



CARE CONVERSATIONS

FORWARD
FROM
DR TINA LAMONT // Director TEC



Dear Friend,

We are pleased to continue to bring you our Care Conversations. In the first series, Dr Stephen Fyson brought us some reflections on *Mere Christian Education*, based on CS Lewis' *Mere Christianity*. In this next set, Stephen brings us some encouragement from the Gospel according to Matthew – often called the *Teachers' Gospel*.

We hope that this service from The Excellence Centre continues to support you in this wonderful ministry of Christian Education. Please remember to contact us with any ideas about how we may be able to assist you more.

Dr Tina Lamont

Director TEC

The Excellence Centre

Series 2:

THE TEACHERS' GOSPEL...

REFLECTION BY
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Number 6:

SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT IN OUR TEACHING

Deep thinking? Critical thinking? Synthesis and evaluation? Higher order thinking? Which of these terms describes best that moment when we can see that someone's thinking is changing in a significant way, for the better?

As we know, there is much educational literature written about such things. If we look at the Gospels, we can see a pattern in the teaching of Jesus that can help our understanding of this dynamic. For example, in the account of Jesus forgiving and healing the paralytic who was let down through the roof by his friends, we read this little passage: *At this, some of the teachers of the law said the themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!". Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said...* (Matthew 9:3-4)

Jesus then taught them and also demonstrated that He had authority to forgive sins and to heal people. Why did He do this? Jesus knew in His spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts (Mark 2:8). He discerned the issue of the moment, and then taught to it.

We can see this pattern in Matthew (e.g. the account of the Canaanite woman in chapter 15), in Mark (e.g. as above), in Luke (e.g. see chapter 7 and the woman who came to the Pharisees house), and in John (e.g. chapter 4 and the woman at the well). He would discern a spiritual difficulty, even if it was unspoken, and then teach to it.

This is a stirring reminder that our deep teaching is a spiritual enterprise, because we are looking to engage the hearts and minds of our young people. As Emeritus Professor Brian Hill noted, we *test for competency but teach for commitment*.

Let's keep reminding our people that we are involved in this profound and spiritual relationship with our students – and then routinely ask His Holy Spirit to be with us to guide us each and every day.

Grace and peace,

Stephen J Tyson PhD
Principal Consultant
The Excellence Centre



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Dr Tina Lamont, Director, TEC

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