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TEACHERS TALKING

FORWARD
FROM
DR TINA LAMONT // Director TEC



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 4

TO KNOW BY HEART

Jesus' command to follow Him is a command to align our longings and loves with His, to see life through God's eyes, to love what He loves and to do what He wants. The crucial question for us as teachers becomes, how do we orient our students' lives to their Creator and direct their loves toward the 'long and same direction' of discipleship in the midst of a culture that promotes immediate gratification?

Jesus' disciples were involved in a shared learning journey where telling the story of God's Kingdom and enacting it was at the heart of the disciples' formation. As God made us for community, to truly know something is to have a living relationship with it. Jesus taught us that love is the context for teaching, learning and knowing which is counter-cultural to the secular conception of knowing being about mastery and control. Love is our way of knowing – our students are to love in order to know. Jesus showed us that learning is primarily a communal act where teachers live in a loving school community seeking to grapple with and understand the reality and meaning of what God has created.

Educational strategies that touch and change people are those that touch the whole person (head, heart and hands). Teachers are to create a space where students can participate in the truth.

“Christian Teachers are to engage our students by knowing their heart and the beauty and truth within and across our subjects. Teaching and learning is the art of connecting through our disciplines, heart to heart.” (S Fyson)

In Science, for example, students can learn together that scientifically exploring the world is a matter of love, a deepening of their love for God the designer of such a splendid creation, themselves, other people and the universe. This leads to the praise of the Creator and a commitment to stewardly service. *“Knowing requires listening to the eloquence of this creation as it sings its praise or groans its painful cries to the Creator”* (Walsh) The knowledge and skills gained lead to the ability to nurture shalom wherever they are able to do

so.

How can our class be a learning community where truth is practised?

- Do learners have opportunities to reflect, critique and share observations and interpretations with passion and discipline?
- As an unfolder of God's truth, how can you structure the instruction and learning which encourages students to share perspectives and construct meaning under the authority of the Biblical text?
- Do the students have service learning opportunities that flow directly from their class learning and are they able to reflect on the meaning of their service and evaluate it?

Schools that nurture discipleship develop curriculum that assists students to be transformed in a way that their loves and longings are shaped by kingdom priorities for the purpose of shalom.

"...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10)

Grace and Peace

The Team

The Excellence Centre



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