

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Introduction

Christian education as an educational process in which God works through His committed teachers, Biblical methods and truthful curriculum materials to build disciples with the Biblical worldview, character, and skills necessary to fulfill God's calling and live to His glory.

People recognize that Christian schools have a distinctive, which not only separate them from secular schools, but also distinguish them from each other, a higher standard for preparing our youth for Life (Rocky Bayou, 2007).

Education

A. Meaning of Education

1. Webster defines education as the process of educating or teaching.
2. To educate is further defined as "to develop the knowledge, skill or character."
3. In ancient Greece, Socrates argued that education was about drawing out what was already within the student.
4. The word education comes from the Latin word, *educare* which means "to lead out." / or a process of bring forth (caring) young ones out.
5. The word education comes from the French word, *educere* which means a process of "bringing out" or removing one from a state of ignorance to knowledge
6. It is any experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character / or physical ability of an individual.
7. It is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, and values from one generation to another.
8. Education is a process of change in knowledge, skill and attitude which results into change of behavior.
9. The process of change in the school system
10. Education is a "deliberate attempt to acquire and to transmit the accumulated, worthwhile skills, attitudes, knowledge, and understanding from one human generation to next", (Mbiti, 1981:1)
11. According to Gregorio (1976: 1-3), education is:
 - The aggregate of all processes by which a person develops ability, attitudes, and other forms of behavior of practical values in the society.
 - Both a process of individual growth and a means of social development, therefore, education is the sum of the qualities acquired through instruction and social training, as a continuous process.

** The following are quotations from different scholars concerning Education:

- a. "The central task of education is to implant a will and facility for learning; it should produce not learned but learning people. The truly human society is a learning society, where grandparents, parents, and children are students together."

Eric Hoffer

- b. "No one has yet realized the wealth of sympathy, the kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure."
- Emma Goldman
- c. "The only purpose of education is to teach a student how to live his life-by developing his mind and equipping him to deal with reality. The training he needs is theoretical / conceptual. He has to be taught to think, to understand, to integrate, to prove. He has to be taught the essentials of the knowledge discovered in the past-and he has to be equipped to acquire further knowledge by this own effort."
Ayn Rand
- d. "The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think—rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men." Bill Beattie
- e. "The one real object of education is to leave a man in the condition of continually asking questions."
Bishop Creighton
- f. "The central job of schools is to maximize the capacity of each student." Carol Ann Tomlinson

B. Purposes and Functions of Education

I. Purposes / aims of Education

1. A purpose is the fundamental goal of the process—an end to be achieved.
2. A purpose is an expressed goal, and more effort is put into attaining it.
3. The purpose of education is to develop the knowledge, skill or character of students.
4. Personal development
5. Social training, and
6. Vocational preparation

II. Functions of Education

1. Functions are other outcomes that may occur as a natural result of the Process - by products or consequences of schooling.
2. Functions are assumed to occur without directed effort.
3. The transfer of knowledge from school to the real world
4. One of the main functions of education is preparation of an individual to be useful member of the society (Sociology of Education, 1997).

In the highest sense, the work of education and the work of redemption are one, for in education as in redemption, other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ (E. G. White, 1952: 30)

Some teachers believe that the transmission of knowledge is the primary purpose of education, while others also believe that the transfer of knowledge from school to the real world is something that happens naturally as a consequence of possessing that knowledge (a function of education). For this reason, it is valuable to figure out which outcomes you consider a fundamental purpose of education.

Questions

1. How is the capacity / ability to think creatively assessed in today's school?
2. To what extent is the typical student recognized and given respect?

his place, meaning, purpose and responsibilities in the plan of God. Christian education can help determine God's call on his life, and equip him with skills and knowledge by which he can glorify God effectively.

As the student better understands God's Word and how to apply it to God's world he will be able to take dominion in his calling under Jesus Christ.

Sources of Knowledge

Keller (1971:17,18) describes knowledge to be “the principle stock in trade of educators” and thus the most important aspect in the study of philosophy. Keller argues that, even when the teacher is concerned with the learner's physical health and emotional well-being, the teacher's base judgment on reliable knowledge.” Knight (1980: 18-21) identified the following five sources of knowledge:

1. The senses: People obtain knowledge of the world around them by the senses of seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting. This empirical knowledge is built in the realm of human experience. It is composed of ideas formed in unison with the observed data.
2. Revelation: People claim to have obtained knowledge communicated to them by a supernatural being, such as God, angels, spirits and the like. Such knowledge is believed to be unique, absolute and uncontaminated. People who never saw the being itself have to believe the message by faith without proof or empirical data.
3. Authority: Knowledge is held to be true because it comes from experts. A person, a book or an organization which is powerful, announces certain knowledge to be true and holds it as a tradition.
4. Reason: This is man's power of thought which is collected, synthesized, and organized by the mind into a meaningful system to be held as truth. It is also known as rationalism, logic or reasoning.
5. Intuition: This is the innate knowledge. The knowledge that is born within a person himself and is capable of making man to understand the impossible or unknown without being told or taught about it. It is a leap over the limitations of human experience. It is different from instinct in that it is a grasp of truth which is not necessarily obvious.

Types of World Ideological Philosophies

Besides any Church, there are other people, nations and organizations who have developed various philosophical ideologies. Here below are ten of the world famous philosophical ideologies:

1. Idealism – the thought that idea or mind is real while matter is a by-product of mind (ideas).
2. Realism – matter is independent of mind. Matter exists whether it is being thought of or not.
3. Pragmatism – something is useful if it works. Emphasis is on empirical science and reaching out beyond reality.
4. Existentialism – what is the meaning of existence? “I am because I live”. “Man is nothing but what he makes himself”.
5. Naturalism – nature alone is real, all reality is physical or material. There is not reality

of immaterial spirit or mind.

6. Progressivism – reality is composed of the perceived needs and immediate interest of the society.
7. Perennialism – truth is that which is enduring, everlasting and has continuum – the conservative ideas.
8. Social Reconstructionism – reality is inherent in the social, political and economic climate of the society.
9. Essentialism – certain things are more essential (important) and more crucial than others.
10. Marxism – economic relations are basic and primary and as such determine all other relations of production to their forces of production. Work out ideas, and organize themselves in institutions to enable them to do things.

The influence of Greek Philosophers in the Christian World View

Socrates and Plato were Greek Philosophers whose world view greatly influenced Christian philosophical thinking. One of the notable ideologies influenced by those two people is the idea and doctrine of the immortality of soul.

Most of the Western Christian priests, including St. Augustine of Hippo copied this idea and began looking for Biblical verses to support it. The Bible does not teach that after a person dies, his soul lives forever. The Bible uses the word soul and man as synonyms. The Bible talks to a living Soul and a dead soul (a living man and a dead man).

Socrates, in his teaching, taught that education improves the human soul. After the death of Socrates, Plato explained that Socrates never died, but that his soul was liberated from the body which imprisoned it, and will live forever as a free moral agent to continue teaching the ideas of which imprisoned it and will live forever as a free moral agent to continue teaching the ideas of justice, truth and beauty which he had advocated while alive.

After death, Plato thought that the Soul of Socrates will continue teaching ideas and ideals through the process of birth and re-birth in different forms and a process known as transmigration. Plato did this to defend his teacher and he was showing that even though the Athenians executed Socrates, he would definitely live forever because as a teacher his ideas would be referred to as long as human beings live on this earth.

Socrates and Plato were not Christian themselves. They lived about 500 years before Jesus, the founder of the Christian faith was born on this planet of earth. They were not members of the Jewish nation. They were non-Jews and uncircumcised. The Greeks ruled the Jews nation (Palestine) after the Persians. This was during the inter-testament period of the Bible just before the Romans took over the Jewish land.

A Greek general, by the name Antiochus Epiphanies (defied the God of the Jews by sacrificing a pig on the Jewish altar in Jerusalem). By the time Jesus was born in about 5 / 4 BC the Jews were ruled by the Romans who had overthrown the Greek dominion. Latin, a language of the Romans was the language of Law used in courts. Greek was the language of intellectuals and

Education

The Foundation for Adventist Education fosters scholarly activities that are based on the Biblical worldview and advance the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It promotes the foundational role of the Bible in the integration of faith and learning through conferences and seminars as well as through research and publication projects.

It seeks to engage educators, scholars and graduate students with the purpose of strengthening the Adventist mind, enhancing Adventist education and influencing contemporary thought.

A. Philosophy of Adventist Education

The Adventist interests in propagating education was founded upon the philosophy that students at all levels of schooling possess individuality and should be educated to use their God-given capacities to become individuals of principle, qualified for any position of life.

Education is to begin in the home where the basic values of redemptive discipline and mental and physical health are well balanced with the importance of work.

Adventists have embraced the philosophy that education should be redemptive in nature, conforming to the image of God, our Creator.

Mental, physical, social and spiritual development, intellectual growth and service to humanity form a core of values that are essential aspects of the Adventist education philosophy. The Adventist view of education is based on both the Bible and the spirit of prophecy.

a. The Biblical View of Teaching

1. Deuteronomy 6: 6-7 – Teaching is a divine instruction
2. Acts 1:8 Jesus promised to give power to His followers when they would receive the Holy Spirit, then they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and to the utmost end of the world.
3. Ephesians 4:7, 8, 11-13- when the Holy Spirit came, He gave gifts; He gave according to the level of understanding:
 - a. apostle; - Pastor
 - b. Prophets - Priest
 - c. Evangelist - prophet
 - d. Pastors and - Profession
 - e. Teacher - Parent

b. Spiritual gifts are given for the reason of:-

1. Equipping the saints for the work of the ministry
2. Edifying the body of Christ
3. Unity of the faith
4. Unity of the knowledge of the son of God
5. To perfect man

A teacher is one of the parts of the body of Christ given by the same spirit like being an apostle, prophet, miracle performers, healing of disease, helping others, administration and speaking various tongues or languages to communicate the Word of God (1 Cor. 12: 28, 29; 4—8).

B. The meaning of Philosophy, education and philosophy of education According to the Bible and the spirit of Prophecy

1. Philosophy – The knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ, Who sent (Rev. 14: 6,7 John 17:3, Proverbs 9: 10)

2. Education

- a. Education is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental and spiritual powers (Ed. 18).

- b. In the highest sense, the work of education and the work of redemption are one (Ed.30).

- c. Philosophy of Education – is the restoration of the lost image of God in man through the development of the physical, mental and spiritual powers, (Ed., 15, 16, 13).

3. Adventist Philosophical Thought in terms of philosophical content:

- a. Metaphysics- the study of question concerning the nature of reality
- b. Epistemology—the study of the nature of truth and knowledge
- c. Axiology—the study of the questions of values

1. Metaphysics

- a) God is the Ultimate Reality. He is the first and the last (Isaiah 42: 6,8,11; Rev 21:6 and Rev. 22:13)
- b) God is the Creator of all (Nehemiah 9:6)
- c) God is the reality beyond what we see, hear, taught, feel, smell and taste (Ed., 99,100).

2. Epistemology

- a. True knowledge of God – Ed, 14; Hosea 4:6
- b. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 1:7, 9: 10, Revel 14:6,7)
- c. True knowledge is to know Jesus Christ and the one who sent Him (John 17:3)
- d. God is the source of true knowledge (Ed., 16; 17; CT, 18)
- e. Nature reveals God (Ed., 21; CT. 185)
- f. The bible reveals God (Ed., 123; CT. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16)
- g. Holy Spirit (John 16: 13-15, 7-12. Ed. 120)
- h. Conscience (Rom. 2: 14-16, Rom. 1:18-26)

3. Axiology -The value of Adventist Education centers around the fact that trains for:

- a. Service – It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and in the world to come (Ed., 13)
- b. Redemption- The work of education and the work of redemption are one (Ed. 30.
- c. Restoration of the lost image of God in man – True education restored the lost image of God in man (Ed., 15)
- d. Godliness and Godlikeness -Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children (– Ed., 18).
- e. Reaching out to the goals of Education – harmonious development of the physical mental and spiritual powers of man (ED., 18,19)
- f. Directing people's mind to God's revelation (Ed., 16)
- g. Character development – To strengthen the character (Ed., 18).
- h. To meet the greatest want of the world (Ed., 57)

“ The greatest want of the world is the want of men-men who will not be