

Welcome to Teachers Talking e-newsletter

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TEACHERS TALKING

FORWARD
FROM
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Hello Friend,

Last term, the Teachers Talking offerings entitled “Teaching for Discipleship” focussed on the role of the teacher to inspire and equip students to embrace the path of discipleship.

This term, the focus will be on “Deeper learning for Discipleship”. The Lord Jesus called His disciples to be with Him and through their learning experiences, they participated in the truth of what it meant to be citizens of the Kingdom of God. The Lord wove together a web of relationships, instruction, encounters and activities to make the learning meaningful and life-changing for the disciples. So the question arises for us as teachers: How do we approach our pedagogical practice, which includes every aspect of the process of teaching and learning, so that it demonstrates a link between education and discipleship? Deeper learning is to invite our students to play their unique role

in God's grand story and use their knowledge and skills to be wise culture-makers who serve and bless others.

These talks will help us to be mindful of our teaching and learning design. Teaching is a complex task about which we constantly make choices such as

- how our class space is used,
- the nature of the activities (individual/collaborative),
- resources to be used,
- are student voices to be heard?
- how the teacher will instruct the class.

These practices make up the patterns that our students will live and learn in. The goal of learning is that students will love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength and love their neighbours as themselves. How then does love for God and others shape our pedagogical practice?

“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done.” (John 13:14,15)

Grace and Peace,

The Team



Series 7:



DEEPER LEARNING FOR DISCIPLESHIP



Recently, when I was assisting my nine year old grandson with his Maths homework and he wanted to do his trumpet practice, he asked me that age-old question – ‘Why do we have to do homework anyway?’

This is part of the wider question related to the design of teaching and learning.

Does it matter anyway about:

- the way homework is structured,
- the nature of our assessment practice,
- the design of lessons,
- how we use technology and structure of the learning space
- the nature of the student interactions?

Does faith inform our pedagogy or is teaching just about techniques and methods that work?

Christian teachers have focussed on being a role model and presenting a Biblical worldview in content (both of which are vital) but often not considered how faith informs the design of teaching and learning for their classes.

Pedagogy, which derives from the Greek and translates to leading a child, is the route teachers lead their students on to journey through the curriculum. In Ancient Rome, the paedagogium was a school where the sons of Roman citizens learnt the Greek language.

Here the image of the paedagogium hints that pedagogy is a shared dwelling place. David Watson in his book “On Christian Teaching” states “When we teach, when we design learning, we offer a temporary home in which students will live for a while, and we shape the patterns of life together within which they will grow..... The teaching process itself carries in its patterns a faith-based vision of how we should live and learn together ... These pedagogical choices become part of student formation.”

Jesus sought to grow His disciples' faith by a process of teaching, shared practice and reflection. In the context of this community, the teaching and learning process itself enabled Jesus to embody and demonstrate the realities of the Kingdom of God and actively engage the disciples in this reality. Consider a class that you are teaching this term:

- What are your goals for the students – how do you want them to grow?
- If we consider pedagogy as a home, what is it like for your students to live in the class created by your own pedagogy?
- What message, like a typical homework activity, (such as my grandson's Math's homework) is communicated to students about what matters in learning?

May the Lord bless you on the journey of how we do it!

“Our identity as human beings is a gracious gift of our Creator & Redeemer, who has provided for us a creational home and a normative, redemptive story in which to dwell and be nurtured.” (Middleton & Walsh)

Grace and Peace

The Team

The Excellence Centre



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