staff, and Christian ministries.

Part 3: In the Trenches

Chapter 9: Critical Thinking

Engler says "...critical thinking tools are like intellectual garden pruners for tackling the weeds of lies, irrationality, and flawed logic that crop up in our minds—and in the messages we encounter daily."³ In this chapter, Engler addresses what students can do when their beliefs are challenged in the classroom. She provides three rules and seven checks. Her three rules are: (1) don't panic, (2) break it down, and (3) follow it up.

Rule #1: Don't Panic

Students may encounter *persuasive* but *unbiblical* messages in their classes. When this happens, students should remind themselves of what is true: God's Word, facts from science, history, eyewitness testimony, and their own personal experience. Whatever contradicts God's Word is a lie, and students may have to dig deeper to expose it; the Bible will always stand up to scrutiny. Put quotation marks around unbiblical claims. Write down your questions immediately so you can follow up later, seeking answers from apologetics databases and biblical mentors.

Rule #2: Break It Down

Engler introduces her Seven Checks of Critical Thinking in this rule.

Check #1: What does scripture say?

God's Word is the measuring stick for truth. God is omniscient and cannot lie. We have fulfillment of prophecies, answered prayers, statements about creation, etc. We need to have a strong spiritual foundation in order to compare various messages with scripture (Acts 17:11). Of course, the Devil will encourage us to doubt. "Basing our thinking on God's Word involves checking everything we hear, believe, and tell ourselves against scripture."⁴

³ Engler (2022) 157

⁴ Engler (2022) 161

Check #2: Check the challenge.

Does the message involve side issues or foundational doctrines? Side issues may be church traditions, worship styles, and other nondoctrinal issues. If evolution is true, the story of Adam would be a fable. Adam is foundational to biblical doctrine (see Rom 5 and 1 Cor 15). Any teaching that contradicts the existence of Adam must be wrong. Some messages may come from poor biblical interpretation or conflict with what Christians have believed for hundreds of years.

Check #3: Check the source.

Who is proclaiming the message? What is their worldview, credibility, and motivation? Is the person an expert in their field or merely someone making appeals to authority without providing good reasons to back up what they are saying? Is their worldview based on man's word or God's Word? Be sure to differentiate facts from assumptions. Is the message based on good information? Were experiments performed correctly? Was the sample size sufficient? Were the results reported accurately?

Check #4: Check definitions.

Make sure you understand their definitions of terms. The words *science* and *evolution* can have multiple meanings in various contexts. Science can be observational or historical as discussed previously. Evolution can refer to variation within kinds (microevolution), which is observed and consistent with the Bible, or it can refer to macroevolution (molecules-to-man evolution), which is inferred, not observed, and based on faulty assumptions. Evolutionists will provide evidence for microevolution and then claim macroevolution has also been demonstrated just on a small scale. This line of reasoning is referred to as the "bait-and-switch" or *logical equivocation fallacy*.

Check #5: Check for propaganda.

Propaganda is persuasion based on emotion, not logic or evidence. Propaganda is based on faulty logic referred to as the *fallacy of irrelevant premises*. Ask what makes the message so persuasive. Propaganda uses anything but sound reasoning to distract from the possibility the message may be untrue.

Check #6: Check the interpretations.

Ask which parts of the message are based on observational science and which parts are based on historical science or propaganda. Assumptions and interpretations can masquerade as "facts."

Check #7: Check the logic.

There are several logical fallacies one should look out for such as circular reasoning, straw man arguments, and others (see discussion of chapter 12 below).

Rule #3: Follow up.

Weigh the evidence for the unbiblical message against the weight of evidence for Christianity. The weight of evidence for Christianity far outweighs one's ignorance.

The key to remember is that God has the answer, even if He never reveals it to us on this side of heaven. Unanswered questions can be a devious faith killer. But faith crises don't happen when Christians begin asking questions. They happen when we stop seeking answers.⁵

Engler recommends students follow up by consulting apologetics resources, biblical mentors, and God and His Word. We should take tough questions to God in prayer.

Chapter 10: Dodging Psychological Bullets

Propaganda seeks to persuade through emotional manipulation instead of appealing to critical thinking and evidence. Engler says we should ask if a particular claim is being presented as true for reasons other than evidence and logic. Some common fallacies are appeals to the popularity of an idea or certain authorities agreeing with the claim (genetic fallacy); neither of these appeals has anything to do with the veracity of the claim. It is the content of a claim, not its source, that is the basis for its validity.

Engler provides a table entitled *Catching Common Fallacies of Irrelevant Premises* with twenty-three examples of the faulty logic often associated with propaganda.⁶ Many of these fallacies are explained in an article by Engler available online.⁷ Two of these fallacies are the *appeal to possibility* and the *argument from fallacy*. The *appeal to possibility* fallacy happens when someone asserts something is true because it seems possible or plausible. Evolutionists use this fallacy frequently. Their "just so" evolutionary scenarios are in view here. The idea that dinosaurs evolved into birds *seems possible* in light of the existence of dinosaurs with feathers, but saying this does not make it so. The *argument from fallacy* says that a claim is false because it has been previously defended with weak evidence or poor logic. For example, creationists in the past claimed that the thickness of dust on the lunar surface was evidence the moon was formed recently. Subsequent studies have shown that the rate of deposition of dust on the moon has been highly variable and so can't

⁵ Engler (2022) 169

⁶ Engler (2022) 176

⁷ Engler P (2020 Jul 15) Catch countless logical fallacies with one critical thinking hack. <https://answersingenesis.org/blogs/patricia-engler/2020/07/15/catch-countless-logical-fallacies/> Accessed 2024 Jan 09

be used to make age estimates.⁸ But just because the argument is weak does not change the fact that the moon was formed recently.

Other fallacious objections to Christianity include *there are hypocrites in the church* and *Christians have done many evil things in the past*. Logically, the poor character of some Christians has nothing to do with whether Christianity itself is true. These arguments commit the *genetic fallacy* which claims that the source of a message determines its validity.

Persuasion works through two channels in our brains. One channel involves logic and careful reasoning, and the other automatic and intuitive processing. Propaganda bypasses the first and addresses the second. People tend to follow the crowd. How can we resist the pressure to conform to secular values and behaviors? We may deny what we believe and compromise our behavioral boundaries to be accepted by the majority. We tend to think less critically about views held by most people. Studies have shown people are willing to state their actual position if at least one other person is also willing to do so.

Messages may be perceived as likely true when they are given by an authority figure. But just because a professor says humans evolved from a primate ancestor does not make it so. This is the *appeal to authority fallacy*.

How often a message is repeated has nothing to do with its validity.

Messages that play on our fears and desires are not true or false because of the emotional responses they elicit. God designed us as emotional beings. The same message can be framed positively or negatively. For example, say there is a drug that works for 80% of those who take it. A reporter could say that this new drug helps 80% of all patients (positive) or fails to work for 1 in 5 people (negative).

Once we can discern these fallacies, we can avoid psychological biases. We need to filter irrelevant persuasion from a message so we can clearly separate facts from assumptions and interpretations.

Chapter 11: Assessing Information

Identical facts can lead to very different interpretations. Engler explains how students can separate facts from interpretations:

Step #1: Identify the Observational Science

Step #2: Identify the Historical Science

Non-observable “facts” are usually interpretations. Some will assert something *did* happen because it *could* have happened, but this is just the *appeal to possibility fallacy* mentioned previously.

Step #3: Notice the Assumptions

For evolution, the assumptions include macroevolution is possible, the Earth is millions of years old, and life must have arisen from non-life.

Step #4: Remember There is Probably More to the Story than What You Are Hearing

Classes usually only scratch the surface of subjects. Students will usually only hear the secular side of the story. The facts contrary to evolution will probably not be mentioned. Students should explore the explanations creation scientists provide.

Engler then goes through the evidence often presented for evolution. Engler says students should apply Rule #2: Break it Down (in chapter 9) using the seven checks to evaluate macroevolutionary claims. The first claimed evidence for macroevolution is that *natural selection* is observable. Check #1 is passed. Some bacteria do become drug resistant as a result of mutations and natural selection. This fact is held up as proof evolution works. But this is the *bait and switch fallacy* as this is an example of microevolution, but not macroevolution.⁹ Mutant bacteria that have damaged DNA may be able to survive in the presence of an antibiotic but at the expense of genetic information; this is the opposite of what macroevolution needs to advance. The mutant bacteria are still the same species, so no contradiction with scripture is found. Check #3: Asserting bacterial resistance as evidence for macroevolution is based on man’s word, not God’s. Check #4: The definition of evolution is switched by equating micro- and macro-evolutionary change. Check #6: Mutations do not add novel genetic information; macroevolution is not supported. Darwin can explain the survival, but not the arrival of the fittest. Engler mentions other examples of “evolved” creatures that have resulted from the loss of genetic information: wingless beetles, blind cavefish, snakes without limbs, etc.

The second evidence advanced for macroevolution is the *similarities between organisms*. Evolutionists assume that similarities between organisms demonstrate they have a

⁸ Snelling AA, Rush DE (1993) Moon dust and the age of the solar system. *J Creation* 7(1):2–42. <https://creation.com/moon-dust-and-the-age-of-the-solar-system> Accessed 2024 Jan 09

⁹ Reynolds DW (2019 Jun) Review of Jonathan Well’s new book *Zombie Science* (Part 2). <https://www.tasc-creation-science.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/jun2019.pdf> Accessed 2024 Jan 09

common ancestor. They point to the similarities between humans and chimps, for example. Such similarities are said to be *homologous* or derived from a common ancestor. Cats, bats, whales, and humans have similar forelimb skeletons. Evolution assumes macroevolution can explain this. But comparison of different traits often results in different phylogenetic trees (“family” trees based on the assumption of common ancestry). Similar genes do not always code for homologous structures, and homologous structures do not always trace back to the same genes. In addition, sometimes organisms with similar structures are assumed to have very different evolutionary histories. For example, the camera eyes of humans and squids are very similar but are said to be a result of *convergent evolution* and not due to descent from a common ancestor with camera eyes.⁹ Similarities between organisms are best explained by assuming they have a common *Creator*. The same modules (e.g., camera eyes) can be used across different species.

The third evidence advanced in support of macroevolution is *vestigial structures*. There are various structures in organisms that are assumed to have no function and are presumably the remnants of a random and unguided evolutionary process. An example is the human appendix. Biblically, a presumably useless organ might be thought of as a result of a loss of genetic information or having an as-yet-unknown function. We now know that the appendix stores good bacteria which are released into the gut after a bout with diarrhea. Other examples of alleged vestigial structures include the human tailbone, which is now known to serve as an anchor for various muscles to support internal organs, and pelvic bones in whales, once thought to be the useless remains of the hind limbs of a terrestrial ancestor, but now known to serve a function during reproduction. Using vestigial structures as evidence for evolution must assume evolution to begin with—a clear example of circular reasoning. Almost all “vestigial” structures have been found to have function.

The fourth alleged evidence for macroevolution is *biogeography*. Biogeography is the study of the geographical locations of extant species and fossils. It is thought to provide information about when and where species evolved. However, biogeographical patterns can be explained by animal dispersion after the Flood, movement of geologic plates, variation within kinds (microevolution), rafting, and land bridges exposed during the ice age; there is no need to invoke macroevolution.

The fifth alleged evidence for evolution is *transitional fossils*. There are only a few examples of these, and all are questionable. The coelacanth is not intermediate between fish and amphibians, the alleged evolution of modern whales from a terrestrial ancestor is not supported by the fossil evidence, fossils of the alleged intermediates in the horse series have been found buried together, archeopter-

yx was fully a bird, not a transitional form between dinosaurs and birds, etc. Many alleged intermediates are constructed from fragmentary fossil evidence often lacking essential diagnostic parts. The idea of transitional fossils is in conflict with the biblical teachings of created kinds and the limited variation within kinds. Fossils represent one created kind or another, not something in between (e.g., ape or human, dinosaur or bird, fish or amphibian, etc.). Sometimes bones from various organisms may be found together and mistakenly attributed to one species; reconstructions may then result in finding a “transitional” form (e.g., Piltdown Man’s skull was assembled from human and orangutan bones). There are a few created kinds, such as the platypus, that are a mosaic of features found in various animals.

Chapter 12: Evaluating Arguments

Arguments consist of premises that logically lead to a conclusion. A logical argument based on valid premises is sound. A logical argument based on invalid premises is unsound, even though the logic may be valid given the premises. Reasoning may be inductive or deductive. Inductive reasoning takes facts and tries to tie them together into a pattern. Inductive reasoning takes little pieces and attempts to paint the whole picture. Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, starts with a big picture and tries to draw smaller conclusions from it. The Bible provides the big picture from which we can make deductions. For example, if God made the universe, then most DNA probably has a function, even if we don’t yet know what it is.

We can use exegesis to get the Bible’s big picture and from there infer the little pieces. On the other hand, if we inductively start with little pieces out of context, we may read into the text (eisegesis) and arrive at the wrong big picture (false theology or teaching). Eisegesis happens when we try to make scripture fit the interpretations of science. Eisegesis can be detected by applying Critical Thinking Check #2: Check the Challenge (in chapter 9). Does the message conflict with scripture? Does the message conflict with the big picture from scripture? Does the message conflict with how the Bible has been understood for thousands of years?

Engler discusses several fallacies of unacceptable premises.

Straw Man Arguments

Here a misrepresentation of an argument is put forth and then disproved. An example would be: “creationists believe that organisms never change.” Creationists believe there is variation within kinds.

Motte-and-Bailey Arguments

Here one starts with a weak argument and then conflates it with a strong argument making the weak argument seem more likely to be true.

Either/Or Fallacies

Here one presents two options as the only possibilities when they are not mutually exclusive. They might both be true, both be false, or somewhere between. An example might be: "One must accept an old earth or become a bad scientist."¹⁰ This kind of fallacy is called *confirming the disjunct*. One can ask if there are really only two options. Could a good scientist also reject an old Earth? Sir Isaac Newton, a young earth creationist, would say "Yes."

Slippery Slopes

Here only one explanation is presented when others may be available. Slippery slopes usually contain many "if-then" statements. The conclusion may be true if the premises are valid. One must weigh the probability of each if-then statement.

Circular Reasoning (Begging the Question)

Circular reasoning occurs when one assumes the very thing they are trying to prove. While technically correct, this type of reasoning is not very persuasive. An example might be: "Evolution is true because the fossil record is a history of descent with modification of all organisms."

Everyone must start with unprovable presuppositions (axioms) from which arguments can be made. If one can demonstrate that the conclusions drawn from the presuppositions are not in conflict, then there is an internal consistency. We must assume logic exists to logically argue that logic exists. The laws of logic do not contradict themselves and are consistent with what we know about the world. Basing our thinking on this axiom is not a fallacy.

All worldviews begin with axioms. Christianity has axioms that are internally and externally consistent. That is, there are no logical contradictions in the axioms of Christianity and these axioms are in harmony with what we know about the world experientially, historically, and scientifically. This harmony is absent in worldviews based on materialism and naturalism. For example, materialism must deny the existence of free will and can't even be certain of the existence of a real external world. As Engler explains:

For example, if the Bible is right that God, whose character is the source of truth, created a logical universe and designed humans in His image with

faculties for reasoning, then we have an absolute foundation for objective knowledge, morality, and logic. But if human reasoning is the authority, then knowledge, morality, and logic are ultimately meaningless chemical reactions happening in our accidentally evolved brains. This logically leads to conclusions which conflict with themselves and with the world around us—including the assumption that immaterial things like logic exist in a material Universe without a consistent foundation for that assumption.¹¹

Some think of the various religions teaching different aspects of the same god analogous to the story of the blind men feeling and explaining different parts of the same elephant. But since different religions teach contradictory things about God, they can't all be true.

Engler then discusses several *formal* logical fallacies. In the previous *informal* fallacies, the problem was the *content* of the argument—these arguments had fallacious presuppositions. In formal *logical* fallacies, it is the *structure* of the argument where the fallacy lies. Many conditional arguments take the form of if-then statements, where the *if* portion of the argument is called the *antecedent* (symbolized by the letter *p*), and the *then* portion is called the *consequent* (symbolized by the letter *q*). Premises can be true or false and arguments can be sound or unsound. Below are some examples of both sound and unsound arguments.

Below are examples of valid logical arguments.

Affirming the Antecedent (modus ponens)

This is a valid conditional argument that has the structure:

If *p*, then *q* (Example: If God created humans, humans have dignity.)

p (God created humans.)

therefore, *q* (Therefore, humans have dignity.)

Denying the Consequent (modus tollens)

This is a valid conditional argument that has the structure:

If *p*, then *q* (Example: If evolution is true, the information in DNA arose by chance.)

Not *q* (The information in DNA could not possibly have arisen by chance.)

therefore, not *p* (Therefore, evolution is not true.)

Below are examples of invalid logical arguments.

¹⁰ This is my example, not Engler's.

¹¹ Engler (2022) 226

Denying the Antecedent

If p , then q (If humans and dinosaur fossils are found buried together, then humans and dinosaurs lived at the same time.)

Not p (The fossils of dinosaurs and humans are not found buried together.)

Therefore, not q (Therefore, humans and dinosaurs did not live at the same time.)

Dinosaurs and humans may still have lived at the same time but were just buried in different places.

Affirming the Consequent

If p , then q (If macroevolution is true, then organisms can be arranged into nested hierarchies.)

q (Organisms can be arranged into nested hierarchies.)

Therefore, p (Therefore, macroevolution is true.)

But the fact that organisms can be arranged into nested hierarchies can also be explained by all organisms having a common designer.

Engler then mentions the *stolen concept fallacy*. In this fallacy, the argument must assume some of the premises it is militating against. For example, atheists borrow a high view of reason from Christianity to argue that there is no God. But if evolution is true, there is no basis for having a high view of reason and so the argument for atheism is self-defeating and self-refuting. Materialists have no good basis for believing in truth, logic, morality, science, knowledge, human freedom, or human dignity.

Chapter 13: Combating Brainwashing

Engler opens this chapter by relating what it was often like for her at the university:

I felt the steady drip, drip, dripping of that force [brainwashing] in my classes, where authoritative professors and textbooks repeatedly told me the Bible is wrong, Earth is millions of years old, and no “real” scientist believes in Genesis. The demands of student life left little time and energy for responding to these claims as they accumulated and everyone around me seemed to accept them.

I knew that statements which conflict with Scripture aren’t true. I had apologetics training to defend why they aren’t. Even so, consistently hearing them presented as facts for four years wore on me. This type of “brainwashing” was the hardest part of secular education.¹²

Engler says brainwashing is propaganda with appeals to fear. One must be able to distinguish between teaching and indoctrination. Brainwashing is forcible indoctrination into a new set of basic beliefs. Secular universities criticize Christianity in an environment that does not promote critical thinking. Instead, beliefs are instilled through repetition, appeals to authority, and pressures to conform.

Engler says discernment between teaching and indoctrination can be realized by asking the right questions. Are students allowed to question what they are being taught? Is what is being taught true? Are beliefs being presented as dogma that can’t be questioned?

Engler then asks if churches are guilty of brainwashing. She says “no” because Christianity is consistent internally and externally with history and science. Students can ask questions. They will find out the Bible is true after all.

Engler lists eight characteristics of indoctrination:

1. Milieu Control: Information is controlled; undesirable information is censored.
2. Mystical Manipulation: Messages manipulate emotional responses.
3. Demand Purity: Everything in one point of view is good, and everything else is bad.
4. Cult of Confession: Everyone must confess crimes against the new truth.
5. Sacred Science: The new beliefs are sacred and can’t be questioned.
6. Loading the Language: Use cliches to promote ideas and undercut/silence the opposition. Conformists to the new truth are “progressive”; all opposed are “oppressors.”
7. Doctrine Over People: All non-conformists are “canceled.”
8. Dispensation of Existence: Brainwashers play God and decide who are persons with rights and who don’t have rights.

Engler suggests several questions to help recognize messages that are propaganda. Is the information likely true? Where does the information come from? Are words redefined to fit an agenda? Why does the message sound persuasive? Is the message based on observations and logic or manipulation? Which part of the message is instruction and which part is indoctrination? Is the message one-sided indoctrination?

Engler suggests three ways to resist brainwashing:

¹² Engler (2022) 236

1. Take care of yourself spiritually. Set boundaries ahead of time. Make sure to have a strong apologetics foundation.
2. Take care of yourself physically. Watch diet; get exercise; get enough sleep.
3. Take care of yourself mentally. Church attendance and prayer are good for mental health.

Engler suggests taking breaks, talking to friends, taking a walk, going outside, spending time with people, and making music as ways to stay healthy.

I couldn't trust in my own strength to stay a faithful Christian by "knowing enough." Instead, my job was to stay close to God, who is able to keep Believers from falling. As the Apostle Paul assured Christians in the secular society of Corinth, [He] will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is ultimately the one who enables us to survive the brainwashing environments of secular classrooms and culture. As we stay faithful in the little things, keep connected to God through continuous communication and maintain our spiritual, intellectual, and interpersonal foundations through the resources he provides, he takes care of the big picture.¹³

Chapter 14: The Next Level

In this final chapter, Engler shares her best advice. She says changing the world takes "knowing, believing, and obeying someone bigger than the giants." We must stay connected to the vine in order to bear fruit. We need to draw near to the "giant slayer." Being useful often requires much preparation. God-given desires will align with His Word. We need to surrender our desires into God's hands, and then He will guide and direct. We need to worship, spend time in prayer, and be in the Word. We should not let anything replace spending time with God. We should not let our ministry become our foremost identity. We need to return to biblical authority. We need to develop our spiritual, intellectual, and interpersonal foundations. We need to remain faithful. We need to bring others along.

¹³ Engler (2022) 250