

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION: EXERCISING
BIBLICAL COMPETENCE: A CONSECRATED HEART AND
AN EDUCATED MIND

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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to The Christian Academy at Bible-Based Fellowship Church, Tampa, Florida;

To my staff: For allowing me to serve you with Christ-centered intent;

To my parents: For trusting me to serve your children;

To my Pastor, Rev. Dr. Arthur T. Jones: For your confidence and encouragement always;

To my husband & children: For your love and support;

And to Christ: For allowing me to partner in the service of your people!

ABSTRACT

There is minimal research conducted to assist Professional Educators with effective ministering and administration in Christian Schools. While secular academic training and experience provide the Administrator with great preparation, there are specific dynamics unique to the Christian school environment that warrant deliberate attention if the Administrator is to be effective.

Observed from the perspective of a parent, having served faithfully as both teacher and the current Principal of the Bible-Based Fellowship Christian Academy; in its young life, this nine-year old school had experienced eight different administrators, most recently in January 2005. Inconsistency in leadership had stunted the growth of the school, the confidence of the church membership and had all but killed the motivation and retention of staff.

Christian schools are an absolute necessity. The task of providing direction and guidance in a Christian context is massive. Effective administration in a Christian school involves choosing servant leadership over a dictatorial approach which forces leaders to embrace the gifts of employees and thus better appropriate human resources. The model of Jesus and His example of Kingdom leadership provides the example that is to be followed in the Christian school. Effective administration of organization and program yields much fruit and masterful results for the Kingdom.

Good Christian Schools are a necessity. Contrary to popular belief, they serve our society in valuable ways. They not only produce academically sound individuals but they produce morally conscious people with regard for humanity and life. The Christian school gives its instruction in light of the Word of God. For the Christian school to

accomplish its task, a competent Christian Aadministrator is required, supported by a competent and Christian faculty and staff.

Based on supporting research, this paper will not only evaluate the current status of effective vs. ineffective and competent vs. incompetent Christian School Administration, but will offer a detailed profile for effective ministering and administration that includes: hiring the right Administrator, the hiring and appropriation of faculty and staff, the ongoing development of faculty & staff, building partnerships with parents, establishing church / school relationships, establishing community presence, managing expectations, planning for recruitment, and implementing an effective budget.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| DEDICATION..... | II |
| ABSTRACT..... | III |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS..... | V |
| ONE | |
| INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| The Statement of the Problem..... | 3 |
| The Statement of Limitations..... | 4 |
| The Theoretical Basis..... | 4 |
| The Statement of Methodology..... | 5 |
| <i>Chapter One – The Introduction</i> | 6 |
| <i>Chapter Two – The Pieces of the Puzzle Must Fit!</i> | 6 |
| <i>Chapter Three – “Them vs. Us” – A Fatal Analogy!</i> | 7 |
| <i>Chapter Four – Reaching Beyond Familiar Borders</i> | 7 |
| <i>Chapter Five – Whose Child Is It?</i> | 8 |
| <i>Chapter Six – Managing Expectations!!!</i> | 8 |
| <i>Chapter Seven – We Want You – Weeping, Witnessing and Working!</i> | 9 |
| <i>Chapter Eight – Count the Costs!!!</i> | 9 |
| The Review of the Literature..... | 10 |
| <i>Books on Christian Leadership in General</i> | 10 |
| <i>Books on Christian Day School Administration</i> | 12 |
| <i>Books on Secular School Administration</i> | 13 |
| <i>Other Theses on Christian Day School Administration</i> | 15 |
| TWO | |
| THE PIECES OF THE PUZZLE MUST FIT!..... | 17 |
| Standards for Hiring..... | 19 |
| <i>Spiritual Standards</i> | 19 |
| <i>Academic Standards</i> | 26 |
| <i>The Interview Process</i> | 28 |
| <i>Recruitment</i> | 30 |
| THREE | |
| THEM VS. US – A FATAL ANALOGY!..... | 32 |
| <i>Relationship Defined</i> | 32 |
| <i>Purpose Defined</i> | 34 |
| <i>Vision Defined</i> | 36 |
| <i>Problems with Priorities</i> | 38 |
| <i>Problems with Property</i> | 39 |
| <i>Problems with Programs</i> | 39 |
| <i>Problems with People</i> | 40 |
| FOUR | |
| REACHING BEYOND FAMILIAR BORDERS..... | 43 |
| <i>Acceptance</i> | 45 |
| <i>Tolerance</i> | 49 |
| <i>Assistance</i> | 51 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| <i>Performance</i> | 53 |
| FIVE | |
| WHOSE CHILD IS IT? | 56 |
| <i>Home/School Partnership</i> | 57 |
| <i>Parental Support Group</i> | 59 |
| <i>Benefits of Healthy Home/School Relationships</i> | 62 |
| SIX | |
| WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO? | 65 |
| <i>Managing Expectations</i> | 65 |
| <i>Clarifying Expectations</i> | 69 |
| SEVEN | |
| WE WANT YOU: WEEPING, WITNESSING, AND WORKING! | 73 |
| <i>The Weeping</i> | 74 |
| <i>The Witnessing</i> | 75 |
| <i>The Working</i> | 77 |
| EIGHT | |
| COUNT THE COSTS! | 86 |
| <i>The Financial Cost</i> | 87 |
| <i>The Spiritual Cost</i> | 89 |
| <i>The Physical Cost</i> | 95 |
| <i>The Personal Cost</i> | 98 |
| <i>The Professional Cost</i> | 99 |
| CONCLUSION | 101 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 102 |
| APPENDIX | 107 |
| SURVEY ABOUT CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOLS | 108 |

ONE

INTRODUCTION

A search for adequate sources reveals that there is minimal research conducted to assist professional educators with effective ministering and administration in Christian schools. While secular academic training and experience provide the administrator with great preparation, there are specific dynamics unique to the Christian school environment that warrant deliberate attention if the administrator is to be effective.

In addition to secular academic training and experience, the effective administrator in the Christian school must be called, gifted, anointed and appointed first of all, by God. The leader/vessel that will find success in the Christian school is a person not only academically prepared but spiritually gifted in the areas of teaching, administration, exhortation, discernment and the pastorate. While this list is inclusive, it is certainly not exhaustive. The absolute necessity of each is explored along with its relevance to the success of the school. The absence of either proves the necessity of each.

The impetus for this thesis is both a lived and observed experience, this writer having served faithfully as both teacher and currently Principal of the Bible-Based Fellowship Christian Academy in Tampa, Florida. The position became available in January of 2005 in an interim capacity, following the abrupt departure of its prior Head. In its young life, this nine-year old school had experienced eight different administrators. Needless to say, the inconsistency in leadership had stunted the growth of the school, the confidence of the church membership, and had all but killed the motivation and retention of staff. Following both the plight and success of the current administrator, the tenure of this newly appointed “Critical Situations Manager” is the impetus for this project.

Christian schools are an absolute necessity. Research has shown that while the intentions are good and the vision is vital, the failure of Christian schools far too often is directly attributed to the administrator's inability to effectively lead and provide guidance that yields growth. The value this project brings to said school and ministry is immeasurable.

Effective Christian schools serve our society in valuable ways. They not only produce academically sound individuals but they produce morally conscious people with regard for humanity and life. The Christian School is an institution for the teaching of children in all various branches of earthly knowledge. Contrary to popular belief, a Christian School is not a school for the exclusive teaching of Bible and the Catechism, or for the teaching of Bible history and Bible doctrine. This is the task of the church.

The Christian school however, gives instruction of another sort. It teaches reading, writing, mathematics, history, and other subjects that are taught in the State's public schools. It is, and must be, sound academically. It must provide its students a thorough education in all the various aspects of human knowledge, both cognitively and affectively. The Christian school gives its instruction in light of the Word of God. It prepares children to live their earthly lives in a particular society to the glory of God, and this requires the guidance and direction of a tenacious and God-fearing administrator. This is no easy task. The Christian school has a tremendous challenge before it and therefore must be properly managed and directed, thus the need for effective Christian school administration. For the Christian school to accomplish its task, a competent Christian administrator is required, supported by a competent and Christian faculty and staff.

Effective administration in a Christian school will involve choosing servant leadership over a dictatorial approach which forces leaders to embrace the gifts of employees and thus better appropriate human resources. The model of Jesus and His example of Kingdom leadership provides the only example to be followed in the Christian school. Jesus was the Master Teacher and the components He demonstrated must be practiced in Christian school administration. This consistently modeled throughout the Christian academic community can create an atmosphere of Biblically sound institutions co-laboring in like manner to accomplish the business of education. Effective administration of organization and program yields much fruit and masterful results for the Kingdom.

The Statement of the Problem

The problem is revealed based upon the research which indicates that the overall status of Christian School administration is rendered both incompetent and ineffective. The challenge of effective leadership in Christian schools lies in the absence of Christian accountability and **the lack of application of biblical standards**, which guides the leadership of the school. Often Christian schools hire great managers but fail to hire great leaders. In George Barna's book, *Leaders on Leaders*, Jack Hayford states in chapter four, "Without intending to mock the value of practical methodology, or to minimize the importance of such basics as prayer and study, I want to focus on what I view to be the key to true leadership: the leader's "heart."” Dr. Hayford goes on to say that no matter the role, the leader is called to target the central issue of how a leader's character is cut –

and this requires a thorough investigation of the “heart.”¹ This writer agrees with Dr. Hayford. Research has proven that successful leadership and administration of Christian schools will center on the heart of its leader.

The Statement of Limitations

The research for this project is limited in its scope for several reasons. First the research presented will not include administrative requirements for public school administrators or the evaluation / assessment tools used respectively. Additionally, this project will not include statistical data regarding administrative employee turnover rates and student retention rates from public schools. Rather, this project will identify specific recourses that will offer guidance and direction for effective leadership in the Christian school which this researcher will then use to evaluate and eliminate ineffective administrative measures currently utilized at The Christian Academy.

The Theoretical Basis

While this topic investigates the specific dynamics involved in leadership in the Christian school, there are corresponding parallels to the administration of public schools that run consistent in the efficiency of either. After adequately identifying the similarities of both environments drawing comparisons and contrasts to each, there are certain leadership and administrative principles that are proven tools of effectiveness in either environment.

Additionally, there are certain biblical and theological principles that govern administration and leadership in the Christian environment that if followed, yields

¹ George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997), 64.

guaranteed success for the administrator. The greatest platform for effective administration is the Kingdom of God, embodying the model of Jesus and His example of Kingdom leadership.

A good Christian school has its basis in the Holy Scriptures. The Bible is the foundation and rule of the entire school. All of the instruction is based on Scripture and is faithful to it. The behavior of teachers and students alike is controlled by Scripture. This is no small matter! In the State schools of the United States, there is wild disorder and gross immorality on the part of teachers and students alike. The Christian school is marked by discipline, the discipline of the Word of God. By His Word, God Himself is the foundation and the authority of the Christian school and its work. Thus, Christ is Lord over education. The education is Christian – subservient to Christ. It would be a disgrace to ignore Christ’s crown in the area of education, the mind, ideas, and the rearing of our children.

The Statement of Methodology

Predominate research offered in this work will evaluate the current status of effective vs. ineffective and competent vs. incompetent Christian School Administration. Utilization of data collected relative to The Christian Academy from qualitative assessment tools will prove effective in the hiring of the right Administrator, the hiring and appropriation of faculty and staff, the ongoing development of faculty and staff, building partnerships with parents, establishing church / school relationships, establishing community presence, managing expectations, planning for recruitment, and implementing an effective budget. The data collected will determine that indeed there is

need for review of administrative methods in Christian schools. This research will serve as the foundation for a comprehensive operations manual that will detail the guidelines for efficient and effective management of Christian schools, and will hopefully serve as an operations tool providing guidance and direction for Christian Administrators.

After determining what constitutes effective administration over ineffective, data of both will be collected and evaluated via interviews and surveys of Pastors who have Christian Schools, School Administrators, Christian school educators, Community representatives and Parents of children attending Christian schools. Only then will this research establish a guide for effective administration. Its contents will include: qualifications for administrators – academic and spiritual; hiring and appropriating staff; programs for partnering with the Church, the community and with parents; managing expectations; planning for recruitment, and other areas unique to the success of administration in the Christian school environment. For the purpose of cohesiveness, the outline and overview of this project is as follows:

Chapter One – The Introduction

Chapter Two – The Pieces of the Puzzle Must Fit!

Along with academic preparation and qualification, effective administration will require the proper assessment and appropriation of gifts necessary for casting the vision of the school. Research will prove that the misappropriation of personnel is one of the greatest deterrents to success in the Christian school. However, the problem goes deeper than that. The right leader must possess the gift of discernment in order to make the

correct choices for the school. If the leader lacks in this gifting, the organization doesn't stand a chance. Failure is certain!

Chapter Three – “Them vs. Us” – A Fatal Analogy!

The fact that a school is underwritten and financially supported by a church does not make it a Christian school. A Christian school is an educational institution governed by the Scriptures and led by the authority of the Holy Spirit. In so doing, it must be intricately connected to its source, the church. It is imperative that the Christian school understand its foundation in the church, and its relationship to it. The school is an extension of the church and therefore serves as an outreach and evangelistic tool for the families it serves. As a result, the school's connection to its church will ultimately define its relationship to Jesus Christ. Because Christ is the head of His church, the school being an extension thereof, the school must refrain from anything and any persons that remotely give the appearance of division. “A house divided cannot stand.” The church school connected in name only to its church, cannot stand either.

Chapter Four – Reaching Beyond Familiar Borders

Christian schools designed to serve their own congregations will not succeed. The model of Jesus Christ presented an all inclusive ministry, and so must ours. Christ, in His dialogue with the woman at the well crossed many barriers and His ministry in the earth must do the same. One cannot build strong churches or schools in the name of Christianity to the exclusion of any. One of the greatest strengths of strong Christian schools is its ability to serve as a tool for evangelism. How much stronger is your

community as a result of your school? This chapter will explore the school / community relationship.

Chapter Five – Whose Child Is It?

Schools and homes have become enemies of each other, rendering the children hostages to either and free to none. This is a sad commentary but has tremendous impact on the success of our schools. Whether public or private, this is an area of shared concern. The success of schools is predicated heavily upon the degree to which solid and meaningful parent partnerships are established. Parents must not abdicate the education of their children primarily to the schools. Schools, on the other hand, must not exclude the vital input and positive influence that parents can have on their children and in their educational process. How successful is the Christian school? This will depend largely on the parent / school partnerships, established through the administration of the school.

Chapter Six – Managing Expectations!!!

Christian schools can be the extension of the home that so many parents desire. However, false expectations can cause complete breakdown in effective implementation of curriculum and the overall development of the child. Expectations must be managed. Whether public or private, in today's society, schools are expected to work miracles with children who do not want help, parents who deny the needs, and systems that are not designed to meet them in the first place. Valiant efforts must be made to ensure that clarity is always a present factor. Testing measures must be put in place that can establish adequate placement of children, thus determining whether this particular school is even a

fit. Although private in practice, Christian schools must be equipped with proper measures of establishing and managing expectations of parents and students alike. Emphasis and clarity in these areas can assist in eliminating negativity when undisclosed expectations are not met.

Chapter Seven – We Want You – Weeping, Witnessing and Working!

While recruitment is an absolute necessity, just how effective are Christian school administrators outside of the comfort zone of their immediate congregations? The ability to attract both believers and non-believers to an institution designed to glorify God through the education of His children is critical to the success of the school. The biblical model of leadership Christ provides demonstrates the will necessary to break down barriers of race, culture, community and gender. Christ proved in His dialogue with the woman at the well the absolute importance of reaching people by sharing their immediate experience. If Christians are unable to extend the same grace as did Christ with the Samaritan woman, then organizations will experience unsuccessful recruitment efforts.

Chapter Eight – Count the Costs!!!

Effective administration will require the administrator be conscious of the costs! Not only from a financial perspective, but the spiritual costs, the personal costs, the physical costs and the professional costs must be adequately assessed periodically for effective management. Christ taught in the parables the absolute necessity of counting the costs. So often, the bar of productivity is held far too low in Christian schools. With Christ as head of the church and ruler over the school, how dare you lower the bar. There

is a mark of excellence that must be demanded in Christian schools that should rise far above the expectations found in non-Christian environments. Mediocrity is not acceptable! Excellence must be the order of the day for Christ deserves it, He desires it and He demands it!

The Review of the Literature

It is our desire that this study will assist Christian school administrators in the implementation of meaningful and effective Christian schools. Current literature related to the topic will prove the contribution of this study valid and will encourage leadership that is effective in the Christian environment. So often the attempt has been to incorporate secular techniques in the Christian environment. While some may work, the evidence proves that in order to lead effectively in Christian environments, the emphasis must be on godly leadership. Review of current literature will prove this.

Following is a brief synopsis of some of the literature that will prove helpful in this study.

Books on Christian Leadership in General

Barna, George. *The Power of Team Leadership: Achieving Success Through Shared Responsibility*. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2001

A major advantage of being led by a team is that the results almost always transcend what any individual from that team could have produced alone. The Christian Academy is led with a team concept. There are five persons that comprise the Administrative team. The team concept helps to keep leadership humble and encourages

empowerment. Cross-training is necessary within this concept which also forces collaboration.

Many leaders fight hard to maintain complete authority because they have a deep-seated need to be needed. For these leaders, team-based leadership poses a threat; however, it is helpful, for it forces leadership out of a territorial mentality. Conscious and intentional efforts must be made to train others without leaders making the assumption that they will no longer be needed.

Great leaders recognize that their position and ability are gifts from God and are to be shared with others for the common good. When leaders recognize that their gifts are not their own, it heightens their sensibility to train and impart into others.

Berkley, James D. *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1997

The Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration is a comprehensive reference for those doing the work of ministry. Leadership and Administration handles the pastor's personal management, ministry transitions, leadership and supervision of paid staff and volunteers, church management and church finances. This book is a literal handbook, permitting the reader to seek specific reference information on the subject of interest. The writers have a single purpose: to help pastors and other Christian leaders more effectively serve Jesus Christ through the leading of His people into an abiding faith and fulfilling ministry.

Blackaby, Henry. *Spiritual Leadership*. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2001

“Only when we understand leadership in light of God’s calling on our lives will we be equipped to lead effectively.”² The Blackaby’s encourage leadership from God’s perspective, the servant leader. They admonish the reader to follow the leadership model of Jesus Christ, the greatest of servant leaders. Their book challenges Christian leaders and holds them accountable for the conduct demonstrated by the leadership of Jesus, Himself.

Miller, Calvin. *The Empowered Leader: 10 Keys to Servant Leadership*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995

It has been repeated often that every Christian who desires to become a leader must first know how to follow. Dr. Miller’s book is a book about leadership, not about success. He draws the parallel of King David who called himself the *servant of God*. The major precepts of his book are drawn from a study of the David of Israel. Dr. Miller draws clear cut distinctions between learning how to ride the crest of corporate or political control (as is taught in the secular world of leadership), and how the Christian’s view of leadership should be shaped and manifested.

Books on Christian Day School Administration

Deuink, James W. *Management Principles for Christian Schools*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1996

Management Principles for Christian Schools presents a biblical, practical model for Christian Education. This book not only provides needed help for the administrator beginning their first school but also includes the insight and direction sought by principals, pastors, those who serve on Christian School boards, and others working with

² Henry Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 13.

established Christian schools. Deuink has written this book out of a deep concern for Christian Education and based upon his broad experiences as a Christian Educator.

Lowrie, Jr., Roy W. *Inside the Christian School*. Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1980

This book is a diary of the thoughts of Dr. Roy Lowrie and his days as Headmaster of the Delaware County Christian School. Dr. Lowrie writes about what makes education truly Christian – personal concerns for students, teachers and parents in the context of a school program rooted and grounded in Scripture and centered in Christ. Dr. Lowrie recognizes that a Christian School is not necessarily a utopia, but that it too is not exempt from its share of problems.

Brubaker, Lester. *Personnel Administration in the Christian School*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980

“This is not a textbook on school administration. Neither is it a manual on leadership. Instead it is an “in-between” book, providing suggestions for administrative policies and procedures that will free employees to do their best and to be happy in the work to which the Lord has called them. Relationships are emphasized, for they are the heart of personnel administration.”³ Dr. Brubaker’s book provides a Scripturally based guide to effective personnel administration in the Christian school.

Books on Secular School Administration

Willis, Benjamin C. *Social Problems in Public School Administration*. USA: University of Pittsburg Press, 1967

³ Lester Brubaker, *Personnel Administration in the Christian School* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 3.

The thesis of this book sums its contribution to this project:

Social Problems confronting schools are but a reflection of the profound social problems, with all their attendant issues, confronting America today. Inadequate and unequal educational opportunities in various states and from place to place within a state are fundamentally a social problem that pervades our national life. Its effects are reflected in the school systems of the country, particularly those in large cities. Other problems, again particularly in the major cities but not exclusively so, arise from the effects of new population pressures, delinquency, rapid urbanization, modern technology, and the conflicts of federal, state and local politics.⁴

Strike, Kenneth A., Haller, Emil J., Soltis, Jonas F. *The Ethics of School Administration*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1998

The Ethics of School Administration is one of a set of books in the Teachers College Press Series Professional Ethics in Education. All the books in this series are aimed at helping educators and the education profession to examine and reflect on the ethical issues and controversies that are a normal and routine part of educational practice. The writers attempt to teach some ethical concepts that are important to educational administration as well as something of the process of ethical reasoning. The book is built around cases for thorough discussion in classes and in depth writing assignments as a result.

Jacobson, Stephen L., Hickcox, Edward S., Stevenson, Robert B. *School Administration: Persistent Dilemmas in Preparation and Practice*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996

Larry Cuban, in his presidential address to the American Educational Research Association in 1991, "Managing Dilemmas While Building professional Communities," contended that dilemmas are conflict-filled and persist because they require choices between "competing, highly prized values that cannot be fully satisfied." Unlike problems that can be solved, dilemmas can only be managed, and the key to

⁴ Benjamin C. Willis, *Social Problems in Public School Administration* (USA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967), 2.

managing these persistent dilemmas is to recognize the values in conflict.⁵

The writers of this book examine the persistent dilemmas of school administration by examining three major parts. Part one deals with the Understanding of Educational Dilemmas; Part two deals with Societal and Ethical Dilemmas in School Administration; and Part three deals with Organizational Dilemmas in School Administration.

Kirschmann, Robert E. *Educational Administration: A Collection of Case Studies*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Publishers, 1996

This is a casebook intended to provide the learner with a look into the problems confronting administrators at all levels of education and in a variety of settings. The cases highlighted in this book have been categorized into four different sections. The first 13 concern elementary school, the next 13 middle school, the next 14 high school and the last to concern the central office. At the beginning of each case the writer provides the unique setting and summary of the case. The case study approach is particularly useful for the Administrator for developing skills, examining the affective domain, looking at process, and examining personal style and values.

Other Theses on Christian Day School Administration

Lowrie, Jr., Roy W. *Christian School Administration*. Newton Square, PA: National Association of Christian Schools, 1966

The purpose of Dr. Lowrie's manual is to provide practical help in the organization and administration of a Christian school. The information is directed to the principal, or school board in an existing school, or to the planning committee for a new

⁵ Stephen Jacobson, Edward Hickcox, Robert Stevenson, *School Administration: Persistent Dilemmas in Preparation and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996), 4.

school. As he states, “it is not a blueprint but a guideline.” This manual is written that other schools may benefit from the work of Dr. Lowrie as Headmaster of the Delaware County Christian School in Newton Square, Pennsylvania.

TWO

THE PIECES OF THE PUZZLE MUST FIT!

“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business” (Acts 6:3).

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (II Timothy 2:2).

“The administrator is the key person in the development of a Christian school.”¹ Effective administration will require the proper assessment and appropriation of gifts necessary for casting the vision of the school. Research will prove that the misappropriation of personnel is one of the greatest deterrents to success in the Christian school. However, the problem goes deeper than that. Christian administrators must themselves possess the gift of discernment in order to make the correct choices for the school. If the leader lacks in this gifting, which leads to effective staffing, the organization doesn’t stand a chance. Failure is certain!

“Selection of quality personnel is sometimes called the most important job of the school administrator.”² “A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and an organization is only as good as the personnel who carry out its functions. Selecting personnel for the Christian school deserves more attention than it usually receives; for no position is insignificant, and no employee chosen to fill that position can be taken for granted.”³

¹ Roy Lowrie, Jr., *Administration of the Christian School* (Whittier, CA: The Association of Christian Schools International, 1984), 7.

² *Ibid.*, 62.

³ James W. Deuink, *Management Principles for Christian Schools* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1996), 227.

“Two steps are involved in finding personnel to serve in the Christian school. The first is recruitment – searching out possible candidates – and the second is selection – determining the particular candidate best qualified for the position.”¹

“The major recruitment efforts of the administrator begin with completing good position and person descriptions.”² The administrator must have a solid handle on the school and be able to properly assess its needs.

To bring clarity for consideration purposes, all staff and faculty of the Christian school can be categorized as either professional or nonprofessional, the distinction being primarily the amount of education required to perform the job. All teaching, resource, counseling, and administrative personnel are considered professional staff; all secretarial, clerical, bookkeeping, maintenance, custodial, kitchen, and transportation personnel are considered nonprofessional.

“Recruitment and selection policies of schools may vary, depending largely on the board or local district practices and procedures.”³ Before hiring the first person, the school administrator or the hiring team (maybe the board) needs to develop written standards of employment. Clarity of responsibilities can assist greatly with matching the correct personnel. Since policies are effective only to the degree that they can provide meaningful assistance in the decision-making process, they should be sufficiently detailed to provide specific direction, but not so restrictive as to require constant exceptions. They should also reflect the demands of the individual institution and the

¹ Roy Lowrie, Jr., *Administration of the Christian School* (Whittier, CA: The Association of Christian Schools International, 1984), 59, 60.

² Larry W. Hughes, Gerald C. Ubben, *The Elementary Principal's Handbook* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1978), 143.

³ *Ibid.*, 143.

availability of personnel in the area. For positions requiring only one employee, formal written standards may not be necessary but even at that, it is vitally important to manage the expectations of the potential new hire up front.

Frequently, Christian school administrators find themselves with loyal employees who lack the specific skills necessary to do the work assigned. This could be a direct result of congregational affiliations, family ties, or other links to the sponsoring church. Nonetheless, because of their loyalty, it is difficult to terminate them. Since most Christian schools are not large enough to absorb inefficient employees, the school finds itself with the problem of having to terminate a loyal employee who never should have been employed. It is far better to evaluate the person's capabilities before he or she is placed on the payroll. It is far less expensive to do the employment homework up front!

“Prayer and careful reflection were the means by which Jesus selected from among His recruits. The Christian school administrator avoids heartaches – but not all of them – by prayerful selection processes.”⁴

Standards for Hiring

Spiritual Standards

“The most important criterion for Christian school employees is spiritual fruit.”⁵

“Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another – to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God” (Romans 7:4). “I am the Vine, and you are the branches. He

⁴ Roy Lowrie, Jr., *Administration of the Christian School* (Whittier, CA: The Association of Christian Schools International, 1984), 61.

⁵ James W. Deuink, Carl D. Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 101.

who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). “Every employee in the school is in a position to influence the overall testimony of the school, good or bad. Christian schools cannot let down their guard to meet a need.”⁶ Therefore, every employee must be born again and must be able to give a coherent testimony of his salvation experience. All professional employees must be able to give evidence in writing and in a personal interview that they have Bible-based assurance of personal salvation. Being able to provide a clear, concise testimony is obviously more important for a teacher than for a custodian, but unless each can give convincing evidence of his faith in Christ, he should not be employed. “Every staff member in a Christian school must be a born-again Christian whose life evidences the fruit of the Spirit and testifies to the students of the grace of God.”⁷ The longer the person has been saved and affiliated with his local church, the more evidence he should demonstrate supporting his conversion experience.

It is also important to evaluate other areas that reflect on the spirituality of the applicant. Such matters as church membership, personal involvement in the church’s vision, attendance and affiliation in church ministry activities, and financial support by way of tithes and offerings all must be taken into consideration in the overall evaluation process. These activities are usually very important to church related schools and should be to other Christian schools as well. “Beyond these qualifications, it is especially

⁶ Ibid., 102.

⁷ Ibid., 15.

important for each employee to have a servant's heart so that he or she is willing to give of him or herself in ways beneficial to the school.”⁸

Church membership. “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day is coming” (Hebrew 10: 24-25). Church membership and affiliation for employees of Christian schools is absolutely essential. If the teacher or staff member is to be certain of their salvation, they must be in a Bible teaching church where they can be instructed in Christian living.

At The Christian Academy, a prerequisite for hiring is the individual's level of commitment to their local church. The staff of The Christian Academy may not all attend the same church but they are all affiliated with a church. This makes a world of difference as it pertains to polity and Christian accountability. What does that mean to the school? An individual that is accustomed to spiritual guidance and authority from the local church is more apt to follow direction provided by the spiritual leader of the school. At the Christian Academy, the persons who were proven not appropriate for the demands of this school, were all persons who either did not belong to a fellowship of faith, or were not in adherence to biblical accountability and responsibility. The more submissive a person is to his local church pastor and obedient to the scriptures, the more cooperative and willing they are to adjust to the lead of the spiritual direction of the Christian school.

⁸ Ibid., 102.

Personal involvement in the Church's vision. "Most Christian schools in America are established as ministries of local churches."⁹ A person who is intricately involved in the vision for the local church is a person who understands the necessity of buy-in and adaptability. The Christian Academy is an extension of the Bible-Based Fellowship Church of Tampa, Florida. As such, education is one of the five pillars of the church, and carries a very high priority in the mindset of the pastor. If this school is to be successful, it is incumbent upon the employees to somehow be tied to the vision of the church. As previously stated, all the employees of The Christian Academy are not members of the Bible-Based Fellowship Church. As a result, those who are not must somehow become acclimated to the vision of the church. How is that done? The school's leadership must ensure that nonmembers become acquainted with the church, its leadership and its vision. At said school, it is often stated that as the church goes, so goes the school. This is a very important statement and must be grasped by the employees of the school. Because the majority of overhead and operating costs of the school are underwritten by the church, the school's faculty and staff must support the vision of the church. What does this mean? It means that members must be tithing members and nonmembers must somehow sow financially into the initiatives of the church. "Personnel-related expenses are a major portion of the school's budget. Experts in educational administration estimate that sixty to eighty percent of the budget will be allocated to this area."¹⁰ Although tuition supports employee salaries, the church often provides monies for the school to make its payroll. These monies are exclusively from the tithes and offerings of the church. If members

⁹ Ibid., 197.

¹⁰ Ibid., 43.

employed by the school are not tithers, they are not sowing unto themselves. The primary reason they are encouraged to tithe is because Malachi 3:10 mandates it, but they are also encouraged to become tithers to support the initiatives of the church, one being to underwrite the costs of the school's employees.

Attendance and affiliation in church ministry activities. Employees that are actively engaged in the ministry of the church are typically persons who display and demonstrate commitment. As committed individuals to the local church, the school is more apt to gain their commitment in its activities as well. Ministry involvement provides opportunity for teamwork and cooperation and teaches much about leadership from a team perspective. The Christian Academy is led by a team concept and its employees must be willing to be team players. Teamwork and cooperation are necessary for Christian school employees if the school is to be successful. In the book, *The Power of Team Leadership*, Barna states, "A major advantage of being led by a team is that the results almost always transcend what any individual from that team could have produced alone."¹¹ This is a very helpful for Christian schools and is demonstrated at The Christian Academy. The Christian Academy is led with a team concept. There are five persons that comprise the Administrative team. The team concept helps to keep leadership humble and encourages empowerment. For this reason, "efforts should be

¹¹ George Barna, *The Power of Team Leadership* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2001), 11.

made to provide as much team compatibility as possible when teams are initially organized.”¹²

Cross-training is necessary within this concept and also forces collaboration. This method of leadership is recommended to all Christian schools. Whenever Christian school administrators take on an autonomous approach to leadership, they are confronted with power struggles not appropriate for their environments. In the same book, the author states, “Many leaders fight hard to maintain complete authority because they have a deep-seated need to be needed.”¹³ For these leaders, team-based leadership poses a threat; however, it is helpful, for it forces leadership out of a territorial mentality. Conscious and intentional efforts must be made to train others without leaders making the assumption that they will no longer be needed.

“Great leaders recognize that their position and ability are gifts from God and are to be shared with others for the common good.”¹⁴ When leaders recognize that our gifts are not our own it heightens our sensibility to train and impart into others. A primary focus for the Christian Academy administrator is training and impartation. This begins with establishing relationships, and as Dr. Brubaker states in his book, “Relationships are emphasized, for they are the heart of personnel administration.”¹⁵ While this requires a

¹² Larry Hughes, Gerald Ubben, *The Elementary Principal's Handbook* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1978), 116.

¹³George Barna, *The Power of Team Leadership* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2001), 66.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁵J. Lester Brubaker, *Personnel Administration in the Christian School* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 9.

lot of time and energy on the part of the administrator, the benefits for the school, the individual life, the students and the kingdom at large, are immeasurable.

Ministry involvement also characteristically demonstrates a willingness to serve. Christian school employees must be persons with the gift of service. “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord” (Romans 12: 10-11). Michael D. Miller in his book *Kingdom Leadership* talks about servant leaders (and teachers are leaders!), and says that this is the concept that must be followed in the Christian environment: schools or churches. “The great need today is for Christ-centered leadership.”¹⁶ “Christ alone can empower and guide Christian leaders to lead God’s people God’s way to accomplish God’s purposes.”¹⁷ The concept of the servant leader removes hierarchical structures that so often create barriers to effective leadership and gives leaders the wrong impressions of their respective roles and responsibilities. Servant leaders serve and this is major in the effective administration and leadership of Christian Schools. All employees in the Christian school environment must be servant leaders in fact, kingdom leadership begins with servant hood.

Servant leadership creates an environment that encourages Christian character and conduct among its faculty, staff and student body. It fosters keen insight into the calling, character and conduct of each of its constituencies. “Qualifications for Christian leaders centers on character, not on skills.”¹⁸ This is critical to the effective administration of the

¹⁶ Michael D. Miller, *Kingdom Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Convention Press, 1996), 9.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 43.

school and also sets the example of Jesus Christ as He stated, “I did not come to be served but to serve, and to give My life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28).

Academic Standards

At times the quality of candidates for positions in Christian schools leaves something to be desired. There are those whose personal commitment to Christ gives them a strong motivation to follow a “service” vocation; teaching seems most suitable for a variety of reasons. It is difficult to convince some of these people that emotional stability, academic competence, positive interpersonal skills and teaching abilities are also requirements.¹⁹

Generally speaking, as a minimum requirement for nonprofessional positions, every employee of the school should be a high school graduate with an ability to communicate clearly, respecting the personhood of others at all times. Since the school is in the business of providing education, the image projected by all employees reflects to some extent the quality of the education offered by the school. While any parent should recognize that custodians are not teachers, a custodian in a Christian environment should still be able to communicate with reasonable effectiveness as the contrary may reflect adversely on the quality of education offered by the school.

“All professional staff members must hold college degrees. For some positions, graduate degrees are advisable, if not required.”²⁰ At The Christian Academy, the administrator has required of all professional staff the next level degree higher than that of state requirements. Administrators of different schools may disagree over the type of degrees required for a specific position, but there should be no disagreement over the fact

¹⁹ J. Lester Brubaker, *Personnel Administration in the Christian School* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 24.

²⁰ James Deuink, *Management Principles for Christian Schools* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1996), 230.

that the degree is required. “Christian schools claiming to offer an education that is academically comparable to that offered by other private and public schools cannot depart from the traditionally accepted standards of professional competence and preparation and expect to maintain the respect of the community.”²¹

There are specific, generally accepted academic expectations of the faculty for every level of formal education. Each teacher should certainly have a higher level of education than that of the students he or she instructs. To be considered professionally prepared, those who teach in elementary and secondary schools should hold as a minimum a bachelor’s degree.

There is some difference of opinions among those in Christian education about what kind of college degree is best suited to prepare teachers and what degree programs are most appropriate. Some, for example, believe that all teachers should be Bible majors and should have attended a Bible school if not a seminary. Most others, on the other hand, believe that the best preparation is to be an education major at a Christian Liberal Arts College.

“The Bible school has as its primary purpose the training of young people for positions of full-time Christian service, consequently, the curriculum places a great emphasis on the study of the Bible. Since it is customary for such schools to require every student to take thirty or more semester hours of Bible, every student at the school then becomes a Bible major.”²² In the liberal arts college, there is no less concern for the preparation of students for Christian service, yet its curriculum provides a more broadly

²¹ Ibid., 230.

²² Ibid., 231.

based education. It is generally the philosophy of such a school that a more well-rounded student is the most effective servant. Most Christian liberal arts colleges have a department of education whose programs of study includes not only Bible courses and content courses in the students' area of study but also professional education courses. Such instruction helps students to understand the depraved nature of his future students and how they learn, and to examine the most effective teaching techniques known.

“A number of Christian school administrators, having ranked prospective teachers on the basis of the school they attended and the program they pursued, ordered their preferences in the following manner”²³

1. a graduate of a Christian college who majored in education
2. a graduate of a Christian college who holds a degree in some area other than education but a minor in the field need for the teaching responsibility
3. a graduate of a Bible college with a minor in the teaching field necessary
4. a graduate of a secular school who majored in education

The Interview Process

Whenever possible, in addition to the school administrator, it is helpful to have all candidates interviewed by other members of the staff. The second interviewer needs only to get a general impression or follow up on any points communicated by the initial interviewer, the administrator. The Christian Academy enjoys an administrative team comprised of five persons. The entire team interviews and confers regarding the prospective new hire.

²³ Ibid., 232.

Employee processes vary widely and some schools may require the teacher to come before an entire board. As this may be a bit intimidating, this is not necessarily a good practice in a Christian environment. In the first place, the board most often is separated from the school environment, thus the climate of the school may be foreign to them. In effective staffing, the culture and climate of the school become critical in the proper assessing of potential candidates. “Schools, like the persons who serve them, have personalities.”²⁴

All applicants for positions in a church school should meet the pastor of the church as soon as possible. This is the point at which they begin to realize and acclimate to the vision for the church and school. It is important that the pastor is comfortable with the school’s employees and that the school’s employees are comfortable with the pastor. The pastor at this time may give an overview of the church and may state his or her expectations of the school. It is also recommended that the new hires make an effort to at least attend a Sunday worship service at the church. A potential staff member who will not make a reasonable effort to attend a Sunday service or a special service of some sort, such as a Bible study or the annual Christmas play, should not be employed by the school.

Since a major source of friction in church schools is a misunderstanding between the congregation and the employees of the school, a wise administrator will eliminate many of these problems by employing teachers and staff that are supportive of the overall work of the church. There are approximately twenty-six persons on the staff of the Christian Academy. Of the twenty-six, only nine are members of the sponsoring church. The

²⁴ J. Lester Brubaker, *Personnel Administration in the Christian School* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 7.

remaining staff members are all Christians, however, they are actively affiliated with other churches. They are eager whenever possible to attend services at the sponsoring church and they do. This creates for them a sense of belonging and establishes further commitment to the overall vision for the church.

Recruitment

“Recruitment is the first step in obtaining a quality staff for the Christian school.”²⁵

In seeking personnel to fill vacancies in a Christian school, it is almost as important to avoid provoking an interest in those who would not qualify for the position, as it is to locate those who would meet the qualifications. Unintentionally soliciting unqualified people creates two problems.

First, if a person interviewing from the administrative staff is not sufficiently thorough, or if the applicant does not answer questions honestly, it is possible to fail to discover parts of the applicant’s background that would disqualify him or her spiritually. Administrators occasionally become careless, assuming that those applying for a position in a Christian school already understand and agree with the spiritual standards. This has been a major fault in the misappropriation of persons in Christian schools. Attendance at the local church does not necessarily denote commitment to the faith and practices of the Bible.

Second, a person judged to be unqualified because of spiritual standards may become belligerent and attempt to take legal action against the school on the basis of discrimination. While the chances of success in such an action are rather remote, the legal

²⁵ Ibid., 23.

expense and public attention created would not be helpful to the school's ministry or to the sponsoring church.

Because of these and similar problems, it is generally unwise to advertise for personnel by means of media that reach all segments of the population. Advertising vacancies in the local newspaper for example, is often not a good source of prospects for a position in a Christian school.

On the other hand, one of the best ways to obtain good candidates for positions is through the school constituency. Parents, their friends, and church members are all very good sources of contacts, as are friends and relatives of current faculty and staff.

THREE

THEM VS. US – A FATAL ANALOGY!

“Let all things be done decently and in order” (I Corinthians 14:40).

“Obey them that have rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17).

The fact that a school is connected to, underwritten and financially supported by a church does not make it a Christian school. A Christian school is an educational institution governed by the scriptures and led by the authority of the Holy Spirit. In so doing, it must be intricately connected to its source, the church. “In our generation the Christian school has been established as an arm of the home, and of the church.”¹ It is imperative that the Christian school understand its foundation in the church, and its relationship to it.

Relationship Defined

The school is an extension of the church and therefore serves as an outreach and evangelistic tool for the families it serves. As a result, the school’s connection to its church will ultimately define its relationship to Jesus Christ. Because Christ is the head of His church, the school being an extension thereof, the school must refrain from anything and any persons that remotely give the appearance of division. “A house divided cannot

¹ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 11.

stand.” The church school connected in name only to its church, cannot stand either. “Because the church is a single organization with a variety of ministries that must all work together to accomplish a common purpose, the church can develop a healthy relationship with its school only through careful planning.”²

Understanding the organizational structure of the Christian school is paramount to the relationship between the church and the school. Deuink and Herbster write, “From the perspective of the organization, there are three basic types of Christian schools: the independent school (a Christian school that functions independently of any other institution), the independent church school (organized separately from the church, yet wholly owned and controlled by it), and the church school (a Christian school organized as a part of the local church, partially because much of the concern for Christian education has come from within the local church congregation).”³ Christian Education is a mandate to the church and thus must be an integral part of the church.

Although the Bible does not mention the Christian school per se, it says much about the education of young people. God makes it plain that His will for all people is that they be made “perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Tim. 3:17). To accomplish this task, God gives people various gifts “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:12-13). These verses describe the

² Ibid., 197.

³ Ibid., 27, 28.

Christian education should develop Christians whose activities in this life anticipate their eventual conformity to the image of Christ.”⁴

Purpose Defined

The Christian Academy at Bible-Based Fellowship Church (TCA) is definitely a church school. Founded in 1995, it primarily exists because of its general purpose, its educational philosophy and its Bible-based objectives. Resulting from the concerns of the congregation, The Christian Academy was founded to provide a Christian alternative to public schools primarily serving the local congregation of Bible-Based Fellowship Church. The foundation of the Christian Academy is likened to that of the church. The Christian Academy, believes in the sovereignty of God as revealed in the works of His creation and through His redemptive plan of salvation.

The school provides a pre-kindergarten through sixth grade program with the firm belief that God’s truth is at the center of its curriculum. The school takes an interdisciplinary approach integrating Biblical truth in all its teaching. As an alternative for the congregation, the school has to date experienced tremendous levels of success. The Christian Academy is a church school. As a result, this school has a unique structure, and that structure must be understood by each of the personnel components of the school. Although very much under the corporate umbrella of the church, the nature and objectives of TCA dictate organizational policy, and consequently, the structure. Basic organizational structure of TCA differs little from its public school counterpart. (See appendix A). Understanding the structure of said church school will require understanding the levels of leadership.

⁴ Ibid., 10.

Although The Christian Academy does have a school board, it operates primarily through the leadership and direction of its administrator/ principal, who reports directly to the church pastor. A major function of this relationship is to define clear cut goals and objectives for the school, as most of its decisions are left in the hands of just a few.

“Therefore, the pastor should provide the administrator a clear picture of expectations.”⁵

Without clear, written goals and objectives communicated to all concerned, there is no clear direction for the school and its administration. If such a school ever achieves its objectives, it will do so accidentally, and probably no one will ever realize that its objectives have been met. At The Christian Academy, the pastor and the administrator enjoy such a relationship. At all times, the administrator of TCA is held accountable for the operations of the school and provides the pastor with written status reports weekly.

At Bible-based Fellowship Church, the school administrator is also a member of the senior staff of the church. As a result, the administrator serves not only the school but the church as well. This alone allows for said administrator the business and spiritual connection and alliance to the church necessary for running its school. The administrator of the church school must be integrally involved in the church. This again reiterates the fact that during the search for the proper administrator, their personal involvement in the local church and their commitment to the vision of the local church must be given high priority.

⁵ James Deuink, *Management Principles for Christian Schools* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1996), 251.

Vision Defined

The vision of Bible-based Fellowship Church includes five pillars, one of which is education. As such, the Christian Academy exists as an educational mission ministry of the Bible-Based Fellowship Church, incorporated to provide a high quality, multicultural, Christian educational program serving children ages pre-kindergarten three through sixth grade, with diverse backgrounds.

Most Christian schools in America are established as ministries of their local churches. (The Christian Academy as previously stated was founded as a missions ministry of the local church). The remaining Christian schools are independent, controlled by a school board rather than by one church. The problems with church-school relationships are similar in both types of Christian school organizations. However, since most schools are ministries of a single local church, this project addresses primarily this type of church-school relationship. Because the church is a single organization with a variety of ministries that must all work together to accomplish a common purpose, the church can develop a healthy relationship with its school, only through careful planning and through implementation by the right personnel.

Deuink and Herbster state of the church-school relationship, “even though the local church is not commanded to educate children for parents (parents are commanded in Eph. 6:4 to teach their own children), the church was ordained by God to help teach believers all that the Lord Jesus had taught (Matt. 28:20). Since the church has a teaching function, it becomes the ideal institution for establishing and maintaining a Christian school. This ministry in no way eliminates the parent’s responsibility to educate their

children; it only gives parents a convenient way to fulfill God's command and also meet the compulsory school attendance law at the same time."⁶

The Christian school, as a teaching arm of the local church should be an aid in conforming children to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. This then is the goal of the Christian school – making the student Christ-like."⁷ The Christian Academy serves 50% of the children who comprise our Children's Church. It behooves then the staff of The Christian Academy and the staff of Children's Church to be on one accord. In fact, many of the faculty and staff of The Christian Academy fulfill their ministry responsibilities in the nursery and children's ministry of the local church. The Christian school is not primarily an evangelistic tool (although many young people get saved through the experiences of their Christian school); it aids parents in helping them to fulfill their responsibility of giving their children a Christian education.

Therefore, as Dr. Deuink states, "the church and the Christian school both operate most efficiently when they maintain a healthy relationship. Though these two ministries are really one in organization, the fact that there is a dual operation in many areas can result in problems."⁸ Deuink and Herbster identify what is referred to as the "four P's." They are as follows: Problems with Priorities; Problems with Properties; Problems with Programs; and Problems with People."⁹

⁶ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 198.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 198-201.

Problems with Priorities

The Christian Day school is a ministry of the local church and not vice versa. This relationship must be maintained even though the Christian school may have a larger budget, staff, and membership than the rest of the operations of the church. The Christian Academy serves close to two hundred students which mean it serves close to 500 persons, including the families. Perhaps not unique to TCA but certainly a major emphasis for us, is service to the entire family. The Christian school must realize that if it is to be effective with the children it serves; it must gain entrance into the family.

One of the major advantages of TCA in this regard is that its administrator is also a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This alone opens the environment to one of prayer and often times counseling. It is the belief of The Christian Academy that there is no dichotomy between an educated mind and anointed leadership. This is perhaps the single most beneficial attribute of The Christian Academy. When families are strengthened, students are strengthened. When parental relationships are restored, the children are encouraged. When faculty and staff are strengthened, their work efficiencies are heightened.

Dr. Roy Lowrie, Jr. speaks of “Faculty Family Suffering” in his book *Inside the Christian School* and stresses the importance of school administrators and the Christian staff of the school to be able to minister to its employees.¹⁰ The Christian Academy promotes a safe environment, therefore conducive for the well being of each of its members, faculty, students and parents. This is critical to the overall success of the school. If the inhabitants of the school are unhealthy, the school is unhealthy!

¹⁰ Roy W. Lowrie, Jr., *Inside the Christian School* (USA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1980), 35.

Problems with Property

In any church – school relationship, ideally, the building grounds, vehicles, and equipment can be used by both. Such is the case at The Christian Academy. The concept of shared property is understood. However, conflicts can arise whenever proper communication does not take place between the church and the school. This is another indication where a healthy relationship between the church and school is imperative. The facilities and administrative staff of the church must be in constant communication with the school so as to avoid such conflicts. Thankfully, TCA and its local church enjoy such a relationship and problems in this area are minimal.

Problems with Programs

In most fundamental churches across America most of the evenings are taken up with some kind of meeting or activity. Bible-Based Fellowship is no different! This makes it difficult to schedule things for the school or the church without some overlap. In the case of The Christian Academy, the church has a ministry called “Events Planning.” One of the major functions of the Events Planning ministry is to ensure that there is no overlap of events. The problem here as previously stated is priority.

The school and the church are indeed of the same, but there is a separate flow of events and scheduling for each. The caution for The Christian Academy again is to always remain in open communication with the church. This is imperative if the operational flow of the school is to be successful. Many parents are asked to attend church functions and school obligations on the same night. A master schedule of church

activities established on a yearly basis can eliminate most of these conflicts. Most Christian schools or at least The Christian Academy, follow as closely as possible the public school calendar of the local city.

In an attempt to assist families of multiple children, some of whom do not attend TCA or another Christian school, TCA operates as closely as possible with the local public school calendar. For this reason, as in most cities, school calendars are done yearly, not sporadically. Problems really can occur when the calendar is not planned annually, changing events only under extreme circumstances. When the church and school can designate certain nights for school activities and certain nights for church activities, families can better balance their lives and thus better serve their schools and churches.

Problems with People

It has often been said, “If it weren’t for people, we wouldn’t have any problems.” “Property and programs do not have within themselves the ability to create problems, but the people involved in the church ministry do.”¹¹ When church ministry leaders begin to consider his or her area of responsibility more important than that of anyone else they are more likely to push their agenda and programs whenever possible. As more people become involved in the multiple ministries of the church, the possibility for more problems increases, as is often the case with Bible-Based Fellowship.

Personality conflicts and personal ambitions can cause severe difficulty among those who are members of the same organization. This is another opportunity for spiritual

¹¹ James W. Deuink, Carl D. Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC.:Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 200.

leadership to serve its people. Misguided ambitions and improper motives can literally kill the momentum of some of the best churches and schools. It is important that all personnel understand the purpose of the church and its ministry and are on the same page, striving together to accomplish this goal. Personnel must function as co-laborers together (I Cor. 3:9) and understanding that they should bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2). "The pastor of the church plays an important part in keeping conflicts between the church and the school at a minimum."¹²

Again, the pastor of the church and the administrator of the school must have a good working relationship in order for the church and the school to work together harmoniously. They must enjoy open communication and honest dialogue. The pastor must set the spiritual direction for the school but the administrator must ultimately be the one to cast it. The principal must be able to bear the responsibility of the day to day operations of the school. Another of the primary reasons for the recent success of The Christian Academy is the trust and confidence of the pastor towards his school administrator.

As previously stated, the administrator must not only be appointed to the position but must be trained, called and anointed for it. The administrator must function in the role, not in name only but in accountability and responsibility. "Some church schools have no school board. They operate through an administrator who is responsible directly

¹² James Deuink, *Management Principles for Christian Schools* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1996), 55.

to the pastor.”¹³ Such is the case at The Christian Academy. “The structure of the Christian school is important, but no one structure is best for all situations.”¹⁴

The effective school administrator should keep the pastor informed of major happenings in the school and any problems he or she may encounter needing the pastor’s assistance. On the other hand, the pastor should communicate to the school administrator the desires and direction for the school but should not attempt to run it. Many school administrators have left churches because of a lack of freedom to carry out the policies and programs of the school. As was so tactfully stated by Deuink and Herbster, “the pastor must allow his or her school ‘expert’ to operate with minimal interference.”¹⁵

¹³ Ibid., 46.

¹⁴ Ibid., 55.

¹⁵ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 201.

FOUR

REACHING BEYOND FAMILIAR BORDERS

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of age” (Matthew 28:19-20).

The Great Commission commands Christians to take the good news of Jesus Christ to all. Christians are directed by the words of Christ himself, to go into all places, regions, lands, cities, countries and continents, even into the utter most parts of the earth. The same challenge presents itself for the church school that may have been originally intended to service a specific congregation. Chartering unchartered territory can cause discomfort, discontent and even great feelings of inadequacies but The Christian Academy’s history demonstrates that it is the unfamiliar that proves authenticity. “The principal of equal respect requires that we act in ways that respect the equal worth of moral agents. It requires that we regard human beings as having intrinsic worth and treat them accordingly.”¹

Christian schools designed to serve only their own congregations will not succeed. The model of Jesus Christ presented an all inclusive ministry, and so must ours. Christ, in His dialogue with the woman at the well crossed many barriers and His ministry in the earth must do the same. Strong churches or Christian schools can not operate in the name of Christianity to the exclusion of any. “We must consider the

¹ Kenneth Strike, Emil Haller, Jonas Soltis, *The Ethics in School Administration* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1998), 17.

welfare of others as well.”² One of the greatest strengths of strong Christian schools is the ability to serve as a tool for evangelism. Additionally, “Christian schools offer a better level of instruction.”³ How much stronger is your community as a result of your school? This question must be raised by administrators and its response must serve as an impetus for action.

Christians and non-Christians alike often do not understand the purpose of Christian schools and it is therefore one of the major responsibilities of the administrator to communicate it. “Parents by the thousands have opted to send their youngsters to Christian schools.”⁴ The administrator’s objective should always be to develop and improve relations with the community, not only to bring about an understanding of purpose and philosophy, but to invite persons outside the congregation to become a part of the Christian school community as well. As a major emphasis of the school, community outreach will surely call for some debate and will cause the school perhaps to redefine its meaning. The Christian Academy has experienced questions in four primary areas that have heightened our awareness of the purpose of the Christian school. These areas are acceptance, tolerance, assistance and performance. Let’s evaluate them each with respect to the purpose of Christian schools.

² Ibid., 17.

³ Paul A. Kienel, *Reasons for Sending Your Child to a Christian School* (La Habra, CA: P.K. Books, 1978), 14.

⁴ Ibid., 14.

Acceptance

“Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7).

In 1975 Congress passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) guaranteeing for the first time that all students with disabilities would receive a public education. The law’s name was changed in a subsequent reauthorization in 1990 to the Individual’s With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The law provides the foundation for inclusive schooling and requires that every child with a disability receive a free and appropriate education while learning in the least restrictive environment.⁵

If Christian school leaders examine this law, although written for the purpose of a specific group and for inclusion within the public sector, its basic principles are tenets for the Christian school. Christian schools should guarantee based on the scriptures, that all children have a right to the benefits of the Christian environment. “Even if the home is non-Christian, they must respect the school’s spiritual concerns and support its teachers.”⁶ Jesus came seeking the lost and Christians are to do the same. His mandate to us is to teach them all things, as He has commanded us (His disciples). The Christian school must be committed to working with non-Christian homes who understand the school’s Christian philosophy and agree to have their children taught spiritual truth leading to salvation.”⁷

The Christian school can be a marvelous platform for educating children and parents alike to the things of God as Christian school leaders seek to educate students in

⁵ Richard A. Villa, Jacqueline S. Thousand, *Creating an Inclusive School* (Alexandria, VA.: Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005), V.

⁶ Roy Lowrie, Jr., *Administration of the Christian School* (Whittier, CA: The Association of Christian Schools International, 1984), 75.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

matters of curriculum. It is the duty of educators (Christian and non-Christian) to educate children both cognitively and affectively. The cognitive directive meets the needs of the academic. The affective domain speaks more to the social, emotional, and personal realm of the child. “A great part of a child’s success in school depends on his social and behavioral adjustment to the school community and its standards.”⁸ Inasmuch as the Christian school is free to embrace matters of humanity and to teach the biblical mandates of conduct, how much more does a child miss if not in this particular environment? It is therefore incumbent upon the Christian school to take the good news to all.

Every child should receive the benefits of the Christian environment. This does not mean that the school is attempting to teach catechism or to conduct Bible studies, but it does mean that the Christian school should provide an environment conducive for learning and one that is not afraid to embrace and teach the real issues of life. “This philosophy must permeate the Christian community of your school.”⁹ Christian schools should have at the helm of their objectives to always foster the safety and love of Jesus Christ as a method for reaching those that are lost and for comforting them that are bound and that includes CHILDREN! “Children are people too! They have many of the same fears and phobias as do adults but lack the maturity to handle them.”¹⁰

The Christian Academy found that with the inclusion of all as a major emphasis comes an eased entrance into many family situations. So many educators in public

⁸ Ibid., 78.

⁹ Ibid, 74.

¹⁰ Ibid., 61.

schools are not able to delve into the real reasons why children are not performing to the best of their abilities, failing and misbehaving, but Christian schools should never have to experience this. A probing question for the Christian school administrator should be, “What is the temperature of your environment?” “Does it create an atmosphere safe for handling the difficult situations of the student and parent?” If these are issues that administrators run from, then the success of the child is certainly in jeopardy, the success of the family is doubtful and thus the overall success of the school is questionable.

To illustrate the concept of acceptance in a Christian school, this researcher offers this case study from a public school, evaluate the responses and discern that the Christian school environment is the most appropriate in dealing with the real life issues of children and families which so often hinder the effective education of children. Dr. Robert Kirschmann provides the following case studies and they can be used for our evaluation:

Case Study #1– The Ridiculed Child – The Social Problems of a Parent and Child

A very angry woman has barged into the principal’s office moments before the beginning of the school day. She abruptly introduces herself as Mrs. Shelby, the mother of Brenda, an unpopular and unpleasant fourth grade girl. You are the principal and vaguely aware that Brenda is often the brunt of rather cruel taunts by the other children. She is abrasive and disruptive in class and is not strong academically. Acceptable conduct at school is not limited to what is written in our student and faculty handbooks.

The mother tells you that her daughter came home crying for the third day in a row because the kids were making fun of her and refused to allow her to play with them. The most offensive of all is a girl named Dawn, who ridicules Brenda constantly and gets the other children to make fun of her as well. (Dawn is the daughter of a good friend of yours)

Mrs. Shelby says she called Mrs. Nash, Brenda’s teacher, last Friday and Mrs. Nash said she would speak to Dawn. When Brenda came home from school on Monday she said that Dawn had been as mean to her that day as ever before. Last night Mrs. Shelby called Mrs. Nash again. Mrs. Nash said there was nothing more she could do. If she tried to shield Brenda from ridicule, Brenda would become more dependent on her and even less able to form positive relationships with her classmates. Mrs. Nash said that one girl, Carol tried making friends with Brenda but that Brenda rejected her. Mrs. Nash said that she could not make the

children like each other and that, as long as no one physically hurt Brenda or made fun of her *in class*, there was nothing more she could do.

Mrs. Shelby says that she was so angry when she heard what Mrs. Nash had to say, that she slammed down the receiver and decided to come in to see you (the principal) to make sure that the ridicule stopped.¹¹ (End of Case Study)

This case study reflects the everyday activity of an elementary, middle and senior high school principal. “Poorly defined rules encourage students to be disobedient.”¹² The very essence of misbehavior never changes it simply magnifies itself with age. The principal of the public school may permit the parent the privilege of venting, but what can he or she really do with this case? They are constantly plagued with questions such as: ‘In this situation, what can you do?’ ‘Is it appropriate for parents to storm into your office without appointments?’ ‘How does your school choose to deal with students who ridicule others?’ ‘To what degree is the teacher held accountable and responsible for resolving this issue?’ ‘Of what importance to the school is Brenda’s acceptance by her peers?’

A most effective means of teaching adults the concept of acceptance is through their children. The Christian Academy and any Christian school governed by the scriptures should be able to teach that ridicule is not accepted by Jesus Christ and is therefore not accepted at The Christian Academy. In a Christian school and certainly at The Christian Academy, there is only one way to handle this situation and that is to teach them via the scriptures, what Jesus says about mockery and ridicule, and speaking in terms that edify one another, (Ephesians 4:29), and then to remind them of the absolute intolerance for such behavior. “He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah” (Isaiah 11:12). Jesus

¹¹ Robert E. Kirschmann, *Educational Administration: A Collection of Case Studies* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:Prentice Hall, 1996), 2.

¹² *Ibid.*, 116.

calls the outcast back into the fold. Christians are also taught in scriptures that “Fools mock at sin, but among the upright there is favor” (Proverbs 14:9). It is not profitable for Dawn to make fun of Brenda, nor is it for the rest of the class to take pleasure in it. Mockery is sin and sin is recognized, and treated accordingly at The Christian Academy. One of the greatest privileges a church school can have is to educate its young people in the ways and Word of God, so that when they grow into adults the pastor of the church won’t have to deal with lessons that should have been learned as children.

Because Jesus Christ accepts all, Christians must also accept others. Many questions arise regarding socio-economic status, backgrounds, and ethnicity that simply must be addressed by the Christian school administrator. Administrators must be accomplished enough in the things of God to articulate the overall purpose of the school and therefore to encourage parents and the local community that the Christian school environment is the absolute best environment for their children. Excellence is a possibility for all.

Tolerance

He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly” (Proverbs 13:24).

Case Study #2 – Establishing a Discipline Policy – Developing a Process for Making Significant Decisions

In the past, each teacher established his or her own discipline policy. The past principal insisted that if a teacher sent a student to the office, a second student had to accompany them with a note describing the offense. Once a teacher made a discipline referral, the teacher was expected to accept whatever decision the principal made concerning the infraction. If the principal had some concern

about the way a teacher was handling discipline, the principal spoke privately with that teacher.

The school board established a discipline policy for the junior or senior high schools at the insistence of the principals, but it made no specific provision for discipline at the elementary school level.

The new school board has given the elementary school two months to come up with its own discipline policy. As the principal, you have been instructed to establish a committee consisting of teachers and parents, with you as its chair, to write a discipline policy for your school. That policy is to be presented to the board for its approval. Furthermore, you have been instructed to look at *Assertive Discipline* as a possible approach to school-wide discipline.¹³ (End of Case Study)

Parents at large want structure and discipline in the lives of their children. In presenting the Christian school to the community, the advantage of being governed by the scriptures is this: scriptures dictate the discipline policy. Proverbs 13:24 assures that discipline is in order and it is biblical.

Many parents have difficulty with tolerance in public schools and Christian schools alike. If educators are to be effective in the classrooms of today, there must be discipline in the school. That does not always mean corporal punishment but it does mean that there must be clearly defined boundaries and consequences. The issue of tolerance as it pertains to community outreach typically infers that children from lower socio-economic backgrounds are traditionally less behaved than those of more affluent families. The Christian Academy serves a predominance of lower middle class families, but it also enjoys a demographic of the affluent and the impoverished. History proves that behavior is consistent no matter the socio-economic status of the family. The Christian Academy has a zero tolerance for the infractions presented in the Bible as ungodly and these are addressed as the scriptures suggest, promptly.

¹³ Ibid., 6.

Assistance

“And my God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory”
(Philippians 4:19).

Many of the questions raised by parents and members of the local congregation regarding community outreach involve public assistance. That is, assistance for students with special needs, or students with accelerated needs. The Lord has promised us from the beginning of time that He would never leave nor forsake His own. Serving in the purposes of God ensures that He will supply all of our needs. In recommending the Christian Academy to parents (Christian and non-Christian alike), the emphasis on assistance is major.

As its leader, this writer is privileged to speak regarding the promises of God and how He has favored The Christian Academy with regards to its resources and services to special needs children. It was learned a long time ago and it is restated in Dolan’s book, *True to Our Roots*, that “True power is living what you know.”¹⁴

As Christian leaders, administrators of Christian schools must exercise the power found in living what the Bible says is true. If the Bible states that God will supply all needs according to His riches in glory, then one must live and act like it. Often church schools are not privileged with great financial resources. Church schools are typically not surrounded by tremendous capital resources. Rather than be down about it and settle for less than the best, the administrator who again, sets the tone and temperature for the entire school, must look at this condition as a great opportunity to exercise a living faith in Almighty God.

¹⁴ Paul Dolan, Thomas Elkjer, *True to Our Roots* (Princeton, N.J.: Bloomberg Press, 2003), 103.

The Christian Academy has a leader who possesses great faith! She teaches it and practices it in the presence of her staff and faculty and her parents and children. Perhaps one of the greatest proofs of the authenticity of the Christian school is its roots in scripture and its belief in a faithful God.

A real case study from The Christian Academy is presently being realized in this area of assistance. This year The Christian Academy serves an autistic child. He is very demanding and many would say that the staff is not equipped (with the appropriate degrees) to handle him. He is four years old and literally requires the full attention of at least one adult all day. The personnel resources are not available to allocate one person to one student all day. However, a faithful God reminds the staff that ‘He will supply all our needs!’

As such, that same faithful God has sent the expertise of a Ph.D. in Special Needs Children who volunteers her time teaching the staff the proper ways of helping the student and the proper ways of coping with his demands. God also made available to the school a resource center in Tampa for autistic children, headed by The Christian Academy’s former school psychologist. “There are approximately 100,000 Christian school educators in the United States and Canada. Most are truly caring people who love children and young people. They encounter a wide range of youthful needs.”¹⁵

“And my God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory” (Philippians 4:19). A Christian school must not be Christian in name only but it must practice what it preaches. In this particular situation, the principal was able at first visit to minister to the wearied parents of this little boy, praying with them and encouraging their

¹⁵ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 67,68.

belief that God would help us. Not knowing, it was only two weeks later that God moved and the resources necessary for us to contain him in our school became available. This is yet another opportunity to confess the goodness of the Lord. If the Christian environment cannot give testament to the goodness of the Lord, than who can and who will?

Performance

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (John 14:26).

There are several concerns of the Christian school regarding performance and academic readiness. “Christian school students are achieving one full year and six months ahead of the national norm.”¹⁶ The Christian Academy enjoys a consistent track record of excellence on standardized testing and with students who are later mainstreamed into public schools. The Academy uses an accelerated Bible-based curriculum that challenges the students and propels them into levels beyond their age. The Christian Academy enjoys an overall scoring of students’ grades kindergarten through fifth grades in the 90th percentile of comparable students. There are several reasons as to how and why such an accomplishment is attainable in a Christian school and many Christians and non-Christians alike are not aware. The community and even members of many church congregations with Christian schools have been programmed to believe that Christian educators are not competent in their fields but the national statistics prove otherwise.

Paul Kienel responds in his book, *About Christian School Education*, to the myth that Christian schools cannot compete economically with the public schools and therefore

¹⁶ Ibid., 51.

the academic program suffers with this reality. Each year the Association of Christian Schools International coordinates a nationwide testing program and evaluation of Christian School students. The test used, he says, is the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) and is administered to roughly 240,000 students. The results show the average achievement level to be one year and six months ahead of the national norm.”¹⁷

The government funded “Coleman Report” revealed the following:¹⁸

1. Private schools produce better cognitive outcomes than do public schools with comparable students – every child that has transferred from the Christian Academy has been accelerated because of their cognitive development
2. Private schools provide better character and personality development than do public schools – largely attributed to the under girding of the scriptures as the standard for conduct and character
3. Private schools provide a safer, more disciplined and more ordered environment than do public schools – Largely attributed to student / teacher ratios and a discipline policy that is biblical
4. Private schools are more successful in creating an interest in learning than are public schools – Largely attributed to the fact that in true Christian schools, (as is The Christian Academy), failure is not an option

¹⁷ Ibid., 3.

¹⁸ James Coleman, *Public and Private Schools* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1981), 43.

5. Private schools encourage interest in higher education and lead more of their students to attend college than do public schools with comparable students – Largely attributed to the fact that children are taught in private, Christian schools that *nothing is impossible with God*
6. Private schools are more efficient than public schools, accomplishing their educational task at lower cost
7. Private schools have smaller class sizes, and thus allow teachers and students to have greater contact – The Academy enjoys a ratio of 10 to 1

With regards to performance in Christian schools, students have proven success, and this message must be communicated to the community and to the public at large.

“The overall achievement level of Christian school students is commendable.”¹⁹

Carl Sandberg said, “There is only one child in the world and that child’s name is ALL children.” The Christian school is for all children, their parents and a faculty of believers committed to excellence in education. The Christian Academy at Bible-Based Fellowship Church, Tampa, Florida, is an inclusive school, celebrating over nine nationalities with varying backgrounds and ethnicities.

¹⁹Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 50.

FIVE

WHOSE CHILD IS IT?

“So they read in the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading” (Nehemiah 8:8).

“Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife” (Proverbs 26:20-21).

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

Schools and homes have become enemies of each other, rendering the children hostages to either and free to none. This is a sad commentary but has tremendous impact on the success of our schools. “Public schools continue to be secular and spiritually sterile.”¹ Whether public or private, this is an area of shared concern. The success of schools is predicated heavily upon the degree to which solid and meaningful parent partnerships are established. “Parents and school officials must work together if Christian education is to be successful.”² Parents must not abdicate the education of their children primarily to the schools. “Parents who pull children in a different direction from the Christian school will cause problems not only for the Christian school but also for the children.”³ Schools, on the other hand, must not exclude the vital input and positive influence that parents can have on their children and in their educational process. How

¹ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 136.

² James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 196.

³ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 196.

successful is the Christian school? This will depend largely on the parent and school partnerships, established through the administration of the school.

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). While parents are responsible for the education of their children, in order to accomplish this task, they depend largely upon teachers and the Christian school. For this reason it is critical to the success of the child that the school and parents work together as they attempt to prepare young people for the real world at hand. “It will be impossible to accomplish this goal if the school and the home are heading in opposite directions.”⁴ From the Day of Pentecost recorded in the book of Acts, much can happen when all involved are on one accord, but also, much will *not* happen if division is present. “A house divided simply cannot stand.”

Home/School Partnership

“Often parents will get involved in their children’s education only when the school forces them to do so through perhaps a mandatory volunteer program or a reduction in tuition for participation.”⁵ Of course, this is not the case with all parents; however, far too many are not willing to take the responsibility God has given them to participate in the education of their children. In either case, a relationship must exist between home and school that fosters the spiritual growth and academic advancement of

⁴ Ibid., 189.

⁵ Ibid.

the student. “Christian schools cannot duplicate parental love and support.”⁶ The school at any cost, must keep parents informed of the academic, behavioral and spiritual progress of their children, as well as of any discipline problems that may be taking place.

“In modern American society it is not common for parents to be interested in the education of their children.”⁷ For many different reasons, parents have turned this job over to the school and either cannot be involved or do not desire to be involved. Whether the rise in single parented homes with one income or the conflict of demanding work schedules with two, this attitude is pervasive throughout many Christian and non Christian schools alike. There is a rise in culturally deprived students.

As previously stated, The Christian Academy serves over nine nationalities and students of varying backgrounds and ethnicities. As a result of this, as Benjamin Willis states, “many culturally deprived children come to school without experience in speech, listening or the sight of his parents reading to him. The child therefore comes to school unready for the business of school. He or she may have also come from a family where age seven is the earliest general school entrance age; therefore, the child has not attended pre-kindergarten or kindergarten. Just as the child has had no experience with school, neither has the parent so in these cases, there is absolutely no allegiance to schools or any other academic institutions, Christian or not.”⁸ It is therefore incumbent upon the school to find ways to bridge the gap between school and home. With a relationship that is

⁶ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 45.

⁷ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 189.

⁸ Benjamin C. Willis, *Social Problems in Public School Administration* (Pittsburg, PA.: University of Pittsburg Press, 1967), 30.

imperative to the success of the child, how does a school create the bridge? The Christian Academy has experienced great success with the partnering of its parents and has accomplished this task primarily through one major vehicle, The Village Council. The famed African proverb, “It takes a whole village to raise a child,” is the premise for the home/school relationship at The Christian Academy.

Parental Support Group

The Village Council of The Christian Academy is the parent group organized to serve the school in partnership for excellence in education at The Christian Academy. Comparable to most PTA’s but differing in its structure, the Council includes not only parents, but the administration, faculty and staff, and any other volunteers that play a role in the life of any student. The Village Council exists to support The Christian Academy in an active involvement in the student’s learning experiences. The objectives of The Village Council are as follows:⁹

- **To bring into closer relationship the home and The Christian Academy so that parents and teachers may prayerfully and spiritually cooperate in the education of The Christian Academy students** – The home school relationship of The Academy is under girded in prayer. Families and staff have daily prayer. This time has proven invaluable to The Christian Academy. The strength of the partnership is built in prayer. There are several requests daily for prayer. They may be for finances, health, jobs, families, etc., but this time of sharing and

⁹ The Christian Academy, *Parent & Student Handbook* (Tampa, FL: Bible-Based Fellowship Church Press, 2005), 10.

petitioning God in a collective way really has strengthened the relationship between home and school. It also serves to soften the tension that sometimes arises when difficult communications must take place. It is recommended strongly that the families and the school pray together in the Christian school.

- **To support Christian principals and values, as well as, embracing the diversity of cultures within The Christian Academy** – Parents of the Village Council embrace the partnership and therefore demonstrate before the children that the same values The Christian Academy embraces. If the children are aware of the partnership, there is less likelihood of them misbehaving or getting off track somehow; therefore, The Christian Academy purposefully embraces the home and school relationship in their presence. “Parent-teacher meetings should be scheduled throughout the school year, allowing all the parents to get together at the school to learn firsthand about the Christian school ministry.”¹⁰ That may be done in several ways. Monthly there is a family night where parents are invited to visit the child’s classroom to talk about the events of the month. This is a time where students typically accompany their parents and are able to witness the camaraderie between the home and the school. Twice a week school begins with Chapel service where parents may participate in the lesson. This presents another opportunity for students to see the relationship.

¹⁰ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 194.

- **To secure for all Academy students the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education by developing unified efforts between The Christian Academy and the Christian community** – This is a marvelous platform for promoting the home and school relationship. The Christian academy along with the Village Council sponsor several events throughout the year that are targeted exclusively for the community. There are volleyball and basketball games where parents compete against faculty and staff, or where students compete against the Council and faculty members. This year, there are plans for a major Fall Festival of sorts where the community will be invited to attend. This will serve as a great tool for recruitment and evangelism. Again, when students are able to witness relationships that extend beyond parent/teacher conferences, they begin to believe in the strength of the relationship.
- **To promote the welfare of students in both The Christian Academy and the local community** – In the past two years, The Christian Academy began to partner with other Christian schools, parks and recreation centers throughout the community through competitive athletics. This has fostered many school relationships that otherwise would not exist. The Christian Academy and The Village Council also sponsor field trips for students that coincide with other schools, both Christian and non Christian.

Benefits of Healthy Home/School Relationships

The benefits of a healthy home and school relationship are immeasurable. Why do parents send their children to Christian schools in the first place? One of the primary reasons is the ability to have access to loving and caring teachers and administrators in a way that fosters healthy dialogue regarding the growth and development of their children. “Christian love in the classroom is an absolute necessity for the emotional stability of children.”¹¹ When parents and teachers alike can freely offer the love and nurturing necessary for creating positive attitudes among students, they can successfully guide a student into productive outcomes. Paul Kienel suggests that there are ten reasons why parents send their children to Christian schools and research supports that The Christian Academy’s marketing strategy mirrors the ten reasons offered in Kienel’s work. They are as follows:

1. You are accountable to God for what your children are taught in school – Proverbs 22:6 is a direct command to parents stating, “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he grows old he will not depart from it.”
2. Christian schools offer a better level of instruction. The test scores over a long period of years are conclusive. The annual Stanford Achievement Test administered to students grades Kindergarten through eighth shows these students to be seven to nineteen months ahead of the national norm in reading, and seven to thirteen months ahead of the national norm in all other subject areas.
3. The Bible does not teach that children should be exposed to all kinds of sin. Christians are to train “up” a child not direct him downward. Children do not grow spiritually stronger in a negative non-Christian environment.
4. The Christian school is right because it is not cut off from the most important book in the world – the Bible. Without the Bible, education is no more than the blind leading the blind. The Bible provides insight necessary for standards of behavior and morality.
5. The Christian school provides opportunity for children to witness for Christ. All students in a Christian school are not Christian and this

¹¹ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 69.

- environment not only creates opportunity for salvation, but for witnessing the Christian experience as well.
6. Christian school educators teach all subject matter from a Christian perspective. The Bible is at the center of the curriculum so as to force students to see the world through the eyes of God.
 7. Christian schools support the family as the number one institution of society. Christian school educators train students to respect and obey their parents. These educators agree with the early American patriot, Noah Webster who said, “All government originates in families, and if neglected there, it will hardly exist in society.”
 8. The atheists have, for all practical purposes, taken over public education in this country. These shocking words were spoken by a prominent public school educator. Many public school educators openly support Christian education.
 9. Christian school educators are free to maintain discipline. Without a reasonable standard of discipline, education is severely hampered. “For whom the Lord loves, He disciplines,” and it is within that context of love that discipline is carried out in a Christian school.
 10. These children are gifts of the Lord and as such, the staff and faculty are responsible to train them according to His word not only at home or in church, but in school as well.¹²

The original question for this chapter was, “*Whose child is it?*” Well, the answer is not what many think, the parent or the school, but the child is unequivocally, God’s. As such, as parents and teachers we are to partner for the best possible educational experience our children can have. It is a shared responsibility that calls for bridging the gaps of apathy and anger, of blame and badgering, and of fault and finding.

Children are faced with issues today that are enormous and have tremendous impact on their educational outcome. If not for safe and nurturing environments, they are destined to failure. Dr. Kienel states in another of his works, that “children are lonelier than ever before. He says that a growing problem among children and young people is loneliness. This is due in part to the rising divorce rate and the number of mothers who are forced to work outside the home. The US Department of Labor estimates that there

¹² Paul Kienel, *Reasons for Sending Your Child to a Christian School* (La Habra, CA.: P.K. Books, 1978), 14-18.

are 32 million children of all ages who have mothers who work outside the home and are cared for by whomever. Thirteen million of those children are under age 14. Lonely children are distressed with the thought that no one cares, no one loves them.”¹³ There is no consistency in their lives and they are therefore perplexed regarding security. This is the situation for approximately 75% of the student population of The Christian Academy. Christian school educators have the opportunity and freedom of expressing their personal love and concern for the students they serve. This assuredly bridges some of the gaps between school and home. Christian educators can also share the truth that Jesus loves them and “is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24).

Americans are losing their children to the hands of the enemy at a rapid rate; the question remains: when will society see the unquestionable benefit of the Christian school and begin to share as responsible adults, the mandates of our Lord to “Train up a child as he should go.” “This requires the prayerful tender loving concern of teachers, parents and preachers combined.”¹⁴

¹³ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA.: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 68.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 69.

SIX

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO?

Managing Expectations

“Whosoever shall receive this child in My name receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive Me receiveth Him that sent Me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great” (Luke 9:48).

Christian schools can be the extension of the home that so many parents desire. However, false expectations can cause complete breakdown in effective implementation of curriculum and the overall development of the child. Expectations must be managed. “Christian schools cannot be a substitute for a quality home environment.”¹ Whether public or private, in today’s society, schools are expected to work miracles with children who do not want help, parents who deny the needs, and systems that are not designed to meet them in the first place.

Valiant efforts must be made to ensure that clarity is always a present factor. Testing measures must be put in place that can establish adequate placement of children, thus determining whether this particular school is even a fit. Although private in practice, Christian schools must be equipped with proper measures of establishing and managing expectations of parents and students alike. Emphasis and clarity in these areas can assist in eliminating negativity when undisclosed expectations are not met.

¹ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 43.

What can Christian schools offer seeking parents?

There are four areas that guarantee the encouragement of successful and determined young people. First, the Christian school can offer them a loving environment. Christian school educators have the opportunity to express their personal love and concern for the lonely students in their classes and they can also share the truth that Jesus Christ really does love them.”² This may seem minor but in our troubled society, plagued with its many adversities, to find schools where children and families alike can be loved and nurtured into wholeness is simply God sent.

According to one survey included in an unpublished manuscript, 98% of parents polled appreciate the Christian environment embraced by their school.³ Many parents appreciate the fact that their children can be loved during the day. Nothing is more stressful for parents than to have their children in schools where they as parents are not confident in the care and instruction. When a parent can have the assurance that their child is in a safe and loving environment, the support of the parents can be overwhelming. “The teachers under whom your children are taught should be the kind of teachers you would personally hire if your children were being educated in your home.”⁴

The Christian Academy makes every attempt to assure its parents of the love and safety The Christian Academy demonstrates for their children. Love can foster understanding in many ways. The school’s slogan says, “Love them into excellence!” Love is the core of TCA’s existence and it is the reason for the school’s success.

² Ibid., 68.

³ Julia M. McMillan, *About Christian Day Schools* (Tampa, FL: DMIN Thesis Project, 2007) Appendice A.

⁴ Paul A. Kienel, *Reasons for Sending Your Child to A Christian School* (La Habra, CA: P.K. Books, 1978), 14.

Secondly, the Christian school can offer parents assistance with teaching moral integrity. “Standards for morality must be taken from scripture alone, not from the situations as often taught in secular schools.”⁵ Many students come from situations where immoral conduct is the order of the day. “The Bible commands the Christian to abstain from every type of immorality and for this reason, the Christian school is advised to follow policy that supports healthy morals.”⁶ Even students of Christian homes are borderline immoral in many of their ways. When a parent has the confidence that they are being helped as well as their child, true partnering can begin.

A Christian school has the freedom to teach the standards of Jesus Christ to our students and to heighten their conscientiousness towards moral integrity. “Christian school education is a major force for good in the lives of our children.”⁷ Again, these are lessons that many Christian adults yet wrestle with in their lives. It is an awesome privilege to have the opportunity to shape and mold the lives of young people and to watch them as they mature into young adults. This is manageable!

Thirdly, the Christian school can offer parents coping skills for their children. Christian schools can teach them how to properly deal with trials and tribulations and young people have them too! The Christian school environment can foster the kind of love that centers, no matter what may be going on. “Private schools provide a safer, more disciplined and more ordered environment than do public schools.”⁸ Christian schools

⁵ Ibid., 15.

⁶ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 152.

⁷ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 46.

have the privilege of setting the example as well. When a Christian school resolves that it will be Christian at all cost, the example it sets for students and families has immeasurable implications. Coping skills are biblical. Using the scriptures assures parents of assistance with developing strengthened individuals who are then able to *turn around and strengthen their brothers*. This is manageable!

Finally, Christian schools can prepare students for the demands of life! There are six areas that Dr. Kienel says Christian schools can excel in as they prepare students for the demands of life. They are:

1. **We can inspire them to follow Jesus Christ.** We can be the first to introduce our children to Christ, by living example. Most often children will receive Christ as their personal Savior when they see Him in their parents and teachers. We can begin by lovingly leading them to a salvation experience with Jesus Christ. Christ is the cornerstone by which meaningful lives are built. “hear thou my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way” (Proverbs 23:19).
2. **We can stimulate their vision.** People with vision can stimulate vision! Parents and teachers alike can expand the horizons of our young people. We can teach them to begin to see for themselves what God sees for them. Dr. Myles Munroe says, “God has placed within each person a vision that is designed to give purpose and meaning to life.”⁹ There are far too many young (and older) people who have no vision for their lives and the Bible tells us, where there is no vision, the people perish.
3. **We can teach them patience.** In a society where everything is needed “right now,” patience is becoming a lost virtue. “But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Romans 8:25). Kienel further states, “The modern day decline in patience often means a decline in human relations, in-depth worthwhile achievements and a relaxed lifestyle conducive to emotional tranquility.”¹⁰ By word and example, we can teach the children patience.
4. **We can train them to cope with failure.** Patience and coping work hand in hand. It takes both patience and courage to pick yourself up after

⁸ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 3.

⁹ Dr. Myles Munroe, *The Principles and Power of Vision* (New Kensington, PA.: Whitaker House, 2003), 21.

¹⁰ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 83.

disappointment, and to try again. Michael Jordon was cut from his high school basketball team 3 times before finally making the team his junior year!

5. **We can teach them humility.** The scripture says, “By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life” (Proverbs 22:4). A proper understanding of who the Lord is brings humility. In our attempts to inspire children and young people to be all they can be, we must always encourage a reflective spirit, which reminds us of God’s grace and ushers us into humility.
6. **We can ground them in the Word.** If we are to effectively prepare students for the long range demands of life, it is imperative that they have the stabilizing influence of Biblical principles to guide them. “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105). The chances of our children developing a hunger and thirst after righteousness are greatly enhanced if they see the same in their parents and teachers. The Word is the only thing that will sustain them and we need desperately to instill in them the critical nature of the engrafted word of God.¹¹

Clarifying Expectations

While one may not be able to *guarantee* academic excellence in terms of As and Bs, nor the perfection of a broken student, Christian schools *can* guarantee the love of Jesus Christ and the assurance that in Him, all things are possible. This is how expectations are managed!

While certainly there are some things that *can* be done, there are some things that Dr. Kienel points out that *cannot*. They are as follows:

1. **Christian schools cannot guarantee a perfect school environment.** Some parents are unrealistic about other students in their child’s Christian school. They expect a degree of perfection that is simply not attainable among mortals here on earth. Christian schools are decidedly better than the public school alternative, but they are not perfect. Students come to Christian schools with varying degrees of spiritual maturity, if any. The typical Christian school setting is not the sheltered one that many make us out to be.
2. **Christian schools cannot be a substitute for a quality home environment.** The number one influence in the life of a child is his/her home. A parent, more than teachers or preachers, is the primary model for children to follow. Parents are the pattern-makers for Christian living, attitudes towards life, attitudes towards others, work ethics, basic manners, money management,

¹¹ Ibid., 81-83.

health habits, goal setting and study habits. Pastor Chuck Swindoll says, “Home is where life makes up its mind.” Frankly, the impact of the Christian school is quite limited if the home is not what it should be.

3. **Christian schools cannot increase the level of your child’s intelligence.** It is simply not true that we are all created equal. In the broadest sense, in a free society, we are all created with equal opportunity, but God has fashioned us with different degrees of intelligence, imagination and drive. Christian school educators cannot nor should they, push a child beyond his or her ability to perform. Children need a reasonable level of intellectual stretching and academic challenge, but caring Christian educators cannot perform academic miracles to please parents who may have an unrealistic view of their child’s capabilities. Parents and teachers alike should know that a child’s academic success in school is only part of the total composite of qualities that God can use to make a person worthy of our respect, love and admiration. Never judge a child’s future worth to the world on his current academic prowess in school.
4. **Christian schools cannot duplicate parental love and support.** Most adults have forgotten the emotional stress we experienced as children in school. The very nature of a school requires that it maintain an orderly disciplined environment if learning is to occur. The process of learning can be emotionally stressful and mentally stretching. Parents can greatly reduce the pressure of learning our children may feel by encouraging them, inspiring them and loving them. Children and young people need parental love and support when they experience disappointment in a youthful experience. They can be devastating and can have lasting effects if not nurtured properly.
5. **Christian schools cannot replace the spiritual influence of a parent.** In the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 6:6-9, “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on 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. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” Christian school education may be frustrating for the child if Christian principles are not taught at home.¹²

Understanding the special needs of special students is critical in the Christian school environment. George Washington Carver said, “How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant with the weak, because someday in life you will have been all of these.”

¹² Ibid., 43-46.

One of the most clear of evidences that the Christian school is warranted is that more and more Christian schools are ministering to the special needs of today's youth. To minister by definition means to meet one at their point of need. By its definition alone, Christian schools are becoming more and more effective and the demand for those who are Christian at the core will become enormous in the coming years. Often the staff at our school ask, "How is that we are sent so many hurting children and families?" The response is simple, "Because every child is useful to God and important to His Kingdom, and He can trust you to minister to them."

Teaching is a gift and one that is to be guarded at all cost. God will use His teachers in ways like no other for His children are special to Him. Understanding God's position regarding His little ones, and understanding that teaching is a gift from God, the Christian educator must always be postured for service in the Christian school and its not always the As, Bs, and Cs that are called for. The families served at The Christian Academy are not exempt from adversity. These children are the offspring of and surrounded by hurt, brokenness, loneliness, poverty, and unhealthy relationships. As a result, it is absolutely imperative that the faculty and staff first serve as ministers to the students, then as disseminators of information. Managing the expectations in both areas is absolutely essential.

Dr. Paul Kienel offers a great checklist to assist us in the rendering of services to children with special academic and social needs. They are as follows:

1. **Don't force slow learners beyond their ability to learn.** All we can ask of any human is to do your best. Once the best is done, excellence has been realized. At The Christian Academy, we emphasize the all importance of encouraging students to do their best and then celebrating that accomplishment. In managing expectations of parents, it is important to stress that a child's best is his goal, for that matter, a person's best should always be

their goal. When we are able to de-emphasize As, Bs, and Cs and focus our attention on accomplishment, we can better serve the child and stand a greater chance of moving him into another level of achievement. Creative means of assessment must be developed in schools that don't mind teaching "out of the box." Traditional means of teaching calls for traditional means of assessment. However, in effective environments where children are encouraged to think and to be creative, teachers can use other methods of assessing that don't damage self esteem but rather encourage students to reach higher and higher.

2. **Express love and support often to youngsters with learning disabilities.** For that matter, express love and support to all students, faculty, staff and parents. Christian environments afford us the luxury of affirmation. Christian schools are not Christian if they are not edifying at every opportunity. Scriptures admonish us to "let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it might impart grace to the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29).
3. **Emphasize their assets and minimize their liabilities.** The Christian Academy encourages teachers to teach to students strengths, not their weaknesses. When a child's strengths are highlighted and given opportunity to shine, his weaknesses are strengthened in the process. He does so well at one thing that he begins to believe that he can do anything and we know, to believe it is the first step towards achieving it!
4. **Help children with special needs to cope with an unkind world.** We are called to minister hope in a world that seems hopeless and to forgive those who mistreat us. The Christian school has the opportunity to teach invaluable lessons to the students it serves. We also have opportunity and freedom to encourage Christian conduct in a world that rarely sees it. At The Christian Academy we teach our young people to strive for questions like, "Where do you all go to school? You are so well behaved!" Every field trip our students attend they are given these kinds of compliments. It is because of a loving God that we can extend His grace towards others and children are often the greatest vessels for this kind of use.
5. **Show faith in the slow learner.** Albert Einstein and Winston Churchill were the lowest academic achievers in their classes during their early years of education. In spite of their limitations, it is our Christian duty to always show students that we have faith in them. There is no greater encourager than for someone to believe in you. Many of us as adults know the benefit of encouragement, for it is what has driven many of our accomplishments, and this is what God expects us to do for His children.¹³

Christian school education is a major force for good in the lives of children only if the church, the home and the school each operate on the same frequency. A multitude of great things can be accomplished when operating on one accord.

¹³ Ibid., 76-78.

SEVEN

WE WANT YOU: WEEPING, WITNESSING, AND WORKING!

“For the Son of man came to save that which was lost” (Matthew 18:11)

While recruitment is an absolute necessity, just how effective are Christian school administrators outside of the comfort zone of their immediate congregations?

“Evangelism should be a normal part of the everyday curriculum in God’s school system.”¹ The ability to attract both believers and non-believers to an institution designed to glorify God through the education of His children is critical to the success of the school. “Our Christian school administrators and teachers may get so caught up in providing a superior academic program that the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ often fades into a secondary position.”²

The biblical model of leadership Christ provides demonstrates the *will* necessary to break down barriers of race, culture, community and gender. “In a world addicted to what’s comfortable and what’s easy and in a Christian culture that is often so inwardly focused, you will not step up to your destiny assignment as a spiritual rescuer until you see what Jesus sees when He looks at the lives all around you.”³ In His dialogue with the woman at the well, Christ proved the absolute importance of reaching people by sharing their immediate experience. If Christians are unable to extend the same grace as did Christ with the Samaritan woman, any recruitment efforts attempted will be unsuccessful.

¹ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 111.

² *Ibid.*, 111.

³ Ron Hutchcraft, *Called to Greatness* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2001), 30.

Jesus had a burden for His people and so must Christians. The survey included in the unpublished work by McMillan, indicates that “evangelism is one of the primary reasons for the Christian school.”⁴

The Weeping

The Christian school administrator must have a burden for children that are lost. Society’s influences and the culture of many wayward children today, stem from brokenness, poverty, undue stresses in their lives, single parented homes (often but not exclusively), mended and blended families, children with far too much freedom in their lives, yielding to trouble in schools, trouble in communities and trouble in families. Who is seeking these children? Over 60% of America’s children today. In many public schools across America, teachers are elated when they receive their new rosters for the year and “little Johnny,” the now labeled trouble maker kid from the projects, is not listed! Somebody else has the headache this year! For many teachers, this marks time for celebration.

The Christian school cannot take a blinded eye to the needs of lost and wayward children. If the Christian school is to carry out its God given purpose, it will have a heart for the lost and a burden for their redemption. Our survey proves that a Christian school is Christian only if it practices Christianity in all its ways.⁵ As Greg Laurie says, “We must have a burden like Jesus had for the people of Jerusalem.”⁶ Scripture describes His

⁴ Julia McMillan, *About Christian Day Schools* (Tampa, FL: Bible-Based Fellowship Press, 2007), 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶ Greg Laurie, *How to Share Your Faith* (Wheaton, IL.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), 4.

heartfelt burden as He looked out over Jerusalem one day and wept saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!” (Matthew 23:37). Paul goes on to echo that sentiment when he says, “I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh” (Romans 9: 2-3). No wonder Paul had such a successful ministry, he cared!” “The reality is that our Christianity has a tendency to become self-focused and self-absorbed.”⁷

The Witnessing

Driving through the streets of Tampa, Florida, this writer often peruses the low-income project housing and neighborhoods that are less desirable to most. God begins to speak that these are My people too. Just as did Jesus, this writer weeps often at the lost and has a heartfelt desire to bring them to Christ. Charles Spurgeon once said, “Winners of souls must first be weepers of souls.” As young children are observed out of control, unsupervised, and unwilling to abide by anybody’s rule, the heart becomes heavy. It is then the still quieted voice of God speaks, “they belong at The Christian Academy.”

The recruitment process begins by asking, “Where’s your mother or father?”

The typical response is “I don’t know.”

Then God takes over and engages them in dialogue interesting to them. Finally the question arises, “Do you like school?”

Again, typically the response is a resounding “No!”

⁷ Ron Hutchcraft, *Called to Greatness* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2001), 27.

There's the entrance. The next question must be "Why?" Then the child begins to open up. For the Christian school administrator, here is the litmus test as to the authenticity of your own relationship with God and the school. For every response the child gives regarding his or her current school, the Christian school administrator must be able to counteract with a positive response from his or her school and it must be **honest**.

For example, a common response might be, "my teachers don't like me, and they don't care about me." "This free-floating lack of focus and direction is a global phenomenon."⁸ An effective Christian school administrator will be able to honestly respond, "I know a school that cares for boys and girls like you." When this response is sincere, the children will know immediately that they've just met one who cares, and barriers of defense and hardness will drop. God has now given entrance for safe and honest dialogue inviting the interest of the child.

Most often, at some point a parent will appear and the dialogue can continue. These kinds of interactions with people will not present themselves if the administrator is locked in an office all day. "Jesus was no recluse. He did not sit in His office writing theoretical treatises on the apostlelate. Rather, He was an action man!"⁹ A heart for recruitment must begin with the administrator, and just as did Jesus, if one is to be effective, he will lead by example. "Parents, pastors, teachers, and administrators – all of us must be on guard against spiritual decline in Christian schools."¹⁰ The greatest portion of the dialogue with lost children is when they discover that the person talking to them is

⁸ Greg Laurie, *Why Believe* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1995), 52.

⁹ Roy Lowrie, Jr., *Administration of the Christian School* (Whittier, CA: The Association of Christian Schools International, 1984), 60.

¹⁰ Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 111.

the principal! The most frequently asked question is, “How are you the principal walking around *down here*?” The implication here is that principals don’t do this kind of thing and certainly are not found perusing the projects seeking that which is lost! Alexander McClaren once said, “You tell me the depth of a Christian’s compassion, and I’ll tell you the measure of his usefulness.” Where there is a heartfelt burden for the people of God, recruitment can begin.

Dr. Ron Hutchcraft helps one to understand this. He says of Jesus, “There is a vision He sees that is missed by most of those who belong to Him.”¹¹ Jesus said to His disciples that He would make them fishers of men. A more literal translation of that phrase would be “I will make you catch men alive.” The actual Greek verb used for *catch* is unique, and it occurs in only one other place in the Bible. In that instance Paul tells us to be patient with those who oppose truth, “that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive (caught alive) by him to do his will” (II Timothy 2:26). Many of these children and their families have been taken captive and kept uninformed and our burden must be to set them free! “The worldwide potential for Christian school education is awesome if we will accept the challenge.”¹²

The Working

Not only must the administrator have a burden for the people, but he or she must also have a plan for the people. After weeping and witnessing, the working begins!

“Christian schools should endeavor to make Christian education available to as broad a

¹¹ Ron Hutchcraft, *Called to Greatness* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2001), 15.

¹² Paul A. Kienel, *About Christian School Education* (Whittier, CA: Association of Christian Schools International, 1987), 31.

spectrum of students as possible.”¹³ Open acceptance does not affect academic excellence, in fact, it validates its success. While recruitment objectives are the same, the plan of execution will vary according to the prospects. Recruiting in communities like the ones described above will require the necessary tools.

To demonstrate the challenges presented, many of these parents do not see their children in a private Christian school environment so the effective administrator must be able to see for them what they do not see for themselves. Financially the administrator must know that these parents cannot afford to pay a tuition fee of any amount. But thanks to a loving God, “whatever He calls for, He provides for!”¹⁴ In the state of Florida, there are several scholarships available to low-income families who wish for their children to attend private or faith-based schools.

The question then becomes, then why are so many of them not in private Christian schools? The answer is simple, they are uninformed. They may not have access to the newspaper or community flyers that advertise and they do not typically watch the news. Another reason is that the majority of available funds are not disclosed to communities like these. They simply don’t know. Thus, the effective administrator’s role becomes the informant! How will they hear without a preacher! Someone must sound the horn and blow the trumpet loud so they can see that Jesus is no respecter of persons, what He has done for one, He’ll do for another.

Christian schools were not designed exclusively to serve the wealthy. A Christian school must operate with Jesus as its model and as previously stated and proven, He is an

¹³ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian Schools Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 86.

¹⁴ Myles Munroe, *The Power of Vision* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2003), 97.

all inclusive God. “Most churches have established Christian schools as evangelistic arms of the church, accepting any young people who agree to abide by the school’s standards.”¹⁵

Effective Marketing Strategies

Devise a viable marketing plan. As part of the plan, the effective Christian school administrator will prepare packets that introduce the respective school. Whether recruiting in the projects or the penthouse, there are certain fundamentals that remain consistent. Preparation is one. Within that packet is information that will serve to answer the frequently asked questions of a parent seeking other alternatives for the education of their children. The packet will answer concerns about lunch, transportation, uniforms, curriculum, books and fees, tuition, before and after school care, school operating hours, discipline policies, and etc. “Every school should have a student-parent handbook, given to the parents of every child both interested and enrolled, containing basic information about school policies and procedures.”¹⁶

The objective for effective recruiting is for the administrator and team to be as prepared as possible. Parents enjoy informed personnel speaking about their school. The recruiting process is delicate and should be well planned and thought out. Depending on the circumstances and the location, it is not unusual to have staff to carry laptops during the recruiting canvass so as to assist parents with filling out paperwork and submitting necessary forms seeking financial assistance. When parents, who were just distraught on

¹⁵ James Deuink, Carl Herbster, *Effective Christian School Management* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1986), 90.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 190.

yesterday because of having received troubling reports from a public regarding their children can now recognize that care has been introduced into their lives, God has got to be pleased, and when God has been glorified, all else is satisfied! “The obvious reasons for the tremendous growth and support for Christian schools deals primarily with the discontent of parents over what is happening to their children in public schools.”¹⁷

Cultivate effective marketing partnerships. The recruitment plans for Christian schools will vary depending on the audience. The plan for recruitment from the congregation that supports The Christian Academy is quite different than the one just described. This church has a very vibrant children’s ministry which is TCA’s our primary field from which to recruit new students. Several of the teachers and staff serve in the children’s ministry of the church and in fact, one TCA parent heads the children’s ministry. With this kind of connection, the school has great opportunity to present itself.

It will behoove the Christian school to take advantage of the working relationships it has within the church. The Christian Academy has partnered with the children’s ministry for various functions and activities. For example, recently, the church sponsored a “Hallelujah Night” as a Christian alternative to the satanic influences of Halloween. The school partnered with the children’s ministry. This function was also open to other children in the community, serving as a tool for evangelism. There are plans for a major festival that seeks to involve the community in a major way. The children’s church ministry will partner with The Christian Academy in that endeavor.

¹⁷ Paul A.Kienel, *Reasons for Sending Your Child To A Christian School* (La Habra, CA: P.K. Books, 1978), 114.

There are many ways a church school can profit by the benefit of healthy relationships within the church. This is another reason why the administrator must be actively engaged in the ministry of the church.

Another method of recruitment that The Christian Academy employs is called “Each One Reach One.” This method asks of the faculty and staff, to become personal evangelists for the school. There is not a community in America that does not house at least one child that needs a Christian alternative for education. The Christian Academy asks each member of the staff and faculty to use the circles of influence they have, i.e. the grocery store, the drug store, the gym, the mall, and any other place as a field for recruitment. Each is asked to recruit at least one student within a few weeks. “Each One Reach One” is a tool adapted from a model employed by the supporting church, which used it in a personal evangelism initiative a few years ago. In terms of recruitment, many of the methods that are applicable to the church are applicable to the school. Just as the church must market beyond its walls, so must the Christian school market likewise.

Nurture External Relationships. A most effective method for recruitment is neighborhood seminars. The importance of the school’s visibility beyond its walls is critical. Neighborhoods attract families with children. Typically a neighborhood has regularly scheduled meeting nights for residents and do not mind scheduling the administrator for a visit. Given proper permission, they may also permit you to hand out flyers or other promotional materials within the community.

“There are two important ingredients to neighborhood seminars: an informed staff and careful organization.”¹⁸ Neighborhood seminars are not effective used simply as a forum for disseminating information and for one speaker to share with a group of residents. There must be an agenda with targeted areas of emphasis. For example, if your neighborhood seminar is held in a crime infested area, you may wish to talk about the safety your *school* may provide the children. You may wish to talk about before an after school programs that may deter your child from the mischievous behavior he or she may be prone to when unsupervised. If you are presenting in a more affluent area, you may choose to feature planned enrichment programs and extracurricular activities. Certain areas of emphasis will draw interest to your school depending upon the nature of your audience. The administrator must allow time for dialogue. People need to know that the leader is accessible to them. The effective administrator will spend time with the people!

Another method for recruiting is through planned community outreach programs. A school’s willingness to focus on specific communities through outreach can serve as a vital recruitment initiative. For example, throughout the holiday season Christian schools can adopt communities for the purpose of sharing blessings. This does not have to be a time designed specifically for recruiting, but the nature of the service will automatically spark an interest in the provider. When Christian schools are just being “Christian” they can serve to recruit many. Jesus reminds us in scripture and this serves as The Christian Academy’s greatest marketing tool, “If I am lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me” (John 12:32).

¹⁸ Larry Hughes, Gerald Ubben, *The Elementary Principal’s Handbook: A Guide to Effective Action* (Boston, MA.: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1978), 309.

Weeping and witnessing will lead to working. Perhaps the greatest tool for recruiting is by word of mouth. Witnessing as to the blessings of God bestowed upon your family as a result of the Christian school of your choice is priceless. Scripture tells us that many are overcome by the word of your testimony.

A Lesson from the Titanic – Paraphrased from Greg Laurie

“We have all come to know the story of the sinking Titanic. One of the things that make this tragedy so captivating is the realization that the story could have been different had the ship’s captain and crew not made so many disastrous mistakes.”¹⁹

Those in charge on the Titanic repeatedly and flagrantly ignored the warnings of ice ahead. The captain tried to steer the ship around the fatal iceberg instead of hitting it head-on, which, with the advantage of hindsight, would have been the better choice. There were not enough lifeboats on board and one of the greatest tragedies of the Titanic story is that when the massive ship went under, many of those lifeboats were only half full. Those in the lifeboats could hear the screams of the people, yet not one boat went back until it was far too late. They returned only after the screams had subsided. They rowed back to the people only when they felt it was safe, but it was too late.

Listen to parents everywhere. The screams of those who cry out help, ‘my child is sinking.’ Similar cries are heard from every corner of the globe. What is your response? Are you waiting until it is safe to respond or will you use your lifeboat to save another? In the words of Charles Spurgeon again, “The Holy Spirit will move them by first moving you. If you can rest without their being saved, then they will rest, too. But if you

¹⁹ Greg Laurie, *How To Share Your Faith* (Wheaton, IL.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), 11.

are filled with agony for them, if you cannot bear that they should be lost, you will soon find that they are uneasy too.”²⁰

Effective Christian school administrators must have a burden for the children of God. Their hearts must ache that such a profound solution is only offered to a select few. One can only remain disturbed until all who are within reach have the opportunity to experience the love and educational advantages supported by a Christian education. When the administrator can take on the heart and mind of Christ, the rest of the school and its immediate contacts, will take on the same spirit. There is no dichotomy between an educated mind and a saved soul. The Christian Academy enjoys them both.

When Christian leadership will reach beyond the mandates of the “10 steps to effective leadership,” or “the 5 rules for guiding people,” and can begin to take on the model of Jesus Christ, implementing with confidence and power the words of the Scriptures, the realm to which God will embrace these schools is unheard of. The Scriptures state, “eye hath not seen nor have ears heard what things He has prepared for them that wait on Him” (Isaiah 64:4). The great things God wishes to accomplish in and through His schools yet remains.

The questions for the effective Christian school administrator must be: ‘What is the model for recruitment in my school and is it in compliance with the Scriptures?’ ‘Would Jesus have done it this way?’ Based upon honest responses, one can then move with conviction beyond the walls of these own schools and churches, and begin to reach the multitudes as God intended.

Greg Laurie asks these questions of the Christian evangelist: “Does your heart ache to share the hope of the gospel? Do you have a burden for the lost? Do you want

²⁰Greg Laurie, *How To Share Your Faith* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999), 32.

others to know the Lord?”²¹ Yes, he may have posed these questions to evangelists for the church, but do not these same words apply to the Christian school community as well? Should not the Christian school administrators and staff reach out to those who have yet discovered the good news? This writer is tremendously blessed because in Tampa, Florida, she has the good news of a Christian school that dares to be Christian, allowing Jesus Christ to reign, and it is the answer for many of the lost in this community. Even greater news is this; *we won't stop until we find them.*

²¹ Ibid, 13.

EIGHT

COUNT THE COSTS!

“For which of you intending to build a tower, does not sit and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it, lest after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish” (Luke 14:28).

Effective administration in the Christian school will require the administrator be conscious of the costs! “The administrator is the key person in the development of the Christian school. Their walk with the Lord, their Christian character, and their administrative competence establish the spiritual and educational tone of the school.”¹ Not only from a financial perspective, but the spiritual costs, the personal costs, the physical costs and the professional costs must be adequately assessed periodically for effective management.

Christ taught in the parables the absolute necessity of counting the costs. So often, the bar of productivity is held far too low in Christian schools. With Christ as head of the church and ruler over the school, responsible Christian administrators can not lower the bar. There is a mark of excellence that must be demanded in Christian schools that should arise far above the expectations found in non-Christian environments. Mediocrity is not acceptable! Excellence must be the order of the day for Christ deserves it, He desires it and He demands it!

¹ Roy Lowrie, Jr., *Administration of the Christian School* (Whittier, CA: The Association of Christian Schools International, 1984), 7.

The Financial Cost

Although it would be risky to say that any area of Christian school administration is the single most important, few would question placing the management of financial resources at the top. One of the critical dilemmas facing Christian schools is fiscal inadequacy and as a result, many narrowly escape disaster: being dissolved, leaving bad debts, and closing their doors. Had the church not postured The Christian Academy as its number one mission field, it too would have befallen fiscal disaster. Dr. James Deuink says, “Many schools are forced to close their doors either because of failure to count the cost of providing their educational program or because of their zeal to expand beyond the demand for Christian education in their community.”¹

The Christian Academy at Bible-Based Fellowship Church, Tampa, Florida, falls into neither of these categories but shares the severe humiliation of the many Christian schools that do. Financial management must be a priority for the Christian school. As is the case with many church schools, the financial management of The Christian Academy rests primarily with the business and finance office of the church. This does not, however, exclude the administrator from the responsibility of managing a budget and providing oversight for the ongoing financial management of the school. “Balance is needed in the establishment of the school’s budget which involves crucial items including setting tuition rates, faculty and staff salaries, and planning for the maintenance and expansion of facilities. Fiscal management must be feasible and sound, and bold enough

¹ James W. Deuink, *Management Principles for Christian Schools* (Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1996), 96.

to instill trust and confidence by the school constituency, especially by the administration and staff.”²

The effective financial management of any Christian school will require that the school operates from the guidelines of a clearly defined budget. Unique to the church school and unlike the Christian day school or the independent school, the church school operates at the mercies of the church. Tuition and fees is simply not enough to cover the costs of educating a child. Tuition affords the academy the ability to cover employee costs and the overhead of the building (which is tremendous and a great blessing to the church), but it does not cover the complete cost for educating its children. Without the risk of sounding dependent, how then does a school manage itself from a budget it does not control? When operating a church school, governed financially by the church, the administrator must realize the purpose of the budget. “Implementation of a wise program of school finance will help the school achieve its spiritual and educational goals.”³

The budget reflects the school’s priorities. Responsibility for establishing priorities should rest in the hands of those who are acquainted with the educational process and who have the courage to make decisions in the best interest of the school. Also, in a clearly defined budget, major consideration must be given to compensation and salaries. “While Christian schools are concerned about a spiritual ministry, they need to compensate those who perform this ministry with reasonable financial support. It is good to trust the Lord for the wages that will need to be paid, knowing that God indeed is faithful. However, it is foolhardy and “sub-Christian” to build a school (a tower – Luke

² Roy Lowrie, Jr., *Administration of the Christian School* (Whittier, CA: The Association of Christian Schools International, 1984), 34.

³ *Ibid.*, 141.

14:28) without adequate resources to operate it.”⁴ These decisions establish the financial course for the school and must be directed by someone intricately connected to its needs and functions. Herein lies the problem with many church schools. Although the management of the finances may rest with the financial management office of the church, the school’s administrator must still be closely involved in the outgoing expenses that flow through the school’s account. The administrator’s role in the management of the budget for the school is critical and this responsibility will therefore call for one who is willing to share duties in what could potentially be a very sticky area. Our survey indicates that most administrators want complete autonomy in their schools but the financial management is an area that the church school may never realize that autonomy.⁵ The administrator’s role in the shared responsibility of financial management is then to prepare and operate from a well defined budget and maintain a financial plan that realistically details the projected income and expenses for the school. “One of the principal’s major tasks is to keep before the church or board the financial needs of the staff and ways the school can more adequately and justly meet those needs.”⁶

The Spiritual Cost

There are literally thousands of books written on the subject of spiritual leadership but few on the subject of spiritual implementation and accountability. The administrator of a Christian school shoulders a tremendous responsibility, first to God, then to all the

⁴ J. Lester Brubaker, *Personnel Administration in the Christian School* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 75.

⁵ Julia McMillan, *About Christian Day Schools* (Tampa, FL: Bible-Based Fellowship Press, 2007), 3.

⁶ J. Lester Brubaker, *Personnel Administration in the Christian School* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 76.

faculty, staff and students given stewardship of, to the pastor and to the church. In order to effectively guide others in a Christian environment there must be spiritual accountability. “No matter what leaders set out to do – whether its creating strategy or mobilizing teams, their success depends on *how* they do it.”⁷

“Quite simply, in any human group the leader has maximal power to sway everyone’s emotions. If people’s emotions are pushed towards the range of enthusiasm, performance can soar; if people are driven towards rancor and anxiety, they will be thrown off stride.”⁸ How then is the range of enthusiasm guaranteed?

The school head must be respectful of others, regardless of their position in the organization. This calls for humility, a virtue not many leaders are willing to practice. “He must become greater, I must become less important” (John 3:30). For some reason, even in Christian environments, leaders tend to act in superior ways which create hierarchal structures. Many refuse to humble themselves for lack of security and perceived power. Meekness is not a sign of weakness and so to be respectful of all does not in any way demean our strength. “And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful” (2 Timothy 2:24).

In fact, this characteristic trait provides evidence of the cultural impact of those whose actions embody a fundamental respect for human beings of any rank, status, age, accomplishment, and with students of any grade level. “Followers look to a leader for

⁷ Daniel Goleman, *Primal Leadership- Learning to Lead With Emotional Intelligence* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

supportive emotional connection.”⁹ “People are desperate for leaders who can make positive changes in their lives.”¹⁰

The Christian school administrator should be a charismatic person. Here the term charisma is used in casual reference to suggest “big personality,” or a large public presence with leaderly demeanor. “In order for the school administrator to be effective, he or she must be able to work harmoniously with other people.”¹¹ Many associate these traits with outstanding leaders. Interestingly enough some find charisma to be more of a leadership problem rather than an advantage. The key to the benefit of this trait is to recognize the others that parallel it. In other words, respect for others, flexibility, supportiveness, predictability, humility, public and positive reinforcement and love. Paralleled to these qualities, charisma loses whatever threatening character it might have originally had.

What do these traits suggest to us from a spiritual perspective? Scripture encourages us to show ourselves friendly. The disposition of Christian leaders should demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ, always. Herein lies the cost. Flesh will not allow one to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ always. The administrator in the Christian school is held to a level of accountability that is apart from the staff and faculty and parents. The administrator must be able to set the atmosphere for the environment and the only way to do it is to follow the example of Paul who said, “Daily, I must mortify this flesh.”

⁹ Ibid., 5

¹⁰ Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 8.

¹¹ J. Lester Brubaker, *Personnel Administration in the Christian School* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1980), 17.

Spiritual leadership will cost you and it will require submission. For those whom God has called Henry Blackaby says, “He can and will bring character development and personal growth out of any situation, but this is contingent upon the person’s willingness to submit to God’s will.”¹² God is sovereign over every life, but those who yield their will to Him will be shaped according to His purposes. When God directs a life for His purposes, all of life is a school. No experience, good or bad, is wasted!”¹³ “For we know that all things work together for the good of them that love God and are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28). God is seeking the kind of leadership character that will reflect His shaping and molding and can therefore make significant impact on the others around them. Blackaby states that there are three worthy goals of the effective Spiritual leader: Leading Others to Spiritual Maturity, Leading Others to Lead, and Bringing Glory to God.

Leading Others to Spiritual Maturity

Leading others to spiritual maturity involves moving people from where they are to where God would have them to be. A great litmus test for Christian leaders is to measure the movement of their people. The Christian Academy administrator promotes an ongoing faculty conversation regarding personal and professional development. Staff and faculty must know that their leader supports their growth and development. The leader cannot be insecure in this regard with thoughts such as, if they better themselves, they won’t stay here. Well perhaps, “here” is where God may have placed them,

¹² Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 42.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 43.

specifically to prepare them for *His* next assignment. Remember, people assigned to us in a Christian environment are on God's agenda, not ours!

Lead Others to Lead

The second goal Blackaby emphasizes is to develop others to lead. The Christian school administrator should place great emphasis on leadership and empowerment. To empower is to entrust. This will require a trusting leader. Building trust can be extremely costly but is absolutely necessary if the Christian environment is to be productive. The Christian Academy is an environment that fosters trusting and caring relationships. This is the one of the reasons why it experiences great participation and involvement. People are not afraid to try and the leader is not afraid to allow them. In fact, leadership of The Christian Academy promotes creativity and independent thinking.

Many speak of empowerment but are afraid to empower. To empower means the leadership must take the risk of failure. Failure is opportunity for development. As a result, Christian leaders must create environments where failure is safe and an understood part of the growth process. It will cost the leader to allow others to *try* things that you could very well *guarantee*. Great leaders become leaders through trial and error, guided by senior leaders who are trustworthy and effective in providing feedback and guidance. Blackaby calls it the "stewardship of influence."¹⁴ The Christian Academy experiences this influence proven by their 100% staff retention rate for the last two years, and by their exceptional rate of parent participation rate in school activities and operations. Leaders must remember God's primary concern for all people is not results, but relationship. How effective is the Christian administrator at building relationships? God is concerned about

¹⁴ Ibid., 175.

impact not impression. If the school is to be effective, the administrator must be open to fostering healthy relationships.

Of moving people from where they are to where God would have them to be Blackaby states, “One of the issues regarding spiritual leadership is whether spiritual leaders can take people to places they themselves have never been. That depends on one’s definition of spiritual leadership. If spiritual leadership is understood as taking people to a location or completing a task, then leaders can lead people to places they’ve never been. But if the goal of leadership is relationship, then leaders will never move their people beyond where they have gone themselves.”¹⁵

Bringing God the Glory

Finally, the third goal for any spiritual leader should be to glorify God. The ultimate goal of any Christian leader must be to bring glory to God. What will determine whether a leader is bringing glory to God will be the manner in which they lead their organizations. God is serious about His people and He has entrusted godly leaders with them. As a result, He has given us His blueprint for leadership. Anything short of the Scriptures as guide is not acceptable in the sight of God. He demands from us accountability and responsibility.

“Christian organizations always affirm their desire to glorify God, but they manage to get sidetracked in so many subtle ways. Churches can become preoccupied with growing in numbers so much that they forget about growing people. Churches can become so preoccupied with programs that they incorrectly assume that everything they do glorifies God. Schools can become so preoccupied with educational concerns that they

¹⁵ Ibid., 128.

assume that academic respectability is equal to honoring God. Christian charities can become so consumed with fund raisers that they stop seeking God's will. As the media so aptly points out, some Christian leaders are so consumed with building a name for themselves that they fail to lift the name of Jesus.”¹⁶

God is not concerned about bringing glory to people; He wants His glory revealed through people. The leader and owner of Chick-fil-A insist upon bringing glory to God. He has maintained a long-standing policy that his restaurants will be closed on Sundays. Despite the fact that all the stores that surround him remain open in the countless malls that house Chick-fil-A, Mr. Cathy closes his restaurants. Mr. Cathy values the families of his employees as is evidenced by the many trips he provides for the entire family of many of his employees. In doing so, he fosters healthy families and relationships. He is a truly a leader that has chosen to bring glory to God, and he evidences it not only in his talk, but in his actions.

The Physical Cost

Sickness and disease are devastating the lives of so many Christian leaders. So many feel the zeal for ministry must exclude any focus on themselves. Preachers are being buried far too young. Teachers are becoming burnt out far too early. The grave misnomer that in order to be effective in ministry, one cannot have a “life” of their own is ludicrous.

Dr. Don Colbert states of our health and physical bodies, “Our nation may have the most highly trained surgeons, the finest hospitals, and the most sophisticated

¹⁶ Ibid., 142.

equipment, yet the average person doesn't have a clue about basic health and nutrition."¹⁷ And some of the most naïve of all are Christians. Christians are armed with knowledge yet ignorant of their own physical needs and the church is infested with it.

The mental mindset that says its alright to abuse my body, i.e. lack of rest, improper eating habits, working an average of 12 hours daily, minimal or no exercise, no vacations, and no sleep, is a sickened mind that is alluded by the phrase "serving the Lord." It is amazing the number of people churches must minister to who believe their issues to be emotional or mental but really they are physical.

A neglected body will produce a demented and stressed mind. Here's the really sad commentary, many are church leaders. Scriptures remind us that our bodies are a temple of the Lord and should be treated as such. Scriptures also tell us to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, Holy and acceptable unto the Lord for this is our reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). Paul admonishes the believers to acknowledge the presence of God in our physical bodies. A healthy body will reflect a healthy attitude. "Leaders should pay close attention to their attitudes, for these serve as barometers to the condition of their hearts."¹⁸ The condition of one's physical body plays a vital role in the display of Christian attitude. How are Christians to house the anointing of God with bodies that cannot physically contain His presence?

The administrator of the Christian academy encourages the faculty and staff to be cognizant of their physical bodies. How must Christian administrators address this in Christian leadership? At The Christian Academy, the administrative staff has breakfast

¹⁷ Dr. Don Colbert, *What You Don't Know Might Be Killing You* (Lake Mary, FL.: Siloam Publishing, 2004), 2.

¹⁸ Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 174.

and lunch together daily. These are times where the staff collaborates on the issues of the day, the staff discusses strategies for handling concerns, as well as, prays for each other, their respective families, the students, the church and our community at large. This is also the time when the staff engages in healthy personal dialogue. A healthy environment produces vibrant and energetic people, necessary for working in a Christian school. The children demand great amounts of energy from the staff, so it just makes sense to take good care of the bodies, minds and souls of those that will carry out the mission at hand. There are days when it is necessary to fast and pray together, and there are days when celebrating and feasting are the order of the day, but even then, careful consumption is priority.

The work days are full and they begin promptly at the second staff arrives on the campus. The nature of a school mandates that it is active and constantly moving. The days all start with a high level of activity that seems to continue through the day; one's body literally is worn out. At the end of the day, all are encouraged to go home. Many of the staff and faculty are young adults and have young families of their own. Although this writer's children are now teens, she is very empathetic to the needs of family life. Amazingly, many churches are not and will even counsel against hiring someone with small children, knowing the demands. This does not present God's will for people at all. Many Christian leaders need to be reminded that God ordained the family in the book of Genesis, and not the church until the book of Acts. According to God's order, ministry begins at home.

A balanced school administrator will foster balanced employees. A well balanced head of a school will learn how to say "no." Many churches across America today are

active and have opportunity for ministry involvement daily. The church that supports The Christian Academy is no different. The responsibility of leadership is to recognize imbalanced membership and to redirect them, not to contribute to their imbalance. There is a physical cost attached to healthy leadership and effective ones will demonstrate it. There must be balance in the Christian environment. Scriptures tell us that “imbalance is an abomination to God.” It will take a leader with courage to stand for the things that are for the good of the people and sometimes unfortunately, what’s good for the people may not be deemed good for the ministry.

The Personal Cost

ISM Research Report files 16 characteristics of Head Leadership. Eight of them express the personal cost necessary for effective Christian leadership. They are as follows:

- The school head is respectful of others, regardless of their position in the organization
- The school head is a charismatic person
- The school head displays great flexibility
- The school head is a supportive person
- The school head is steeped in moral purpose, moral clarity, moral conviction and integrity
- The school head is a supremely ethical person
- The school head is predictable: One can rely on the consistency of his/her responses, both “good” and “bad”

- The school head practices righteous living¹⁹

The Professional Cost

ISM Research Group files 16 characteristics of head leadership. Eight of them reflect the professional cost of the effective administrator. They are as follows:

- The school head vigorously seeks a professional development-focused faculty culture
- The school head gives public, positive reinforcement to deserving employees in all categories – especially in regard to laudable professional growth achievements – and, as well, to students at all levels
- The school head actively promotes an ongoing faculty conversation regarding high expectations and support for students
- The school head places great emphasis upon the faculty’s specific-to-each student high expectations
- The school head demonstrates an inspired and inspirational commitment to the institutional mission
- The school head sustains high levels both of self-awareness and of self-management
- The school head exhibits determined pursuit of his/her own professional growth program²⁰

¹⁹ ISM Research Group – Ideas and Perspectives *16 Characteristics of Head Leadership* (Vol. 29 No. 14), 54.

²⁰ Ibid., 54 -55.

If teachers are expected to make the commitment to career-long professional growth, the administrator of the Christian school, to be truly and lastingly credible, must make a similar commitment and ensure that the school and church community is aware of his or her professional growth program. This is no place for professional modesty; the initiatives must be made public.

CONCLUSION

Lord, from this moment forward, give Christian school administrators a burden and concern for Your children who have not yet had the privilege or the benefit of Your grace in a Christian school. Help Christian school administrators to see all children as You do. Help us to care enough to share Your love with them. Give us that burden for lost children like You and the apostle Paul, and Nehemiah had. Lord, we admit sometimes that we are afraid to step outside the walls of our own schools and churches, but give us the will to be courageous. Please give Christian educators everywhere a new boldness in you. Teach us to cross barriers as You did at the well. Lord, we thank you in advance. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

If Christian School Administrators everywhere pray a prayer like this and really mean it, our schools will never be the same – and the world we live in won't either.

The Christian school that is to be effective in our world today will count the cost. While the investment may be tremendous, the dividends are endless. Financially, personally, physically and spiritually, the Christian school administrator, faculty and staff must pay. The church must pay. The community must pay. The parents and households must pay. May God continue to call those that are willing, that He may be glorified in the education and advancement of His children.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY ABOUT CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOLS

**Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary
DMIN Thesis Project
Pastor / Teacher / Parent Survey**

Christian Schools Data Collection

Based on your experiences as visionary, founder, teacher, pastor or parent of a Christian school, you are asked to complete the following survey. Your responses to the following questions assist in the development of this Doctorate of Ministry thesis project entitled "Education and Implementation: The Kingdom Way." This data will also aid in the development of an Operations Manual for the Bible-Based Fellowship Christian Academy.

Answer the following questions by placing a check mark in front of the best response:

I would consider myself and my relationship with a Christian Day School primarily as a (check the correct response)

- Senior Pastor of Sponsoring Church
- Staff Member of Sponsoring Church
- Day School Administrator of Sponsoring Church
- Day School Teacher of Sponsoring Church
- Day School Teacher
- Parent of a Christian Day School Student

How long have you had a direct relationship with a Christian Day School?

- Less than a year
- 1 – 6 years
- 7 – 10 years
- 10 plus years
- 20 or more years

How long has your Christian Day School been in operation?

- Less than a year
- 1 – 6 years

___ 7 – 10 years

___ 10 plus years

___ 20 or more years

How would you describe the Administrative structure of your school

___ Autonomous (financially and authoritatively independent)

___ Subsidized (underwritten by the church)

Other _____

What has been the primary cause of personnel or faculty turnover rate at your school?

___ Salaries

___ Environment

___ Conflicts with parents

Other _____

Please rate your agreement with the following by checking the appropriate statement:

I am satisfied with the administration of the school

___ Strongly agree

___ Somewhat agree

___ Somewhat disagree

___ Strongly disagree

___ Don't know

The curriculum presents an integrated balance of sacred and secular

___ Strongly agree

___ Somewhat agree

___ Somewhat disagree

___ Strongly disagree

___ Don't know

Our school is well worth parental investment

___ Strongly agree

___ Somewhat agree

___ Somewhat disagree

___ Strongly disagree

___ Don't know

Our school is well worth the investment of the sponsoring church

- ___ Strongly agree
- ___ Somewhat agree
- ___ Somewhat disagree
- ___ Strongly disagree
- ___ Don't know

The integrated balance between faith and facts encourages well rounded students

- ___ Strongly agree
- ___ Somewhat agree
- ___ Somewhat disagree
- ___ Strongly disagree
- ___ Don't know

I would recommend our school to parents

- ___ Strongly agree
- ___ Somewhat agree
- ___ Somewhat disagree
- ___ Strongly disagree
- ___ Don't know

Using a Scale of 1 to 5, (1 being the most important), rank the following responses indicating the importance to each .

Why do you think churches should have Christian Schools?

- ___ To provide their congregations a Christian alternative to public schools
- ___ To provide an evangelistic tool for the church
- ___ To enhance the church's ministry portfolio
- ___ To provide children a Christian foundation for education
- ___ To create economic empowerment among the membership

What makes a Christian Day School Christian?

- ___ A school that allows prayer
- ___ A school with a Bible – based curriculum
- ___ Anointed leadership, faculty and staff committed to the ways of the Bible
- ___ A school that practices Christianity in all its ways
- ___ A school attached to a church

What should be the most important criteria for hiring an administrator?

- Academic degrees
- Christian experience
- The call of God on the life of the administrator
- Spiritual gifts and natural abilities
- The willingness to sacrifice for the sake of the school

What should be the most important criteria for hiring teachers?

- Academic degrees and subject matter relativity
- Number of years experience
- Christian walk coupled with academic preparation
- Willingness to grow
- The evidence of Christian maturity and academic aptitude

What ways do you think are most effective for the development of teachers?

- In-service training (workshops, seminars, etc.)
- Four-year degrees
- Graduate degrees in education or subject matter they teach
- Experience in the classroom with guided supervision
- Mentoring and tutorials
- One on one sessions with administrators

What do you think are the major church – school problems?

- Separation with regards to priorities
- Lack of understanding between church and school
- Lack of autonomy
- Lack of funding
- Inability of members to afford private school

School personnel:

What do you think are the major problems in the school-home relationship?

- Lack of academic challenge
- Extra-curricular activities i.e. sports, activity clubs, etc.
- Lack of communication – teacher to parent
- Tuition
- Transportation
- Hours of availability

Parents:**What do you think are the major problems in the school-home relationship?**

- Lack of academic challenge
- Extra-curricular activities i.e. sports, activity clubs, etc.
- Lack of communication – teacher to parent
- Tuition
- Transportation
- Hours of availability

Why do you think parents pay for their children to attend a Christian School?

- Because it is a private school
- Because the structure is more disciplined
- Because the classroom sizes are typically smaller
- Because it is faith based
- Because the Christian environment provides more security

What do you think most important in choosing a school?

- Security of the school
- Technology Platform
- Standardized Testing
- Discipline policy
- Tuition cost

If you are a Pastor, Administrator or Teacher, what has been the most effective means of attracting students to your school?

- Newspaper, television, and local media advertising
- School events open to the public
- Word of mouth – i.e. parent testimonies
- The presence of Christ in the school
- The leadership model of the school

Should the Christian Day school rely on the church as its feeder?

- Yes
- No

How much should a church underwrite a Christian Day School?

- 100%

- 50%
- 25%
- None - The school should be financially autonomous
- None - The parents should underwrite the school

How should Christian Day School staff salaries rank with public school salaries?

- Salaries should be commensurate with public school salaries
- Salaries should be evaluated by the success and impact of the school
- Salaries should be adjusted to compete with public school salaries
- Salaries should be determined based upon experience
- Salaries should be independent of public school evaluation