

A PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Perth Bible Christian Academy

Perth Bible Christian Academy accepts the Bible as the Word of God and, as such, it is our final authority. We believe that it is impossible to adequately educate except in the light of and in harmony with this authority. At PBCA the absolutes of the Bible are accepted as foundational and all other knowledge is viewed with this understanding.

Accepting the Bible as the final authority enables education to be accomplished within the framework of definite guidelines and disciplines. Right and wrong can clearly be defined, and definite direction can be given. The principles of the Bible provide a foundation of security that produces certain purpose and reason for existence. Education that is founded upon the absolutes of the Bible makes it possible for the student to know where he came from, why he's here, and where he's going.

The Bible asks the question "What is man?" (Psalms 8:4), and for the believer, the Bible's answer must be accepted before education can even begin. It is essential to know the true nature of man if a proper education is to be provided.

The Bible clearly and emphatically shows that man is the result of the immediate, creative, and formative acts of God. Man was created in the image of God, possessing intellectual faculties and a holy nature. By an act of disobedience man fell from his state of innocence, thus bringing upon himself and his posterity a sinful nature, sorrow, pain, and death. Man, by nature, is not essentially good and does not have an upward spiritual or moral spiral. Man alone, apart from God, is not capable of understanding life nor realizing its full potential.

True education must have as its primary goal the bringing of the student into a right relationship with God. Everything else is secondary to and dependent upon this. Through Jesus Christ, God has made provision for this right relationship.

In the Bible-believing Christian philosophy of education, the student is taught first to deny himself and to totally depend upon God, rather than simply self-confidence, self-reliance, and self-assurance. Proper education brings an understanding of the pupil's constant need for God in every aspect of his life. This does not mean that the student is not taught confidence, but that his confidence comes from a God who never fails. Confidence, reliance and assurance based on the self will always ultimately result in disappointment, disillusionment and failure. Christian Education teaches the long-term big-picture truth that God is the only one (including even our selves) who will "never leave nor forsake us" (that is fail or let down – Hebrews 13:5). True personal confidence, reliance and assurance that endures the afflictions of life is that which is based not on ourselves, but rather borne out of our personal relationship with Christ and the promise of His provision in our lives! "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

Just as the Bible is accepted as the final authority, Jesus Christ is the ultimate example. The Bible teaches us that in His humanity Jesus increased in three ways: in wisdom, in stature, and favor with God and man (Luke 2:52). Complete education benefits the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual aspect of man. This is the total person, body, soul and spirit (I Thess. 5:23).

For those who seriously accept the Bible as absolute truth, an educational program should be designed to meet the needs of the total person. This involves instruction that benefits not only the intellectual but also the moral and spiritual aspects of a person. These three are inter-related and inseparable, and it is impossible to neglect one without injury to the whole person. To ignore or avoid

spiritual truth while presenting other truth will result in, at least, a seeming minimization of spiritual truth. *To teach math, science, or social relations apart from God's truth is to glorify the temporal at the expense of the eternal.* In reality, God's truth is not merely minimized but denigrated and attacked. A natural blending of spiritual truth with all other aspects of education will establish the basis for a complete education. To provide intellectual advancement without the spiritual and moral strength to handle it proves to be disastrous.

Thus, *in Christian education, every subject is taught in the light of God's Word. The Bible is integrated into and through every lesson. The student learns to depend fully upon God in every aspect of life.* God has commanded parents to teach their children concerning Him (Psalms 78:4,8); they will want to provide the very best education that will teach the whole child academically, spiritually, and physically, and that will not allow an ungodly system to tear down and steal away the precious teaching of God's Word.

At Perth Bible Christian Academy, we seek to extend Perth Bible Church's purpose and mission through developing children who love God absolutely and love others sacrificially. We believe that the true mark of a Christian is that of going beyond just belief to living and thriving as fully devoted disciples committed to lifelong learning, living (application), and growth under the Kingdom rule of Jesus Christ! We are called to live as representatives and ambassadors of Jesus Christ in every area of our lives.

It is to this standard that we purpose to disciple our students while teaching and preparing them academically. Even more, this is the standard that we expect the staff and teachers to represent, model and encourage. *Christian Education thus entails much more than simply transmitting "Christian facts."* It is essential to our philosophy of Christian Education that every member of the faculty and staff is a born-again, Bible-believing Christian committed to living for Christ in every area of their lives in and out of the Academy setting. As such, all faculty and staff should not only be capable of teaching academic and Biblical knowledge, but also of passionately and consistently modeling it in their own lives, positively challenging the conduct and character of the students, and always looking for opportunities to lead children to a saving and strong relationship with Christ.

Ultimately, it is recognized that *PBCA is but one component in the process of discipling God's children.* As an Academy, we work in support of and in conjunction with the parents and other churches. We strive not just to grow good family, church, or school members, but maturing servants of Christ - glorifying Him in all settings and activities. Discipleship must extend beyond the walls of the sanctuary, classrooms, and structured Bible studies and infiltrate every area of our lives (Dt. 6:6-7; Mk. 3:14; Acts 4:14)! We must not only develop admirable patterns of behavior, but also admirable character qualities. We can't just *push* students to do better, but through our relationship with Jesus and growing Christ-like character they should be *drawn* to be better. Leading and encouraging ourselves and others to change who we are requires a greater process than that needed to simply change what we do or what we know. We must walk with Jesus, enabled by the Spirit, and before the Father with every step we take.