

My philosophy of christian education

[Religion](#), [Jesus](#)



My Philosophy of Christian Education Isaiah 54: 13 “ all your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children. ”

Introduction: Upon examination of Jesus’ life and ministry here on earth, I find it to be very fascinating that He successfully engaged in a plethora of professional fields; including that of teaching. In fact, He holds the title of Master Teacher. He was indeed a highly sought after teacher whose passionate and holistic approach to the vocation of education is the basis of my philosophy of Christian Education. The Ohio Department of Education, Center for the Teaching Profession describes the Master Teacher as one who, respects students’ diversity, is knowledgeable in the content area, practices effective assessment, effects plans, communicates with all stake holders, promotes a learner friendly environment and assumes responsibility for his/her professional growth and development. Christ the master teacher exhibited all these qualities and as a Christian Educator we all should too. It is on this foundation that I will seek to base my philosophy of Christian Education. According to Guillemin and Beck (1998), a Christian philosophy of education is, “ one that is determined by scriptures and bordered by the parameters, educational purpose, educational provider, the learner, curriculum or content and teaching, ” giving rise to four specific tenets. These four tenets to the Christian Education process consist of; the learner, the teacher, the curriculum and the teaching process. Therefore in formulating my Philosophy of Christian Education, I will use scriptural references to support the four aforementioned tenets of the Christian Education process. The Body The Learner The Learner in the Christian Education process may either be a child in the home, a student in the formal

classroom setting, or an adult member of a congregation. Sociologists have described the family as the first agent of socialization and therefore parents are the first educators. God has given parents the mandate to, “ Train up the child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it, ” (Proverbs 22: 6) also in Deuteronomy 6: 6-7 the Lord gave clear directions regarding the commandments; “ These commandments given today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them upon your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road. When you lie down and when you get up. ”(NIV) The word parents can be extended to include other persons in the society who are responsible for guiding and facilitating learning. This includes teachers and so we too have this mandate in relation to the child in the formal classroom. The Christian teacher even more so, as we must not only facilitate the contents of the secular curriculum but also be able to integrate Biblical principles effectively so children can come to realize their purpose in God’s wonderful plan. In college I was taught to do everything to avoid teaching ‘ Christ’ in the classroom. This was frowned upon as being indoctrination and so, in the schools I have worked before, all that is done to fulfill the mandate is devotional exercise and even then, children are not mandated to attend. Some of these children demonstrated total lack of respect for persons in authority, lying, stealing, cheating among other despicable acts and when there is no intervention some ended up being juvenile delinquents. It was never intended by God for children to behave, nor end up in such a manner. After all, Jesus said, “ Suffer the little children to come unto me: forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. ” (Matthew 19: 14). Teaching about Christ definitely should be the

job of all teachers. It is for each learner too, to study to show himself approved to God. (2 Timothy 2: 15). As leaders we are commanded by God to feed his sheep. (John 21: 17). The Great Commission is found in Mathew 28: 19, Jesus gave His disciples direct instructions to go and teach all nations, make disciples, teach them to obey all the commandments that were given unto them. Therefore due to the reciprocal nature of the teaching learning process, I am of the view that both learners and teachers do have a very critical and equally important role to play, to guarantee success and the fulfillment of God's plan. The Teacher Consequently, the teacher is accountable to God for the quality service that is offered to those in his/her care. In James 3: 1, 2 it is stated, " Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because we know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.... " As teachers of Christian education we should seek to emulate Christ as we facilitate learning. He is the Master Teacher who exhibited consistent leadership. Jesus sought to his listeners' wellbeing showing how much He cared; for example in the feeding of the multitude. (Mathew 4: 13-21). Jesus as teacher also aided his students in their decision making process. In Proverbs 11: 14, He clearly establishes the importance of guided decision making. " Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety. " He also in His many uses of parables made his teachings very applicable to real life situations, therefore understandable. He was a very innovative teacher who sought to influence, transform and empower people. His infinite knowledge made Him experienced in teaching. As Christian educators we too must have some experience of the power of the Holy Spirit in order to be able to

communicate fully, to the learners, the importance of, and the difference having Jesus Christ in their lives can make. Therefore it is my conviction that, Christian Education is best taught by Christian Educators. Paul in first Corinthians one lived as a teacher in Christ and therefore was able to tell his charges, “ Be ye followers of me, even as I am also of Christ. ” Therefore we should model Christ’s teachings as well as teaching them. Dr. Paul Cates, in his article entitled Transforming Teachers- Christian Philosophy of Education, postulated that, “ The teacher is the communicator of truth, he must therefore be openly and boldly a Christian. ” Teachers must be aware that teaching is a call to ministry. Teaching is one of the foremost gifts of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12: 28. It is to be used for the edification of the church or, in this case the learner. The Curriculum Additionally, it is my belief that the Bible forms the very core of the Christian Education curriculum. Guillemín and Beck (1998) argue that; “ the content or curriculum of Christian Education is simply truth. Unless we know God we cannot know anything correctly. God is best understood through the revelation of Himself in scripture. Christian Education which is truly genuine begins, proceeds and ends with the concept of divine revelation. All other truths must be scrutinized by it. ” Author, Craig Rose uses the passage of scripture found in 1 Colossians 17 “ In Him all things consists” as the premise on which his book titled “ All Things Consists in Him: Teaching Christianity Using Biblical Integration” is based. Rose purports that; “ we as Christian educators, should not relax within our safe environments, but should be diligent to utilize the opportunities provided to train up Spirit-filled students who know how God can use them in each of their respective fields of study-from athletics to

acting, from law to literature and from math to ministry. Each field of study needs Christians who really believe they are to be identified with Christ first and their profession second—such as a Christian engineer, a Christian football player, and a Christian playwright. " This is similar to how we are recognized by both our first and last names. This will entrench in their minds and in the minds of their peers and colleagues that they are different, set aside, being built as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable, to God through Jesus Christ. " (I Peter 2: 5). He further argues that the Bible is both the foundation upon which ideas are presented and the filter through which they are explored. For every topic in every subject a principle from the Bible can be had. It therefore stands to reason to say God supports the knowledge that we pass on to our charges. In Social Studies for example; there are principles to support every strand, and every topic within each strand. In the History strand we see where God wants us to develop a positive attitude towards historical events. We must learn about and pass on knowledge of these. Deuteronomy 31: 19, 21, 22 shows God instructing Moses to, " write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. " There's no doubt that God believes in the teaching of History, after all He was the one who inspired men to write the Bible which is to date, the greatest History book ever written. Similarly there are scriptures to support the other strands of Social Studies; geographical principle proves that God is responsible for the contours of the earth...Job 26: 10, " He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters, at the boundary of light and darkness. " For economics in dealing with money and possessions

He reminded us in James 1: 17, “ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the father of lights.... ” For the strand Government, we see where nations, governments and authorities were created by God and maintained by Him for His ultimate purposes. Job 12: 23, “ He increases the nations, and destroys them: He enlarges them and then straightens them again...” In Language Arts there are Biblical principles and scriptures to also support each strand namely, Reading, writing, listening and speaking. God spoke the world into being and that is a miraculous use of language. The Bible totally supports the curriculum within the school and therefore it is for us as Christian educators to infuse our lessons with these principles thereby facilitating the plan of God that young men and women will come to serve Him in their youth. The Teaching Process Guillemin and Beck (1998), identified three principles in the teaching process. “ Firstly, the objective content of truth directs us to the objective methods of teaching. Secondly, the fact those students are persons, demands personal approaches to teaching. Thirdly, the purpose of conforming to Christ’s image focuses the process of teaching on evaluation” As educators we are challenged to present objectivity in a relatively subjective world. While we train students to reason and confront their biases, it is also important that they are made to understand that there is objective truth to be learned. Deuteronomy 6: 25 provides a Biblical response to the question of subjectivity. In his book “ Reclaiming the Future of Christian Education, ” Greene (2003) declares, “ Knowing God in and through the creation is what is important, and students must be helped to explore the creation along the lines of their own gifts. ” Greene stresses, that it is important to reawaken to

the biblical view of life and reality, we dare not fail to train our children, whether in Christian schools or in Christian home schools, in a transformed, biblical consciousness. " In other words, we must return to a biblical worldview. I firmly believe that it is imperative for Christian educators to model the desired behavior of the student in his/her care. Teachers must first live transformed lives if they desire to positively impact young lives. It is important for them not to send mixed signals to the students, as this will only contribute to chaos and confusion. And will negatively impact the teaching/ learning process. According to Dr. Cates, The Bible being the foundation of the school reveals the threefold features of Christian Education as, a purpose, method and result. " The purpose is to put the believer into right relationship with God, man, self and his surroundings. " The method is the spirit's support with the adoption of Biblical truth to the believer's life resulting in a mature believer who is able to live a life in accordance with the teaching of God's word. He postulates that; " Christian education is a process of guided learning where the teacher and the Holy Spirit combine efforts to help the learner, to spiritually grow and mature, to more and more conform to the image of Christ. " Conclusion In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that a philosophy of Christian education must be based on a revelation of God through His word, His creation and His Son Jesus Christ. It includes the learner, the teacher, the curriculum and the teaching process. I deem it pertinent to also superimpose the Master teacher characteristics of Jesus; to be patterned by today's Christian Educators. As we continue to impact lives and facilitate transformation, growth and development. It is of paramount importance to practice consistent leadership, focused in collaboration and a

distinguished teaching. Finally it is important to always remember that we touch the future because we teach. Therefore, " all our children shall be taught by the LORD, " Through us, " and great shall be the peace of our children. " References Edlin, R. (2003). Core beliefs and values of a Christian philosophy of education. In J. Braley., J. Layman., & R. White. (Eds.), Foundations of Christian school education (pp. 69-81). Colorado Springs, Colorado: Purposeful Design Publications. Greene, E. (2003). Reclaiming the future of Christian education. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Purposeful Design Publications. Guillermin, P., & Beck, D. (1998). Christian philosophy of education. In P. Kienel., O. Gibbs. & S. Berry. (Eds.), Philosophy of Christian school education (pp. 105-129). Colorado Springs, Colorado: Association of Christian Schools International. Rose, Craig D.(nd.). In Him All Things Consist, Teaching Christianly using Biblical Integration Websites http://www.aiaas.edu/ict/vol_21/21cc_377-394.htm http://www.transformingteachers.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=37