

Mentoring Christian Principles in the Classroom

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Unlike teachers in the public sector, the role of a Christian teacher is more unique. Teachers, in general, have a mandate to instill knowledge through academic instruction, and experiential application of learned principles, through observed learning outcomes. The mandate for a Christian teacher takes learning even further, by pointing the student to their Heavenly Father and His desire that all they do should emulate His plan for their lives. This will likely emerge over time and become a life-long quest for the person who seeks God's will.

In our secularized society we continuously witness the views of Christian students being jaded by increased pressure to conform to worldly influences. These pressures include music, television viewing, movies, internet, and much more. The *Bible* states, *Don't pattern your life after this world, but let God transform you from the inside out and give you a new way of thinking. Then you will know what is good and pleasing to Him and what is not. (Romans 12:2, The Clear Word)*

How can we, as Christian teachers, instill a Christian worldview and a Christian way of thinking and living? We need to be intentional about our methods and goals. Teaching Christian principles will not always be popular and may be met with some resistance. Our objective is to teach well. We should strive to impart knowledge in a kind and convincing manner. Similar to a Christian parent, we Christian teachers need to resolve to teach students to aspire toward Christ's ideal for their lives. *Ephesians 6:4* says, *Raise them up with discipline and in the teachings of the Lord, training them to serve others. (The Clear Word)*

When we guide or correct our children, we do not always get positive feedback. This is also true in the classroom. Our nurturing and discipline will not always be appreciated or embraced. However, based on principle, we must continue to guide, nurture and discipline as necessary. It may never be known to us if our attempts were fruitful. God's Spirit working in our lives will make it possible for us to forge ahead, knowing that we are following God's principles of instruction. Ellen White writes that *Obedience to every word of God is another condition of success. Victories are not gained by ceremonies of display, but by simple obedience to...the Lord God of Heaven. (6T 140.1)*

The teaching profession demands diligent consistency. Yet, the rewards are great. However, the rewards are often noticed more as time goes by. Our work today may at times seem fruitless. Obedience to God's principles of education will help us gain the success we strive toward each day. One day at a time, God will guide us as we do His will. The tasks we carry out will be more meaningful as we become aware of God working through us. We can rest in the assurance that our efforts will make a difference in the lives of our students.

As we enter our classroom for another school year, let each one of us consider the positive blessing teachers bring as they influence their students. Academically, teachers fortify students with knowledge for the careers they seek. Spiritually, teachers acknowledge the Creator and encourage their students to build a relationship with Him. This is an awesome mandate!

For me personally, the teachers who stood out from the crowd were the ones who lived Christ-like lives. They were the ones who cheerfully and steadily showed me, by example, how a Christian should live. They demonstrated through positive actions that they had a personal relationship with their Saviour! Teaching students to live Christ-like lives will help them embrace a Christian worldview centered in Christ and His word.

When we teach students to make choices based on Christian principles, they will be better equipped to serve God meaningfully. *Service, Not Fame* was chosen many years ago as the official motto for *Kingsway College*. When I enter our campus I see the sign bearing this logo. It is my reminder of the hope for Christian education and I don't ever want to fail to live by those words *Service, Not Fame!*

May God bless each one of us as we begin a new school year.

(Responses/reactions can be e-mailed to Connie Solomon at lsolomon@sympatico.ca)

Resources:

- White, Ellen G., *Testimonies*, Volume 6, page 140.