

Philosophy of Education

Roxboro Christian Academy (October 2023)

Theology as the Foundation

God exists eternally as ultimate reality. He is the eternal source of all wisdom and knowledge, himself being omniscient of all things past, present, and future. As the Creator of all things, he is the only rightful authority in establishing the purposes, design, and intention over all that he has created.

He is the source of truth, and his Word stands as the only true measure of what is true.

God is wholly good and the source of all that is good. He is the source of beauty and the ultimate determiner of what is beautiful.

God exists in eternal relationship within the Triune Godhead and has graciously revealed himself to his creation as a God who communicates. He desires for his creation to know him, to be known by him, and to make him known.

In summary, a proper understanding of God according to his Word will shape how teachers and students understand and pursue love of truth, goodness, and beauty.

The Nature of Education

The right knowledge of the reality of God is the basis for the right knowledge of the reality of all things.

In creating humanity in his image, God has embedded within us the capacity to know and relate to him.

Humans are created with the capacity to learn and grow.

The aim of Christian education is for students to be aligned with the truth of God as they abide in the presence of God so that they may live a life pleasing to God. Good and right education results in the cultivation of spiritual wisdom towards the end of knowing God, and is only possible firstly through the miracle of new birth.

In summary, “the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.” Apart from faith and knowledge of God, we cannot properly understand the created world He has made which includes every subject under study.

The Purpose of Education

Being that a school has no authority over its students outside that which is granted by parents as an extension of the parents' authority, the purpose of education is best understood by understanding the charge God places to upon all Christian parents. Parents are charged to partner with the Lord in the formation of their children, which includes: training in righteousness; learning to love the Lord our God with all one's heart, soul, mind, & strength; the cultivation of wisdom; and equipping for lifelong discipleship & Kingdom service.

In summary, God has commanded all believing parents to pass down the Christian faith and teach their children to obey all that the Lord has commanded, therefore educators should comprehend their calling as a partnership with parents towards this end. Christian education is a disciple-making endeavor with a holistic approach—teaching the mind, shaping the heart, and preparing the body for Christian service.

The Nature of the Teacher & the Student

The truth that every person is created in the image of God from conception provides the basis for the dignity and value of every human life. This truth ought to shape every interaction that one image bearer has with another.

God's economy of life includes different roles that carry with them varying levels of authority and areas of stewardship, all to his glory. The classroom involves two such distinct roles that should be intentionally shaped by the reality of both the *imago dei* and the nature of each role.

The teacher is to be the representative of God and the steward of his truth in the classroom. The teacher is also to be the steward of the young lives that make up the class.

The primary goal of the teacher is to see students grow in their knowledge and love for God by revealing him through each and every subject. The teacher is to manage the classroom in a way that honors the Lord and enhances glimpses of his goodness as the task of learning takes place.

The goal of the teacher is to come beside parents (as the primary faith influencers of their own children) and the church (as the primary community of discipleship for families) in helping students understand their identity and purpose in light of God and his will. The primary objective of the teacher is to lead students to know and love God as supreme, and to serve him in whatever vocations God has equipped and called them to fulfill.

The student is to embrace the task of learning, both as an individual and as part of a community of students. The student affirms the Image of God in the teacher by joyfully submitting to his or her authority in the Lord.

Each student affirms the Image of God in every other student by treating them with dignity, kindness, and respect.

The student should recognize that the task of learning falls under the exhortation of Scripture to do all to the glory of God. Learning is a context for worship, as students pursue a desire to grow in the knowledge of God and learn how to glorify him with their lives by the knowledge they attain.

In summary, teachers and students should respect the image of God upon one another and respond accordingly. Teachers are to partner with parents and churches in shaping the student to love God and love his neighbor. Students should submit to the learning process respectfully and joyfully as an act of worship of Christ who is Lord of all.

The Nature of Instruction

Instruction that honors the Lord is rooted in both right theology and right anthropology.

This manner of instruction looks to God alone as omniscient and the fountain of all knowledge and understanding. It seeks to highlight above all else the glory and goodness of God in all things and draws every learner to respond to him in worship and awe of the God who is the Creator of all.

Instruction grounded in right anthropology recognizes the image of God in all people. It recognizes that every person is a learner and God is the ultimate subject. It affirms that young learners are not robots but individual learners who are all precious and unique creations that each reflect God's image. Differentiation in instruction, therefore, reflects this truth of the beauty and diversity of God's design.

This type of instruction views young learners holistically, aiming at not just the mind, but the heart and the body as well, viewing every human as an embodied soul. The goal of instruction is not just the transfer of information, rather transformation, specifically into the image of Christ through the work of the Spirit. Good instruction is not just taught but caught, leading students to follow Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life through the teacher's example.

In summary, correct theology and correct anthropology should result in holistic instruction toward the end that students love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength and love their neighbors as themselves.

The Nature of Worldview

Christians are to understand reality through the lens of God's Word—in other words, we are to understand reality as it really is, and this is only possible by the renewal of our minds by the Word of God, who is the author of life.

Christians immersed in God's Word can rightly answer questions of origin and purpose, the basic problem with our world, and the solution to remedy it.

Furthermore, Christians who have been trained by a Biblical worldview know how to apply it to every area of life. A proper Christian education, therefore, teaches all subjects in the light of God's Word.

A biblical worldview rightly comprehends God as Creator of all things and Christ as Lord and Redeemer of all things, and therefore cannot recognize anything as basically "secular." All belongs to God and cannot be rightly understood apart from him; therefore, nothing should be.

In summary, Christian education teaches everything in relation to God the Creator and Christ our Lord.