

“BASIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS”

Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

Christian schools have been a part of the fabric of American society since the Pilgrims and Puritans waded ashore in 1620 and 1630. Yet there are Americans, even Christian Americans, who are woefully uninformed about Christian schools:

Q: How can you mix Christian faith with an academic curriculum? How do you integrate the two?

A: Biblical integration or combining faith and learning is as old as the Bible itself “...*bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...*” (II Corinthians 10:5). The Apostle Paul said, “*In whom (Christ) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*” (Colossians 2:3). One Christian school educator aptly described Biblical integration as “Bringing the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the truths of Scripture to bear on the formation of young minds seeking to know the world.” He said his school “offers an environment where change can happen in the personal lives of young people. Here, a vision of God’s grace in Christ may be glimpsed, depths of character explored, love and integrity moved from principle into action and quality in one’s life. We provide the opportunity for real change by communicating the essentials of Christian character.”

Biblical integration is spiritual in nature. It can only be done by educators who are true believers in Christ Jesus.

Q: How can Christian school students adjust to the “real world” if they do not attend school that teaches a non-Christian point of view?

A: It may surprise some people but there is no Biblical support for training Christian children in a non-Biblical environment. Decades ago Yale University’s President, Timothy Dwight, said, “Education ought everywhere to be religious education” “parents are bound to employ no instructors who will not educate their children religiously. To commit our children to the care of irreligious persons is to commit lambs to the superintendence of wolves.”

Christian psychologist Dr. Clyde Narramore said, “A tree that is planted in poor soil doesn’t have the advantages that one planted in good earth has. Contrary to some beliefs, we do not grow through resistance. Children do not develop because they resist food. Their growth comes as a result of good food and care.”

The Bible describes life on this earth as warfare. Warriors are never trained in enemy territory. School is a training ground. A primary purpose of a Christian school is to prepare students to be nonconformists to the world. The Bible says, “*And be not conformed to this world...*” (Romans 12:2a) but at the same time be prepared to live victoriously in the world. Note the words of the New Testament’s Dr. Luke who wrote, “...*When a student is fully trained he will be like his teacher.*” (Luke 6:40). Simply put, if you want your children to live as Christians, they must be taught by Christians.

Q: Generally speaking, how does Christian school education compare academically with non-Christian schools?

A: Year after year standardized achievement test scores affirm that students taught by Christian school educators achieve well above the national norm. In fact, in twenty-seven years of testing with the Stanford Achievement test/Iowa Test of Basic Skills, our students have never achieved less than one full year ahead of the national norm. It is, indeed, a commendable record.

Do Christian schools offer a wide range of student activities that broaden their educational experience?

A: Depending on the financial strength of the school, most Christian schools offer a wide range of student activities such as fine arts festivals, speech meets, academic meets, spelling bees, student leadership conferences, cheerleading camps and all kinds of sporting activities. This past year 56,807 students participated in student activities sponsored by the Association of Christian Schools International. This does not include, of course, the wide range of student activities offered by individual schools.

Q: Is the enrollment in Christian school open to students of all races?

A: Each school that joins the Association of Christian Schools International must affirm annually on its school application form that students of all races are welcome. Since the message of Christ is available to all, so our schools are available to all, provided student applicants meet other minimum requirements of the school.

Q: Are Christian schools growing in number?

A: Not only are new Christian schools being started but established Christian schools are experiencing solid growth. This past year has been the largest growth year in the history of the Association of Christian Schools International. The combined student enrollment of the 4,971 member schools of ACSI has reached 707,928 this year giving us an increase of 95,940 students. This past year, 40,805 teachers attended ACSI teacher conventions, an increase of 5,577 over the previous year! These figures are remarkable indicators of the Lord's rich blessing on Christian school education.

This question and answer page is for your information and answers a few of the questions parents present when they ask about Christian education. The staff at Redlands Christian School would be happy to answer any additional questions you may have about Christian education or more specifically, Redlands Christian School. If you have any questions, please call us at (909)793-5172. The school office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, September through June. Summer Office hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.