

Christian Education at Zion Christian School

Back to the Basics

As anyone who has served on an admissions committee will tell you, parents opt to send their children to Christian schools for a variety of reasons. The decision may be based upon a sense of obligation to tradition, a way to escape the academic and social troubles common to public schools, an attempt to shelter their children from the insidious forces of the culture in which we live, or a desire for excellence in the classroom or on the athletic field. Are these sufficient reasons for the commitment of countless financial resources and staff hours necessary for Christian education?

The foundation upon which Christian education is built is not new. Rather than *reinvent* Christian education, Zion Christian School is simply seeking to *revive* it. Christian education is built upon the premise that Christians of the community in which they live (parents and fellow believers alike) pool their resources to offer a quality education for their children that is focused solely upon the Word of God and a sincere desire to learn and live according to that Word. In keeping with this commitment to God's Word, we offer the following tenets upon which we stand at Zion Christian School, trusting that these words will be more than lip service, as generation after generation learns and lives in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

1) Authority of Scripture

- a) The Bible is the supreme authority for every aspect of faith and life. All spheres and domains of life, education included, must be subject to the ordinances of God, and serve to His glory.
- b) Scripture is God's inspired, infallible, inerrant, authoritative, authentic, and Holy Word.
- c) Students learn to interpret God's Word (exegesis), learn from God's Word (doctrine), have God's Word written on their hearts (memorization), learn to witness and defend God's Word (apologetics), and finally, learn to live God's Word (James 1:22).
- d) God directly created the universe in six consecutive days, with morning and evening enclosing the beginning and ending of each day, from no preexisting substance. Both naturalistic and theistic evolution must be rejected. Everything has been made by God, upheld by God, and reveals God. Therefore, facts are not neutral but are only truly understood when they are interpreted as God has created them and as He interprets them in His Word.
- e) Scripture, rather than political opinion or social sensitivities, provides for us the foundation for godly living and shapes our perspectives on matters such as abortion, gender roles, homosexuality, idolization of sports, popularity, etc.

2) Reformed Heritage

- a) Salvation is by particular and effectual sovereign grace alone, through faith alone, through the active and passive obedience of Christ alone.
- b) Students learn of church history, particularly as it relates to the doctrines reinforced in, and creeds and confessions borne out of, the Protestant Reformation. Particular emphasis is given to the five points of Calvinism.
- c) Priority is given to the singing of psalms and hymns, as well as the use of the Reformed creeds and confessions, in order that another generation might be profoundly affected by such treasures rooted in God's Word.
- d) God's sovereign covenant faithfulness in ALL spheres of life and learning is accentuated.

3) School Life, Academics, and Atmosphere

- a) Without an emphasis upon godly living and discipleship, even the best of training is in vain. Christian education must cultivate an atmosphere that reflects the priorities and appearances of God's Kingdom, rather than those of the world. This must be evidenced in language, conduct, cross-generational interaction, apparel, and physical appearance.
- b) Sanctified works are emphasized as a gift of God, to be done in thankfulness to Him for His great work of redemption on our behalf. As only God Himself will bring about the consummation of His Kingdom, we must not consider the works of our hands as a means of redeeming the culture of this age. Instead, we live lives of faithful service, seeking to extend God's Kingdom by evangelizing sinners, even as we await Christ's return, not before or after a millennial reign, but as a thief in the night according to His sovereign will.
- c) Emphasis is placed on finding and retaining teachers and staff who are Christ-like in both faith and practice, are exceptionally gifted in their field of study and their ability to disciple children, and declare full agreement with the school's philosophy of education.
- d) While we place strong emphasis on our Reformed heritage, it is our purpose not only to enlighten students of this perspective, but also to challenge our students to defend and confess what they believe. Thus, liberal and modern thought is also presented in the classroom and critiqued by teachers and students in light of God's Word.
- e) Students are presented with the gospel of Jesus Christ each and every day as they see the fruits of God's faithfulness in the lives (sinners though they be) of teachers, staff, and coaches.
- f) Students are challenged to grow in their knowledge of self and the all-sufficiency of Christ as Lord and as Savior, bringing a better understanding of how to serve Him and their neighbor.