

Welcome to Teachers Talking e-newsletter

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TEACHERS TALKING

FORWARD  
FROM  
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Hello Friend,

During Terms 2, 3 Teachers Talking will focus on teaching for discipleship. As teachers, we are aware that discipleship as 'long obedience in the same direction' is against the flow of modern culture and infinitely harder for our young people, but as Os Guinness says "Discipleship for the advanced modern world is a priority for our time." How do we provide an education where students are raised up to be responsive disciples of Jesus?

A Gospel-shaped education is like a diamond. Diamonds get their brilliance from three things: **Reflection**, **Refraction** and **Dispersion**.

**Reflection** is that light that bounces off immediately giving the diamond an instantaneous shine. Only a portion of the light hitting a diamond is reflected; the rest travels through it. As the light moves through it, it is scattered and

fractured, creating the 'sparkling diamond'. This is **refraction**. As the light is angled around the inside of the diamond from before passing back towards the top and out through the surface. This rainbow effect, **dispersion**, adds to the shine.

As we know Christ more deeply and are led by His Spirit, His Word enables our imaginations to be liberated to plan and practise education in ways which are distinctive and contrasted to schools grounded in an alternate vision of the good life. Our Schools are to be bearers of the Light.

We trust these Term 2 talks will encourage you as teachers to embrace your significant part in the journey of inspiring students to embrace the path of discipleship.

Matthew 28:19, 20 *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you to the end of the Age."*

Grace and Peace,

The Team





Number 2

## THE HEART OF DISCIPLESHIP

One of the very special blessings of being a teacher is when a student who has left school returns to express their gratitude for the teacher's input into their lives and learning. At times like this, the teacher appreciates more their impact on the lives of those they taught. Without necessarily being aware of it, there are many elements of discipling in the relationships between teachers and students in the school community.

In the Ancient Near East, a disciple was a general term for a follower who committed themselves whole-heartedly to a teacher. This often took the form of an apprentice relationship where a person imbibed the dispositions, beliefs, values and skills from a master teacher and their community. The disciples of Jesus were called by Him to be with Him and follow Him. They became part of his discipling community of diverse individuals and they learnt together. The presence of Jesus and the disciples' relationship to Him and one another was the key to the teaching and learning that shaped the course of their lives over that time.

Many of Jesus' activities and actions demonstrated his teachings. He often drew their attention to qualities in those they encountered as illustrations of the faith and self-sacrifice to which He was calling them. The disciples learnt through shared action, reflection and being given the opportunity to serve and fail and to be forgiven and restored. The goal of the learning was expressed by Jesus in Luke 6:40.

*"A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher."*

The Lord Jesus revealed to His disciples that the heart of discipleship was love. Jesus' primary motivation for his life and mission was His love for the Father. "I love the Father and I do exactly what my Father has commanded me." (John 14:31)

How we respond to God's amazing grace in Christ will define our discipleship and the way we live our lives before our students.

Let us consider:

- What are the distinctive features of a Christian school/class that make it a discipling community?
- How can we nurture a community where grace and holiness, not niceness, abounds?
- What is your hope for the students you teach?

Responsive discipleship in the educational setting of the school is characterised by unwrapping God's gifts, sharing each other's burdens and working for shalom (Stronks & Blomberg). May our students experience these realities in your class.

Grace and Peace

The Team

The Excellence Centre



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