

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION



"Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge." *Proverbs 23:12*

Whether we are totally aware of it or not, we live out our daily lives based upon a set of beliefs or convictions—we do not operate out of a void or emptiness. Those beliefs may or may not have been consciously determined. Nevertheless, they affect every aspect of our lives. For the Christian, that set of beliefs has been touched by God through revelation of Himself in creation, in His Son Jesus Christ, and through His written Word. Man has a source from which to determine what he believes and upon what convictions he will act. As man chooses to see things from God's perspective and attempts to follow Christ's example for living in accordance with the Scriptures, he is developing a philosophy and life view that is distinctively Christian.

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." *Proverbs 23:7*

A GENERAL CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING BELIEFS:

- 1) God is Creator and Sustainer of all and chooses to reveal Himself to mankind. "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things: to Whom be glory forever" (*Romans 11:36*). God is the Source of all knowledge and the ultimate reality. He is sovereign, all-powerful, merciful and loving. The Christian can spend a lifetime learning all the attributes of God.
- 2) Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the anointed One, sent in human form to bring about reconciliation between God and man (*John 1:44, 2 Corinthians 5:18*). He is co-creator with God, eternal, the head of the church, first in resurrection, in Whom all of God's fullness dwells (*Colossians 1:25-29*). As a teacher, He gave us an example of how to live. He is the source of wisdom, knowledge, and truth. He is Lord!
- 3) The Holy Spirit is sent by God to empower, instruct, enable, reveal truth, comfort, guide, testify of Christ, and to convict men of sin (*John 14:7, Acts 1:8, John 15:26*).
- 4) The Bible is the inspired and only infallible, authoritative Word of God. It is eternal, divinely inspired, a light, trustworthy, and profitable for teaching (*Psalms 119:105,89, 2 Timothy 3:15, Psalms 11:7, Colossians 3:16*).
- 5) Man, contrary to the Humanistic view, is not the center of the universe nor is he the "measure of all things." Man was created by God, for God, and in the image of God. Man was free to make a choice and chose to disobey God's command, thus allowing sin into the world. His fallen nature separated him from God. Reconciliation is possible only through Jesus Christ (*Romans 3:23, 2 Corinthians 5:18*).
- 6) God's goal and aim for man is redemptive, to restore in him the image of God and to thus change him into the likeness of Christ. Man was created to bring glory to God. (*Romans 6:23, Romans 8:29, Isaiah 43:7*).

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach..." *Colossians 3:16*

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." *Romans 10:9*

THE CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY APPLIED DIRECTLY TO EDUCATION

As the Christian Philosophy is applied more directly to the realm of education, it is imperative that the above mentioned beliefs are acknowledged, embraced, maintained, and reinforced. The value of education is made clear as we are admonished in Scripture to teach, train, instruct, and grow in wisdom, as did Christ. The Christian Philosophy and a personal acquaintance with the Author of all knowledge, wisdom, and truth provide a central core for the Christian educator that radiates throughout all areas of the educational process and content. The Christian worldview is interpreted and integrated into every area of study. The objectives, methods, and procedures of education now come under the guiding light of God's perspective. How does this translate into Christian education?

Of first necessity is a committed faculty, administration, and school board. While the ultimate responsibility for the education of children lies with the parents, (*Deuteronomy 4:9, 6:6-7, 11:19*) teachers come before the children daily as role models. A student, when fully trained, will be like his teacher (*Luke 6:40*). It is an awesome responsibility to instruct a child and assist in the development of his/her mind, attitudes, spiritual condition, social, and emotional growth. Without having a foundation of God's truth, and a present growing relationship with Christ, how can a teacher live out in front of his students a life worthy of imitation? The teacher must first be committed to the Lord Jesus Christ as a believer and follower, be committed to the study, understanding, and application of God's Word as well as be committed to allowing the Holy Spirit to give as a Guide in the ways of truth.

The selection of curricula and programming should reflect and support the Christian Philosophy of Education as well as the specific objectives stated by the school. The Christian school supports and reinforces the teaching and training that take place in the home and church. It is also responsible to go a bit further in the areas of academics and skill development that will enable students to become complete and capable Christian citizens, equipped for works of service to God and mankind (*Ephesians 4:12*). By choosing to attend a Christian school, no student should have to sacrifice receiving quality education of his mind, body, soul and spirit. Each subject area can be taught in light of God's existence and His words of truth.

"All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." *John 13:35*

Another distinctive aspect of the Christian school must be in how we treat one another. Christ made clear His desire and command that there be a difference in how Christians treat others, be they friends, brothers, or enemies. We must view others as God created them—in His image! Each one is loved and invited to become a child of God. For God does not wish that any should perish. The command to "love thy neighbor as thyself" further implies extending the qualities of love as Paul described in *I Corinthians 13:4-7*.

Our actions and attitudes towards students, parents, co-workers, administrators, board members and community members must reflect the qualities of love. If they don't, how shall any man know we are Christian? Again, if we are to teach this to our children and students, they must first see it lived out in our lives just as we have first seen it evidenced in the life of Christ.

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." *Colossians 3:17*