

The purpose of education and the philosophy behind it

[Philosophy](#)



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Everyone who teaches has a philosophy of education. Everything that a teacher does is colored by the philosophy he/she holds. Every philosophy has at least the three following elements: ontology-what is real, epistemology-what is true, and axiology-what is of value (good) ethics. So what exactly do we mean by the phrase Educational Philosophy? The definition of Educational Philosophy is the desire to arrange all of the various experiences of education into a meaningful pattern. Arranging the experiences of ones educational philosophy is like putting together a big picture puzzle. There are at least five major pieces to the puzzle. This paper will define the five pieces in an attempt to better explain and give an understanding of ones educational philosophy. However, there are two views to be looked at when explaining ones educational philosophy- the view of the World and the view of the Word. Both views will be reported.

The first piece of the puzzle is the Purpose and Goal of Education.

Some of the thoughts of the world are as follows. One is for Reconstruction, which means to form a society in a certain way. An example of this is Busing- when schools are used to meet a social goal. A second purpose of education according to the world is for Life Adjustment, which means helping children to become successful and productive citizens. National Survival is the worlds third purpose of education. It is believed that an educated people is a free people. When Russia beat us in space, our country put an emphasis in math and science education in order to gain power. A final goal of the worlds for the purpose in education is for Psychological Maturity- knowing and understanding thyself.

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Now the purpose and goal of education according to the word is as follows. To educate actually has a two-fold meaning with important Biblical implications. One, it means to nurture/nourish while giving information, and two, to lead out, making you a part of the process. God not only desires to reveal Himself (nurture) but also to bring students (lead out) into conformity with Himself. This has two important implications: First, no true education is apart from God and His word. Second, one should see the world as God sees it, or you have failed as an educator. But the most important purpose of education is to teach about salvation. Teaching others about Jesus and His free gift for all is our main reason to be here on earth.

The second piece of the puzzle is The Nature of the Learner. According to the thoughts of the world, it is believed that all people are basically good and that all people are capable of rational/unbiased thinking. The fact that the environment has a direct relationship to success is another belief of the world. Each person is personally held accountable for his/her life experiences.

However, the thoughts of the word is that Man, though Gods supreme creation is totally dependent upon God. Because of mans rebellion, he has been totally and thoroughly affected by sin. This does not mean that man is utterly incapable of anything good or valuable, but that all aspects (thinking included) of his nature are to some extent marred. The creation of a healthy environment enhances the ability of the child to succeed in his education work. But, a satisfying social, cultural, and educational setting will not overcome the inherent weaknesses of mans nature. A Biblical doctrine of

man suggests at least two tasks for the educator: one, children must understand the world in which they live and what has happened and two, children need a moral and ethical foundation for life.

The Role of the Teacher is the third piece of the puzzle. One of the thoughts of the world for the role of the teacher is that he/she clarifies and promotes the norms of society such as divorce and homosexuality. Also, teachers are to refrain from stifling self-expression when students express themselves in their dress, and a final role of the teacher is to highlight the potential of every child.

Different than what is written above is the role of the teacher based on the word. With this view, teachers must maintain/create stability (good discipline) for the purpose of establishing a respectful solid learning environment. Teachers are in loco parentis (in place of parents) of authority and responsibility. Teachers are to treat the students as if they were to represent the truth, speak, act, and do as God.

Another piece of the puzzle is The Nature of the Learning Process. When it comes to learning, the world goes along with that of John Dewey's beliefs. He believes that learning takes place in context of experience and practicality and that learning takes place in context of democratic pupil activity. A belief of Frederick Froebel, which is also agreed on by the world is that learning takes place as it allows for the unfolding of the divine essence of man.

But, again as we take a look at the thoughts of the world it is believed that one is to take knowledge and make it a part of his/her life. Acquisition

(knowing) leads to application (doing). As the Bible states in John 13: 17- If ye know these things happy are you when you do these things. Learning comes through modeling of teacher and the best teacher to model from is Jesus. Finally, learning comes as teachers understand the tendencies of children, which these tendencies at times need to be strengthened and some need to be eliminated, but teachers know these tendencies and direct the children properly.

One final piece of the puzzle is The Selection/Scope/and Sequence of Subject Matter. According to some thoughts of the world, the teachers job is to do what is told- they have no say in curriculum. However, thoughts of the word agree that there must be the unification of TRUTH and KNOWLEDGE with the world. Gathering knowledge in all departments (curriculum areas) allows you to gather the teachers perspective, but when Gods word is sprinkled within, this causes you to learn bits and pieces of the truth along with knowledge. The unifying factor is Gods word ties it all together! There must be the realization of the paramount importance of the teacher in the curriculum and instructional process. The teacher is the living curriculum. Students will learn what they see more than from books.

So in conclusion, understanding the contrast of the secular and Christian philosophy of education demands an understanding and acceptance of the supernatural: The revelation of God both in the written word as well as in the Living Word, Jesus Christ. Approaching and defining educational philosophy from this perspective distinguishes us from secular educators in the following ways. First, it puts life in a meaningful context. Next, it makes a difference

and provides absolutes that will stand the test of time. Last, it permits us to educate the whole child.