

***Beacon Media***  
**Professional development for  
teachers**

**Session 1**  
**What is the difference**

**The Power Point presentation can be found at:  
[www.beaconmedia.com.au](http://www.beaconmedia.com.au) – Professional  
development for teachers**

## **Why do we need Christian Schools? What is the difference between Christian schools and other schools?**

- Is education neutral?
- Is Christian school education the same as government schooling, with the addition of Bible teaching?

This is a puzzle to many Christian parents.

*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is older he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)*

While it's true that Godly parents can train their children in the ways of the Lord through the home environment and through church life, there will be a double standard for the child who spends a large majority of time in an education system where God is not included..

### **Let's look at the role of the Christian School**

- serves Christian families
- a place where students can grow in godly character
- strengthens students in the Christian faith
- helps students to achieve academic excellence.

Christian parents place their children under the care of Christian teachers. Parents are in unity with teachers concerning what is taught.

### **All children belong to God**

- As CREATOR, God desires children to be educated in His ways.
- As REDEEMER, God wants children to hear the salvation message.
- As PROTECTOR, God requires spiritual protection of children.

*Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these. (Matthew 19:14)*

*Jesus called a child, made him stand in front of them, and said, "I assure you that unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven. The greatest in the kingdom of heaven is the one who humbles himself and becomes like a child. And whoever welcomes in my name one such child, welcomes me. But if anyone should cause one of these little ones to lose his faith in me, it would be better for that person to have a large millstone tied around his neck and be drowned in the deep sea. (Matthew 18 2-6)*

***If we accept that the child truly belongs to God, we must also accept that God alone has the authority to determine the nature of the child's education.***

### **Children are a gift from God (Psalm 127:3)**

- Children are “on loan” from God for the first 18 years or so of their life.
- Parents have been given the task of raising their children.
- Christian parents and teachers are partners in a child’s education.

### **What is the role of a Christian teacher?**

- One who is equipped – with a love for God, a relationship with God, an understanding of the Scriptures; good fruits, an ability to work with others, a calling to teaching, and a love for the students they teach.
- One who imparts truth – Truth is a person – Jesus Christ. All truth is encompassed in the teaching of Jesus.
- A servant – Jesus was the greatest example of a servant. Although He had authority, He was humble.
- An example - following in the footsteps of Jesus
- One who shows grace and love – The students are more important to the teacher than the subject he is teaching.
  
- One who draws out – The teacher looks for the greatest potential in the student and helps the students achieve it. The teacher focuses on meeting individual needs.
- One who affirms, encourages and inspires – Praise and encouragement has a great impact upon learning.
- One who recognizes God’s hand in the training of students – This means listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit. What is He saying about each individual student?
- One who shows wisdom – different from worldly wisdom

*The wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering and without hypocrisy, (James 3:17)*

### **How is the Christian classroom different to the secular one?**

- The students benefit from being nurtured by a Christian teacher.
- But there is another important reason for choosing a Christian school.

**God is included in all parts of education** – We call this ‘God-centred education’.

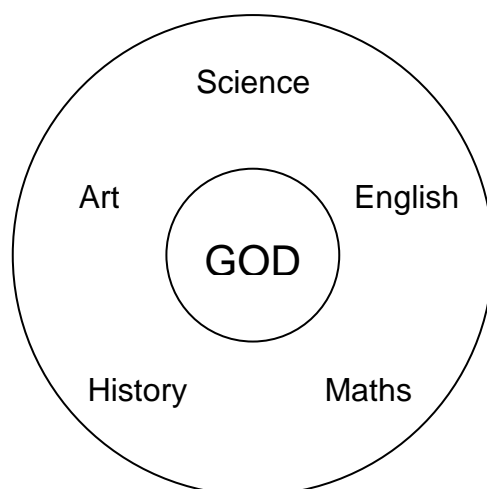
In God-centred education:

- Christian teaching **is not** confined to a separate compartment called “Biblical studies”, “Scripture class” or “chapel”.
- God **is not** excluded God from mathematics, science, and other subjects. Rather, God is placed at the centre of all education.

God and the Bible should be integrated with all education ...not separated from education

## Hebrew education (Refer to poster)

Hebrew education is the foundation for Christian education



- Based on the scriptures
  - God and His word were central to life.
  - God was not separate from education.
  - The whole of Creation, (man included), was regarded as being dependent upon God the Creator.
  - God was regarded as the measure of all things.
- 
- God's commands were central to everything they did.
  - Each person was seen as precious in God's sight.
  - It taught responsibility to be good stewards of all resources.
  - It involved family and community.

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and strength.  
(Deuteronomy 6:5)*

*If you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today - to love the Lord your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul - then I will send rain on your land in its season...*

*Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the Lord swore to give your forefathers. (Deuteronomy 11:13-24)*

### What did the Hebrews teach?

- History and the laws of the nation, the Ten Commandments
- Festivals and days of remembrance
- Health rules and dietary laws
- Literacy using the Scriptures – 13 year old boys practiced for their special ceremonial reading of the Scripture in the temple

- Mathematics – we see this in detailed plans for the construction of the temple
- Listening – Jesus as a boy listened to His teachers
- Prayer
- Music – songs were written and sung; instruments were played skillfully
- Crafts – again we see evidence of this in the fitting out of the temple
- Discernment of good and evil
- The law of love
- Wisdom and the fear of the Lord
- The ways of God – not just what God has done, but what He is like – His character
- Discipline
- To do God's will
- To learn from the Creation
- To look for a Saviour

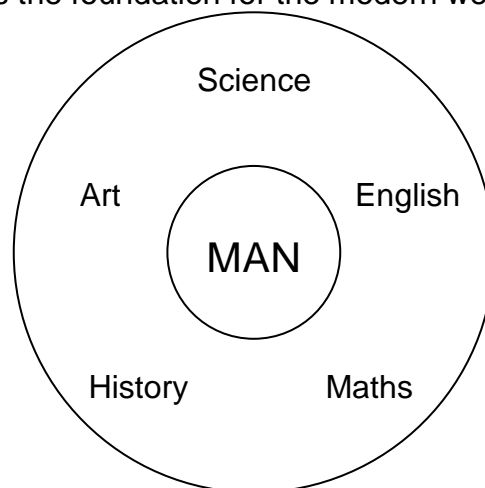
**Hebrew education was not just for Old Testament times.**

**Let's look at Hebrew education in New Testament times:**

- Jesus was educated in the Hebrew way.
- Jesus added to the Hebrew foundation. He gave us a new commandment, to love one another and to be His disciples.
- He was the example of the greatest teacher who ever lived.
- He told us to go into the world and make disciples of all nations.

**Greek education**

Greek education is the foundation for the modern western education system



- The system on which modern Western education is founded
- Education was separated into compartments.
- God was not part of education.
- Man's ideas were all that mattered.
- Pride
- Focused on the perfection of the human body
- Worship of false gods, ('self' was one of them)
- Education was for the elite.

## **Man was the measure of all things**

*We would not dare to classify ourselves or compare ourselves with those who rate themselves so highly. How stupid they are! They make up their own standards to measure themselves by, and they judge themselves by their own standards. (2 Corinthians 10:12)*

## **Humanism**

- Education without God is called Humanism
- Humanism is man-centred education
- Jesus came to pay the penalty for ignoring the Creator of the universe and worshipping ourselves instead.

"There are only two religions: either God is God, or man is god." (Frank Peretti)

## **Humanist philosophy states:**

- "If God didn't make me, I don't owe Him anything."
- "My duty is to man instead of to God."
- "If God doesn't exist, then there are no rules."
- "Man is in control, not God."

## **Some definitions from the American Society of Humanism**

- Motto: "Good without God"
- Humanism is: A joyous alternative to religions that believe in a supernatural god and life in a hereafter.
- Humanism's focus then, is on using human efforts to meet human needs and wants in this world.

## **What does God say about serving self?**

*Philippians 2:3-7*

*Don't do anything from selfish ambition, but be humble towards one another, always considering others better than yourselves. Look out for one another's interests, not just your own. Have the attitude of Christ Jesus...He took on the nature of a servant.*

## **God sets the standard, not man**

For Christians, our lives are not dedicated to looking after ourselves, but others.

## **What is Christian education?**

- The teaching of good morals?
- Providing a good Christian environment?
  
- Evolutionary thinking exposed?
- A Bible study period each day or each week?
- These are important but...

### **We can do more than this!**

A Christian school can lead students to know God personally through an understanding of

- His character
- His nature
- His word

### **God-centred curriculum does not mean**

- Treating Bible study and academic knowledge as separate.
- Tacking on a passage of scripture to the end of the lesson

It should not be like a pizza where all the ingredients are separate.

*(Refer to poster)*

### **God-centred education does mean**

- Placing God and His word at the centre of all education.
- Integrating God's teaching into subject areas.

This approach is like a well-blended milkshake!

*How do we go about pointing students to God through the subject we are teaching?*

### **Ask God for guidance**

- Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.
- Pray that God will give you His mind in what you are going to teach.
- Ask God for a revelation on what He is saying about the topic or subject matter...

### **What is God-centred curriculum?**

*A God-centred curriculum is where God and the Bible are taught within subject areas, (Hebrew).*

It is where we show the students what God is like – His character and nature.

A God-centred curriculum **is not**...

- Separate Bible curriculum, (This is 'Greek')
- A focus on good works – teaching them values without pointing to the One who sets the values
- Tacking Bible verses on to the lesson – that approach is disjointed and doesn't have much depth. For example, we could refer to the Bible when teaching about the plants – the sycamore tree is mentioned in the Bible. Interesting, but doesn't help the students grow in their faith. It would be better, when teaching about plants, to show the students that God is Provider. He provides for us through plants. And we could use a Bible story to back it up – the feeding of the 5000 for example teaches us about God the Provider. This is a deeper and more meaningful approach, which helps the students grow in their understanding of who God is.

**When planning a unit of work, ask God for a revelation of:**

**a** – The attribute of His character or nature that is displayed in the topic you are teaching

**b** - The Bible passages that show us how God is working through the topic being taught

**c** – The response that the students are to take when they understand what God is teaching them. A right response builds character.

*I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in Him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)*

Education must be thoroughly rooted and grounded in God, not separated from Him. (**Refer to Poster – The Vine**)

**Build your curriculum upon the rock!**  
(**Refer to poster – Build on the rock**)

The rock is the person of God – His character, His nature, His word. Subjects are built upon this foundation and as children come to know God through their education they reflect His character.

The true Christian classroom places Jesus at the centre of all knowledge, all learning and all relationships.

**Workshop activity**

**Form groups to discuss the following:**



### **Discussion 1 Why Christian schools?**

- What does God say about education? Prov. 22:6
- What are the disadvantages of secular education for Christian families? (Consider peer group influence; inconsistency in beliefs and values; inability of staff to deal with problems from God's viewpoint; shaping of children in their formative years; subtle occult and evolutionary teachings).
- What are the advantages of Christian education for Christian families? (Consider God's blessing over a school that is submitted to God; teachers who are led by the Holy Spirit; an environment where all of God's principles can be practiced).

### **Discussion 2 All Children belong to God**

- God as CREATOR...If all children belong to God, how would He desire all children to be educated?
- God as REDEEMER...If children are so important to God, it is very important for them to understand the message of salvation. How should this be approached?
- God as PROTECTOR...How can teachers work together with God and parents to provide for the spiritual protection of children?
- What are some implications of teachers and parents working together in children's education of their children?

Points to consider:

- If the education is the responsibility of the parents, what should a teacher's attitude be? Should we respectfully listen to parents concerns and involve them or do we take on a controlling attitude? (See Gal.5:13)
- How can Christian teachers encourage parents to have a greater role in their children's education?
- Do some parents feel inadequate in taking a role in their children's education? How can this be overcome?

### **Discussion 3: The role of a Christian teacher**

- What is God's secret wisdom? (1 Corinthians 2:5-7 and verses 12 &16)
- What is wisdom by the world's standards? 1 Corinthians 3:18-19 and verses 21-23
- How do Christian teachers impart wisdom? (Acts 6:10)
- What is the difference between worldly wisdom and wisdom from above? (James 3:17)
- What is the difference between imparting wisdom, and imparting knowledge?

### **Discussion 4: Hebrew versus Greek education**

*How do we see the Greek approach in secular education today?*

*How can we use the Hebrew approach in our Christian schools today?*

### **Discussion 5: God-centred curriculum**

1. What is a God-centred curriculum?
2. What is a God-centred lesson?