

# Let them see



**A bible study to equip educators in their roles as  
missionaries in America's Schools**

# Christian Educators

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:14-16, NIV

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Doreen served on the leadership team at the Christian Educators Membership Service Center for many years. She was also part of a local church planting team and active in women’s and prayer ministries. She holds a Master’s Degree in Christian Ministry from HarvestNet Institute and an Associate’s Degree in Visual Communications from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. She wrote this study with the hope that Christian educators may recognize areas where they may have fallen into the trap of segregating their Christian faith from the classroom, and then begin more boldly integrating biblical truths into their teaching...legally. Ultimately, she prays for the readers to truly consider themselves full-time missionaries, in front of their mission field daily, being perhaps the only Jesus their students may see.

Revised and updated by Christian Educators, 2023.

This Bible study was originally published under the title “Shine Like Stars.” While this is a wonderful and fitting title, this revised and updated edition has been retitled “Let Them See” in order to help it fit better with other Christian Educators resources. We agree with Doreen in praying that Christians in education would consider themselves to be missionaries, being willing and prepared to let their lights shine for Jesus at school. Wherever the phrase “let them see” occurs, we hope it will inspire the reader to pray “let them see... Jesus in me!”

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*Let them see.*

## **Section 1**

**Worldview: Christian Educators view their world differently**

**Lesson 1**

Sacred vs Secular

**Lesson 2**

Your work matters to God

**Lesson 3**

Work is a blessing from God, it is not His curse on man

## Lesson 1: Sacred vs Secular

Your worldview impacts the way you view the sacred and the secular.

*It is the business of the Church to recognize that the secular vocation, as such, is sacred. Christian people, and particularly perhaps the Christian clergy, must get it firmly into their heads that when a man or woman is called to a particular job of secular work, that is as true a vocation as though he or she were called to specifically religious work.* <sup>1</sup> Dorothy L. Sayers

**Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord for wisdom and invite Him to transform your worldview to align with His Word.**

*Brenda is a Christian and she teaches in a public school. Her job seems overwhelming at times and on this day she was feeling particularly discouraged. She whispered a short prayer and began to browse the internet looking for encouragement. She came across the Christian Educators' website ([www.christianeducators.org](http://www.christianeducators.org)). What she read prompted her to call their office. She said:*

*I just need to talk to someone. I have been searching for a way to serve God for years. Through the years, I have participated in service and mission projects with my church but instead of feeling the same satisfaction others express from serving I have always come away feeling empty, nothing seemed to 'fit.' In browsing your website, I read 'Schools are a mission field, teachers are the missionaries.' I love teaching in a public school and I would even say I feel called to do it, but my pastor doesn't view my job as a ministry. When I read those words on your website it gave me a whole new perspective and all of a sudden everything just seemed to fit.*

**Q:** Have you ever felt you are not serving God because you teach in a public school?

**Read Colossians 2:8:** "Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ."<sup>2</sup> NLT

## What is a worldview and why does it matter?

**Definition of worldview:** A comprehensive set of truth claims that purports to paint a picture of reality; the framework from which we view reality and make sense of life and the world.<sup>3</sup> In short, one's worldview defines how people perceive and respond to reality. Your worldview has a profound impact on what you believe, feel, and value.

Define *Beliefs*:

Define *Feelings*:

Define *Values*:

### A quick look at worldviews throughout history

Three distinct eras have defined our worldview.

#### The pre-Modern Era: to 1500

During the pre-Modern Era, philosophers looked to the spiritual realm to explain and define reality. The Jewish people and early Christians held to a belief that the world was created by God and that He continued to interact with His creation. The philosophers of the Greco-Roman Era looked to a variety of gods to help them make sense of their world. It was during this era that the worldview of Greek Dualism took hold. This dualistic worldview separates the spiritual realm from the material (physical) realm.

#### The Modern Era: 1500-1970

During the Modern Era, philosophers looked to the material (physical) realm to explain and define reality. In the early 1600s, Galileo Galilei played a major role in the Scientific Revolution. He is accredited as a physicist, mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher. And while our textbooks don't promote it, he was a Christian theologian as well.

*Galileo saw both the truths of Scriptures and the truths of nature as having been derived from the same source: God; therefore, one could not contradict the other. "Holy scripture and nature are both emanations from the divine word: the former dictated by the Holy Spirit, the latter the observant executrix of God's commands."*

*"Thus, "...no truth discovered in Nature could contradict the deep truth of the Holy Writ." 4 Galileo concluded that since the world was created by a God of order and things didn't just happen at random or by chance, the world could be studied and explained with predictable outcomes that would hold true over time. Galileo is accredited by some as being the Father of Modern Science.*

The advancement of the sciences gave man the ability to understand his world through the lens of science. This gave rise to the Naturalist worldview. In 1859, Charles Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*. This theory cemented in the minds of scholars and philosophers that man and his world were not created by a divine being but rather they are simply a byproduct of natural selection over time. The Naturalist worldview denies the existence of a spiritual world.

### **The Postmodern Era 1970-current**

We are currently in the Postmodern Era. Community is king and that is where our culture looks to define truth. The belief that there are no absolute truths prevails; therefore truth is relative and is defined by the group of people with whom one identifies. This has led to the philosophy "What is true for you may not be true for me." According to a Gallup Poll, 82% of college students today say they believe in no absolute truths. They believe it is wrong for one person to assume that what is right and wrong for them is right and wrong for everyone else. The postmodern worldview denies the existence of absolute truth.

**Q:** Have you noticed differences between your worldview and the worldview of your students? If so, what are some of the differences you've observed?

When Brenda called our office, she said her pastor didn't view her job as a ministry. Her pastor, like many people today, still holds to a dualistic worldview. The philosophy of dualism separates the physical (secular) realm from the spiritual realm. Choose five things from the list below that one would find in the physical (secular) realm.

1.
2.

3.

4.

5.

Choose five things from the list below one would find in the spiritual realm.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**List:**

Ministry, Family, Home, Church, School, Sex, Medicine, Bible Study, Prayer, Art, School, Job, Fasting, Entertainment, Mission, Sports, Meditation, Drama, Worship, Politics, Law, Education, Quiet Time

Where did the philosophy of Greek Dualism originate?

*What was taught by Greek philosophers such as Homer, Plato and Aristotle three thousand years ago still impacts how the western culture views the world today. The Greeks held to a concept of “dualism” which at its most basic level separates the spiritual upper realm (Form) from the physical lower realm (Matter).<sup>5</sup>*

*Man and animals alike are dependent on things in the lower realm holds the things that separate man from other animals such as the ability to think or create. The attributes of the upper realm were perceived to make man more like God and were therefore more desirable than things of the lower realm. In order to focus on seeking things of the upper realm one had to be freed from the concerns of the lower realm. Sadly, work was placed in the lower realm. Slavery was one outcome of this dualistic thinking. Men were enslaved; working to meet the basic needs of their masters in order to free them up from the task of fulfilling their material needs (Matter) so that they could spend their time seeking after spiritual things (Form).<sup>6</sup>*



*The dualistic worldview has been successful in distorting reality and separating the secular from the spiritual in the marketplace, government and even within the church. Augustine defined the upper realm as “contemplative (spiritual) life” and the lower realm as “active (secular) life.” Monks would cloister themselves away from the rest of the world to seek spiritual things. Priests were the only ones considered spiritual enough to have access to scripture. This dualistic form of thinking wasn’t challenged until the Reformation when Luther translated the Bible so that average citizens could have access to the scriptures.<sup>7</sup>*

**Colossians 2:8** warns us not to be captured by empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that comes from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. It is noteworthy that **Colossians 2:8** was written as a warning to Christians. The implication is obvious—Christians can be held captive by empty philosophies.

How do “empty philosophies” still influence our thinking today?

The naturalistic worldview denies the existence of a spiritual world. One of the consequences of adopting a naturalistic worldview in the public education system is the displacement of the theory of creationism with an alternate theory of origins.

**Q:** In what other ways have you observed the naturalistic worldview influence on what is/isn’t being taught in public school classrooms?

The dualistic worldview segregates the physical and spiritual worlds. One of the influences of a dualistic worldview on the public education system is the interpretation of the doctrine of “separation of church and state” to require the complete removal of God from schools.

**Q:** In what other ways has the dualistic worldview influenced what is/isn’t being taught in public school classrooms?

## What does it mean to hold a biblical worldview?

A biblical worldview defines truth based on God's Word. Those who uphold a biblical worldview align their beliefs and actions with the Bible, acknowledging its truth and applicability to every area of life.

Shortly before Jesus is condemned to die he says, "... In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." John 18:37

The last words communicated to loved ones shortly before death are chosen carefully and convey a message of importance for the receiver. Jesus' words convey that the truth is something that should be important to us.

**Read the following scriptures.** Record what they communicate about truth.

### **2 Timothy 4:3-4**

**Q:** What does Jesus warn us that men will do?

### **John 8:31-32**

**Q:** Who did Jesus say are his disciples?

**Q:** What are the benefits of being a disciple?

### **John 17:17**

**Q:** What is the truth?

### **Point to Ponder**

**Q:** What are some ways you can demonstrate at school that you uphold a biblical worldview?

### **Make a Plan to *Let Them See***

What steps will you take to better understand and live out a biblical worldview?

## Prayer

*Dear Lord, You have warned us not to be taken captive by empty philosophies. Forgive me for the times I have knowingly or unknowingly not walked in the Truth. Reveal any areas where I am still being held captive and help me to walk in Your Truth. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

## Sources

1. Dorothy Sayers, *Creed or Chaos* (Manchester, Sophia Institute Press, 1949, 1974), p.76
2. Holy Bible. New Living Translation copyright © 1996, 2004 by Tyndale Charitable Trust. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers.
3. Focus on the Family, *The Truth Project* © 2009 Focus on the Family.
4. *Ibid*, 6
5. John D. Beckett, *Loving Monday* (Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 1998), p. 67
6. Lee Hardy, *The Fabric of This World* (Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), p. 9

## Lesson 2: Your work matters to God

A biblical worldview maintains God has authority over ALL of life.

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord for wisdom and invite Him to take authority over all areas of your life.***

*My classroom? Holy ground? Oh yes, your classroom is holy ground. When you walk into that room, you are bringing the presence of the Lord with you (along with all the angels you can drag in). Neither Satan nor any of his little imps have any place there. Oh, but they will surely try to enter on the backs of your students; bringing disruption, distraction, confusion, and rebellion. If you do not tolerate it in the physical realm as a teacher, do not tolerate it in the spiritual realm either. You've heard the saying that you may be the only Bible some people ever read.*

*Well, your classroom may be the only place where some of these young people will have ever felt the peace and presence of the Holy Spirit. The fact that you work in a public school does not mean that you cannot demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ. You may not be able to preach to your class, read from your Bible, or pray aloud with your students. You don't have to. All you need to do is invite the presence of the Lord. For one hour, those kids are going to be in a holy environment.*

*Recently, one of my students commented that he did more work in my room than in any other class he had. Keep in mind that he is not an ideal student. Not only was he repeating the class, but we had had a few confrontations at the beginning of the semester. When I asked why, he said, "Because it's easy to work in here; it's calm." That really surprised me, for the class consists of several rambunctious students who are not always motivated to work. They can be quite a handful at times. Yet I recognized immediately that it wasn't me who was providing the calming atmosphere which enabled him to do well. It is His unseen hand, and His holy presence.<sup>1</sup>© Rebecca Harper*

There is no separation between our secular and spiritual lives.

**Q:** Do you ever wonder if God cares about the things you encounter during the school day? Why or why not?

God has dominion over all things.

**Read Daniel 2:37-38:** “You [Nebuchadnezzar], O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; in your hands he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all.”

**Define Dominion:**

**Define Authority:**

**Q:** What does Christ have dominion and authority over?

**Q:** What territory does Christ’s dominion cover?

As educators, you have a good understanding of dominion and authority as you deal with spheres of dominion and authority every day. Your classroom is your domain and you have the authority to set the rules and the power to enforce them. Your school is your principal’s domain and he/she has the authority to set the rules and the power to enforce them.

**Read Psalm 145:13:**

“Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made.”

**Read Daniel 7:14:**

“He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

**Q:** When will Christ’s dominion end?

A biblical worldview upholds the belief that there is no separation between the physical and spiritual. God’s dominion is everlasting. God has dominion and authority over the whole earth and therefore He cares about everything that happens in it, including what happens in schools.

God cares about all we do.

God cares about your concerns.

List some of the things that concern you at work.

God wants you to give Him authority over every area of your life, even your work.

**We must willingly submit to God’s headship.**

**John 15:7,8 states:**

“But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.”

Refer to **John 15:7-8** to answer the following questions.

**Q:** What kind of things can you ask of God?

**Q:** Where must you remain?

**Q:** What must remain in you?

**Q:** What does a true disciple do?

We need to understand the conditions scripture gives in regard to granting whatever we ask for. Jesus wants you to submit to His authority and be His disciple. When you remain in Him, you know His heart. When His words remain in you, you understand his will. True disciples bear much fruit because they know His will, they obey His commands, and they ask for His will (not theirs) to be done. Fostering intimacy in any relationship takes a commitment to spending time together. Take a few minutes right now to redirect your thoughts to God.



When you are ready, open your Bible to **Psalm 139:1-10** and read it out loud.

David paints a beautiful portrait of the intimate relationship God has with those who know and love Him. Spending time with someone you love is the key to intimacy in a relationship. When we love someone, we care about the things they care about.

**Q:** What does Psalm 139 state about God's care for you?

You spend the majority of your waking hours at school. You have been given the privilege of educating and shaping the minds of future generations. Be assured that your **WORK** matters to God and **YOU** matter to God as well!

### **Point to Ponder**

**Q:** Are there any areas of your life you have not willingly given God dominion over?

### **Make a Plan to *Let Them See***

Ask the Lord to show you if there are any areas of your life that you have not completely surrendered to Him. List them and pray consistently for grace to release them to Him so that you may walk in freedom.

## Prayer

*Heavenly Father, I praise You for Your omnipresence. The thought of You being present in all places at all times is impossible for me to comprehend.*

*I confess at times I get discouraged and wonder if You really care at all about the challenges I face at school on any given day. I know better, but the thoughts come anyway. Forgive me for my lack of faith and understanding.*

*I am thankful that You know me in such an intimate way that You even know the number of hairs on my head. Your Word promises that You go before me to prepare the way, and You hem me in from behind as well. Thank you for holding me fast.*

*Be my ever-present help in times of trouble. Help me to see Your hand working in my life.*

**Proverbs 4:18** states, “The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.” Help me to shine Your light and encourage everyone with whom I interact at school this week. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

## Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your call as a missionary in the classroom? Record your thoughts below.

## Sources

<sup>1</sup> Rebecca L. Harper, *Making a Difference*, (Bloomington, Authorhouse Books, 2006), p. 9. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

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## Lesson 3: Work is a blessing from God, it is not His curse on man

A biblical worldview maintains work is a blessing from God.

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Thank the Lord for creating you in His image and giving you the ability to work.***

*One particularly warm spring day, Sally walked alongside the fence that bordered the large cemetery directly across the street from her house. A variety of colorful ribbons, Christmas greenery, and flowers found themselves trapped on the opposite side of the fence. It was evident they had fallen victim to the harsh winds of the winter season that had just passed.*

*Sally worked her small six-year-old hands under the fence, struggling to free the trapped treasures she had just discovered and taking a special delight in each one. Much to her surprise, she found a Styrofoam ring that was pretty bare of decorations but still intact. She dug away at the soil and after struggling for some time was able to pull the ring from the opposite side of the fence and into her possession.*

*With her newfound treasures in hand, Sally quickly headed home. She had a mission to accomplish and she needed to get started right away. She began to fill the Styrofoam ring with the variety of ribbons, greenery, and silk flower treasures she had found. When she finished her masterpiece, she stood back to admire her work.*

*Sally could hardly wait to go to school tomorrow so she could surprise her teacher Mrs. Johnson with the gift she had made especially for her. Needless to say, Mrs. Johnson was VERY surprised by her gift. She told Sally it was one gift she would never forget!*

God created man to work.

### **God Works**

God created the heavens and earth by speaking them into existence. **Genesis 1:3** states, “And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.” Wouldn’t this have been an amazing thing to witness? God just speaks and it comes into existence. God spends six days creating and at the end of each day, He takes time to reflect on all He has made and declares it to be good.

Creating is synonymous with work. **Genesis 2:2-3** states, “By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.”

## Man Works

Read **Genesis 2:15**

**Q:** Why did God put man in the garden?

It's hard to imagine that Adam's work was too difficult. After all, how hard can it be to tend a garden planted by the very hand of God? It was certainly a beautiful garden. We are told it contained all kinds of seed-bearing plants. The foliage and fruit would have been mature and the plants would not have needed pruning yet. Certainly, God wouldn't have planted weeds or put pesky plant-eating insects in the garden for them to contend with. The conditions would have been perfect with God providing just the right amount of moisture and sunshine. We are told Adam was put in the garden to take care of it. Verse 18 tells us God didn't want Adam to be alone in the garden so He would create a suitable helper for him. Eve was to share in the work God gave Adam to do.

### **We are created in the image of our Creator.**

The pinnacle of God's creation came on the sixth day when He created man. **Genesis 1:27** states, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." One way we reflect God's image is in our ability to create. God does a wonderful thing for us; He created us with the ability to be "co-creators" with Him.

**Q:** What kinds of things do you like to create?

**Q:** What kind of creative activity brings you the most pleasure?

**Q:** Do you find the time spent in creative endeavors to be pleasurable or hard work?

It is the rare adult who reflects God's creative spirit better than a child. Children lose themselves in the creative process with reckless abandonment. They have vivid imaginations and are able to create something out of almost nothing. We all stand in wonder at how an empty large appliance box can keep them busy for days! As much as children enjoy creating; their pleasure is doubled when they share their creations with others. This is evident by the number of us who display a gallery of art on our refrigerator doors or have received that special handmade gift given to us by a student.

**Q:** In what ways do you see God's creative spirit reflected in your students?

**Q:** Has a student given you a gift you especially treasured?

**Q:** If so, what made it special to you?

It is a common misconception that when Adam sinned, God cursed work. The ability to work is a gift from God. Yet most of us don't view work from this perspective. We often think of work as being more of a curse than a blessing.

**Q:** How do you view working at your job, is it a blessing or a curse?

### **Read Genesis 3:17-18**

**Q:** Did God curse work?

**Q:** What did He curse?

### Now read Genesis 8:21

**Q:** What does this verse say about God's curse?

We were created to work, therefore we need to work. We gain a sense of well-being when we are productive.

### Read Leviticus 23:22

**Q:** What did God command the harvesters not to do?

**Q:** Why were they told not to do this?

**Q:** Who would reap the edge of the fields and gather the gleanings of the harvest?

We learn an important lesson from this passage. God did not tell the harvesters to harvest the grain and give it to the poor. He said to provide opportunities for the poor to labor in order to meet their needs.

Man was created to work. Since the fall of man, our view of work has become distorted. We will only find fulfillment when we understand the true nature of work and bring glory to God through it.

**We should be satisfied and fulfilled through our work.**

While we don't know all of what Adam and Eve's work entailed, we can see the nature of the work God gave them to do. Their work would have been satisfying, they would have found fulfillment through their work, and God would have been glorified by it.

### **Read Genesis 2:19-20**

**Q:** Why did God bring Adam all of the animals?

God could have named all the animals; after all, He named Adam and Eve. Instead, God chose to allow Adam to name the animals. We can only assume that Adam instinctively knew the nature of each animal that God brought before Him and Adam chose a suitable name for each. How much fun would that have been!

**Q:** Have you ever had the opportunity to name a child or pet?



**Q:** Did you enjoy the process of selecting a suitable name?

**We read in scripture that:**

- God created both man and work
- Man is made in God's image
- Everything God created was good
- Man is fulfilled when he does what he is created to do
- When man enjoys his work, he glorifies God in that work

The very first words in the Bible state, "In the beginning God created." His creation is important to Him. When God created the heavens and earth, He reflected on all He had made and proclaimed it is good.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." Psalm 19:1

*Shirley attended her daughter's fourth-grade art show. As she walked the gymnasium floor viewing the students' masterpieces hanging on the walls, she was amazed by what she saw. What struck her was not the student's creativity but, rather, the art teacher's lack of it. Shirley's son, now a junior in high school, was assigned identical projects to complete when he was in fourth grade. Shirley couldn't help but wonder how the art teacher could possibly foster creativity in her students when she simply regurgitated the same assignments year after year.*

Too often, we allow our schedules to crowd out our creativity. Did you ever think to schedule some time in your week just to be creative? Take time to fuel your imagination and your spirit - enjoy doing something just for the sheer pleasure of doing it. When you are fulfilled, your creative spirit will overflow into your school work. Don't settle for the status quo.

We live in a fallen world. We may struggle and toil in our labor, but the nature of our work does not change. We can find the greatest satisfaction in our work when we perform it in the spirit in which God designed it.

Work is a blessing and not a curse; just ask any teacher whose contract wasn't renewed because of budget cutbacks. Your job gives you the ability to meet your financial needs as well as the opportunity to engage in the purposes for which the Lord has designed and equipped you.

## Point to Ponder

“Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won’t need to compare yourself to anyone else.” Galatians 6:4

## Make a Plan to *Let Them See*

The next time you find yourself grumbling about what goes on at school, think about those looking for work and about those looking at you at work. What can you do that will help you to:

- Develop an attitude of gratitude?
- Thank God for your school as well as your peers and students?
- Praise God for giving you the privilege to work in a field that allows you to impact the lives of others?
- Speak of your job with appreciation rather than complaining?

## Prayer

*Father, Your ways are higher than my ways. I praise You because You are the everlasting God, the Creator of the earth. You do not grow tired or weary and no one can fathom Your understanding.*

*There are days when I am not grateful for my job. I wake up in need of Your grace that will see me through another day. Forgive me for not viewing my job the way I should. Thank you for the desire and skills You have given me to carry out my calling at school. Renew my heart and my mind so that I can live out each day of my calling believing my work is a blessing and not a curse. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

## Sources

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*Let them see.*

## **Section 2**

**Authority: Christian Educators answer  
to a higher authority than man**

### **Lesson 4**

We work for God, not for man

### **Lesson 5**

Understanding authority in the workplace

## Lesson 4: We work for God, not for man

Christian educators acknowledge they work for God and not for man.

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Invite the Lord to mold you into the image of Christ.***

Our relationship with God will impact the choices we make.

We all know the expression “Do as I say, not as I do.” But the truth is, children will do both. As educators, we transmit our values by example—both directly and indirectly. At times, educators promote certain values intentionally, yet much of what we believe is naturally transmitted through our actions. What this means for students is that values are both “taught” and “caught.”

**Q:** Often, when young children do something, we see ourselves in their actions. Have you ever been surprised by a child who repeated an action they “caught” from you? If so, what was your reaction—did it please you or convict you?

As Christian educators, we must strive to live above reproach. **Matthew 18:6** states, “But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.”

**Q:** In what ways can we cause our students to sin?

Living above reproach is a serious responsibility and it is impossible to accomplish on our own. To live above reproach, we must live in the Spirit and not by the law. If we try to live by the law, we are like the Jews who were slaves to the old covenant. When Christ died on the cross, the veil that separated God from man was torn; Christ fulfilled the requirements of the law and He ushered in a new covenant. **2 Corinthians 3:6** says, “He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”

**Read 2 Corinthians 3:16-18**

**Q:** How is the veil removed?

**Q:** Whose likeness are we transformed to?

**Q:** Who works in us to bring about this transformation?

**Q:** What does this verse say we find where the Spirit of the Lord is?

**Read Hebrews 8:9-10**

**Q:** Where will God put his laws?

When the Spirit transforms us into the likeness of Christ, He places the laws in our minds and hearts. Over time, we will no longer have to think as much about doing the right thing because doing what pleases God will just become a part of who we are. As a result, we become freed up from constantly striving to keep the laws as our lives will begin to supernaturally reflect our relationship with God. When we embody the character of Christ we will naturally transmit His love and truth to others.

**Read Galatians 5:22-23v**

This verse of scripture tells us the Holy Spirit produces fruit in our lives.

List the nine aspects of the fruit He produces in believers.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.

It's interesting to note that there are not nine different "fruits," but rather one "fruit" that manifests itself with nine attributes. One definition for fruit is something that is produced; the effect or consequence of any action; an advantageous or desirable product or result. As the Holy Spirit works in your life, you should see the fruit growing in all areas of your life.

Christ sets the standard for our character.

Character means moral or ethical strength. There are a lot of things that form who we become such as our personality, natural talents, IQ, and even upbringing. We don't get to choose these things; however, we do choose to have character.

The way we handle the circumstances of life, especially in times of crisis, reveals much about our true character. Crisis doesn't build our character, it exposes it. Adversity forces us to choose between having character and compromising our values. Every time we choose character over compromise we grow more in likeness to Christ. Jesus was the ultimate example of someone who chose character over compromise even in the face of suffering.

**Q:** Have there been times in your career when you had to make a choice between having character and compromising your character?

**Q:** Which did you choose to do and why?

**Q:** What were the outcomes of your decision?

**Q:** How did you feel as a result of the choice(s) you made?



If we are to imitate the character of Christ, we need to understand what He taught about character.

Read the following scriptures from Matthew.

List the character attributes Christ spoke about in these verses.

**Matthew 5:5**

**Matthew 5:7**

**Matthew 5:24**

**Matthew 7:1**

**Matthew 9:36**

**Matthew 11:29**

**Matthew 17:20**

**Matthew 18:21-22**

**Matthew 20:26-27**

**Matthew 23:12**

*George Barna writes, The best intentions in the world get nowhere unless you have the character and demeanor to carry out those dreams. Once again, the nature of Christ deepens our understanding of what type of person is capable of changing the world.<sup>2</sup>*

*Many people were drawn to Jesus by His nature, without knowing much about what He stood for or His ultimate purpose. He wasn't a Revolutionary because He proposed a different philosophy. He was a Revolutionary because He lived differently, teaching a groundbreaking world order through His demeanor and behavior. His words simply magnified and clarified what He was demonstrating in the flesh.<sup>3</sup>*

**Q:** Which character attribute(s) from the scriptures above strike you as being the one(s) you most need to develop?

Find a person or small group to help hold you accountable. Share your desire to develop particular aspects of your character with them and brainstorm ways you can practically carry out this desire.

Christian educators have a strong work ethic and they strive for quality and excellence in everything they do for the glory of God.

Be careful to avoid falling into the trap of perfectionism. When we become pridefully obsessed with perfection or how something reflects on us, we are no longer striving for excellence in all we do for the glory of God.

**Read 1 Corinthians 10:31**

**Q:** What does it say we do for the glory of God?

Paul tells us everything we do is for God's glory. **1 Corinthians 15:58** states, ..."Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in

vain.” You are God’s ambassador wherever you work. Whether it’s in a classroom, administrative office, cafeteria, boiler room, or school bus, we are to give ourselves fully to the work we do. Through this, we bring God glory. Christians should have such a radically different work ethic from their peers that they stand out as exemplary employees.

Dorothy Sayer writes, “The only Christian work is a work well done. Let the Church see to it that the workers are Christian people and do their work well, as to God: then all the work will be Christian work, whether it is church embroidery, or sewage farming.”<sup>4</sup>

**Q:** Do you give yourself fully to your work each day (both in action and attitude)?

**Q:** Would your peers and administrators describe you as a model employee?

**Q:** Do you go over and above the terms of your contract to serve your district with excellence?

There are days you may not feel like giving your best. Do it anyway. Sometimes we must simply do what we know is right regardless of our feelings. In time, our hearts will follow our actions. Write out **1 Corinthians 15:58** on an index card or post-it note. Put it where you can see it during the day to remind you whom you are working for. Read it every morning until you memorize it. Meditating on God’s Word is transformational.

## Christian educators remain teachable.

**Q:** Have you ever tried to teach a student who thought they knew everything?

**Q:** How did his/her attitude impact his/her ability to learn?

Just as students need to continue to grow in knowledge after graduation we must do so as well. Christian educators are to be lifelong learners. The good news is we have constant access to the perfect teacher.

### **Read Psalm 25:9**

**Q:** In what way are we to approach the Lord?

Look up the following scriptures. What do they reveal about God as our teacher or for us as students?

**Psalm 25:4, 5**

**Psalm 32:8**

**Matthew 7:24**

**John 14:26**

### **Point to Ponder**

The model Jesus gave to us for our transformation into his likeness is discipleship. Just as apprentices study, follow, and work with their master, so do disciples of Jesus study His word, follow His ways, and join Him in his work. Are you spending time in God's word, in prayer, and with His people? Do you believe He is inviting you to join Him in his work?

### **Make a Plan to *Let Them See***

You must be intentional about growing in your Christian walk. This can include putting down some things in order to take up other things. Use the area below to set some goals, define objectives and then create a strategy to get there.

## Prayer

*Father, I praise You for You are all-knowing. I don't ever have to encounter anything that You don't understand. Forgive me for my lack of trust when things get difficult. Help me to remember that the trials I face build my character. Give me the strength I need so that I can reflect the character of Christ at all times. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

## Sources

<sup>1</sup> George Barna, *Revolution* (Wheaton, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005), p.74

<sup>2</sup> George Barna, *Revolution* (Wheaton, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005), p.76

<sup>3</sup> George Barna, *Revolution* (Wheaton, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005), p.77,78

<sup>4</sup> Dorothy Sayers, *Creed or Chaos* (Manchester, Sophia Institute Press, 1949, 1974), p.78

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## Lesson 5: Understanding authority in the workplace

Whose authority are we under in the workplace?

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord to help you submit to the authorities under which He has placed you.***

A biblical worldview tells us that Christ has authority over all people. John 17:2 states, “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him.” We are never to submit to any request that asks us to do something contrary to the nature of God.

God places people in positions of authority.

*Katie teaches at an elementary school. When her principal Mrs. Anderson retired, Katie decided to apply for the open position. She was excited to be called in for several interviews and felt they went very well. However, Katie didn't get the job and she feels the person who was hired isn't as qualified as she is. Katie is still struggling to understand how the other person got the job and is now dreading having to work with her.*

**Q:** Have you ever had an experience like Katie's? How did you deal with it?

**Read Romans 13:1:** “Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God” (NLT).

**Q:** How are people placed in positions of authority?

This verse tells us that people aren't put into positions of authority by accident. All people serving in positions of authority have been placed there by God. This doesn't mean they will always be easy to work with or that they will make good and godly decisions. One example of this is found in Habakkuk 1:6 which states, "I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people."

At times, we would surely choose our leaders differently, but God assures us that He has placed people in positions of authority to achieve His purposes and outcomes. We see this concept repeated again and again in the Old Testament as God brings Israel to power to conquer the land and then raises up their enemies when they stray in order to bring them back to Him.

### Christian educators submit to those in positions of authority.

When children of my generation got into trouble at school, we tried to hide it from our parents. If our moms and dads discovered our transgression, we would not only have to bear the consequences handed out by our teachers but we would be punished by our parents as well. Things have changed since then. Now it seems that when children get into trouble at school, their parents attack the teacher instead of reprimanding their child.

**Q:** Have you ever been called on the carpet for reprimanding one of your students?

**Q:** How did you handle the situation?

Educators serve in a position of authority over their students and students are to submit to their authority. Just as we sense the injustice when our students fail to submit to our authority, so it is unjust when we fail to submit to those whom God has placed in positions of authority over us. Submitting to authority is not always an easy thing to do, especially if we don't agree with the choices our leaders make.



## Read Hebrews 13:17

**Q:** How are we to treat our leaders?

**Q:** What is their responsibility?

**Q:** Why should we obey them?

*Ben was disgruntled by his situation at work. He has been tenured for many years and has always received great reviews. His school recently hired a new principal who has been shuffling teachers around to different grade levels. Many of the educators who have been in the building for years are being moved into positions where they aren't happy. They are concerned that if they are moved to positions where they are unhappy or uncomfortable, then they won't perform well and will receive poor reviews. The rumor is that the new principal is setting them up to fail so that she can eventually release them. Some of the teachers are thinking about hiring an attorney to attempt to stop the principal.*

What Ben's principal is doing isn't fair and it's certainly not a wise management decision, but it isn't illegal and doesn't require an attorney.

**Q:** How should Ben and the other educators respond to their situation from a biblical worldview?

**Romans 13:2** states, “Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.” The Bible is clear—God views rebellion against authority as rebellion against him. We are to both submit to and respect those who are in authority over us.

In 1 Samuel we read the story of how David, the future king of Israel, responded to King Saul who, to say the least, was a less-than-ideal authority figure. The prophet Samuel had anointed David as the future king but he had to wait for years until it was his time to rule Israel. Saul, the current king, was threatened by David because David was popular with the people. After Saul tried to kill David on several occasions, David fled to a cave to hide in safety. David had several opportunities to kill Saul, but he refused to harm Saul because Saul was God’s anointed one. David had every reason for wanting to kill Saul. He even had the opportunity to do so. But he understood that God had placed Saul in a position of leadership and willingly submitted to his authority. We can do well to follow David’s example.

Christian educators respect those in positions of authority.

**Read Titus 3:1-2**

**Q:** How does this passage tell us to respond to rulers and authorities?

**Q:** Do you respond to your administrators, superintendent, and school board members in a way that reflects a biblical worldview?

A biblical worldview reveals that we must not only submit to authority, but we are to respect our leaders as well.

**Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13**

This scripture uses the phrase “the Lord’s work.” We have already established that there is no separation between spiritual and secular tasks. Therefore, whatever work we do, we are to do for the Lord. One could reasonably conclude from these truths that everything one does is “the Lord’s work.”

**Q:** How does this passage instruct us to treat our leaders in the Lord’s work?

It’s easy to respect someone we like. Yet we are told to respect everyone in leadership whether we like them or not. In the time of Christ, the Roman tax collectors were hated by the Jewish people because the tax collectors often cheated the people by charging them more than they owed. If they didn’t pay the tax collector what they asked for, the Jews would suffer terrible consequences. We read in **Romans 13:7**, “Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority” (NLT). We are not called to like everyone in authority but we are called to honor and respect them.

**Q:** Have you been disrespectful to someone in a position of authority at your school or school district?

If so, you can confess your lack of respect to the Lord and thank Him for His forgiveness. Ask Him to help you overcome any negative feelings towards this person and make a commitment to show them respect regardless of how you feel about them. Often, one's heart will follow one's actions, but even if it does not, your obedience will please God.

Failure to honor authority is a failure to believe that God is sovereign. When we disrespect authority, we act on the belief that God is not in control, even though He is.

Christian educators respond in a godly manner when conflict arises with those in authority.

*My interim building principal had requested to see me in her office. I immediately went, never imagining that she called me there for a lecture. I was shocked when she brought up a conversation from the previous day in which I protested the use of my classroom after school by an outside group.*

*Apparently, she felt that I had undermined her authority by voicing my opinion and now, I assumed, she expected an argument from me. Although this confrontation embarrassed me, I quickly responded with an apology. After all, she was in charge, even over the use of my classroom.*

*I did not base my response to this reprimand on my respect for her or my opinion of the way she handled the situation. I based it on my desire to honor Christ. I will never know what kind of influence the testimony of my submissive spirit had on this woman, but I know that I was obedient to my Heavenly Father, and I felt His pleasure. ©Shirley Wilson*

There will be times when you have a conflict with someone in authority.

## Read 1 Peter 2:18,19

**Q:** How should we handle conflict with someone in authority?

When we handle conflict by submitting to our leaders and showing them respect, we need not be concerned about the outcome.

**Psalm 37:5-7** says, “Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: he will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.”

## Point to Ponder

**Q:** How do you respond to those in authority?

**Q:** How do you treat those whom you have authority over?

## **Make a Plan to *Let Them See***

Make a list of the people at school God has placed in authority over you. Write their names on an index card and tuck it into your Bible. Pray for these people on a regular basis and thank God for their leadership. Then, when you have finished praying for them, ask the Lord to show you one of them who is in need, who you can approach to pray with. And if He shows you someone, go do it!

### **Prayer**

*Dear God, I give You all praise and honor this day for You are my King. You have dominion over the earth and all that is in it. You are a fair judge and I can put my trust in You. Forgive me for the times I have rebelled against Your authority or the authority of others whom You have placed in a position of leadership. Sometimes I don't understand why our leaders make certain decisions but I am thankful that nothing happens that You are not in control of.*

*I also ask that You help me to be a godly leader. You have entrusted many students to my care. Help me to care for them in such a way that I will earn their trust and respect. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### **Reflection**

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

## **Sources**

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*Let them see.*

## **Section 3**

**Job Description: Christian Educators view  
their profession as a divine calling**

### **Lesson 6**

Career vs Calling

### **Lesson 7**

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)

### **Lesson 8**

Shine your light before men



## Lesson 6: Career vs Calling

We know that God has a plan for our life and we live to serve Him by serving others.

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord to help you submit to the authorities He has placed you under.***

**Q:** Why did you choose a career in education?

**Q:** When did you decide this would be your career path?

We believe we were created to serve in this time and place.

You most likely work with educators who think of work as a necessary evil. They begin the end-of-the-school-year countdown the first day classes begin and organize the staff lottery pool in hopes of hitting it big so they can retire early. When someone has this kind of attitude, it is not only tiresome, but it also reflects in their work.

Christians with a biblical worldview believe there is a difference between a career and a calling. A career is the work you do to support yourself and your family. A calling is following God's lead to a job that brings you satisfaction and fulfillment because you are contributing to His work in a meaningful way. Having a positive attitude about our work comes from our belief that God has called us to do that work.

Believing you are called to be an educator takes faith. The work of education is difficult and it can seem overwhelming at times. However, if you really believe you are in the center of God's will, you can have peace, security, and joy, even amidst the trials.

## Read Jeremiah 1:4-8

**Q:** Do you believe God created you to live at a specific time and place in order to work out his plans? Why or why not?

## Read Ephesians 2:10

**Q:** What were we created to do?

**Q:** Who prepared the work for us and when was it prepared?

God does create each of us to serve Him in a specific time and place. The story of Esther is an example of God's hand directing one's position in life. Esther was a Jew who went from being an orphan to the Queen of Persia almost overnight. As queen, she was in a position to intervene and save the Jewish people from total destruction. **Esther 4:14** is possibly the most familiar passage in this story. These words were spoken by Mordecai to Esther and he tells her,

“For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”

Esther knows she will have to risk her life to go before the king to ask him to intervene. Mordecai tells Esther that the Lord most likely has raised her to a royal position for the purpose of saving the Jewish people. He reminds Esther that God can and will save his people without

her help and she will have to choose to either honor God through her obedience or bring destruction to her and her family because of disobedience. Esther risked her life to do the right thing and as a result, her people were saved and she was honored.

Sometimes we struggle to hear God's call and we wonder if we are straying from the path He has laid out for us.

### **Read Proverbs 3:5-6 and Proverbs 16:9**

**Q:** What do these scriptures say about our walk with God?

Scripture tells us when we look to God and trust Him, He will lay out our path and direct our footsteps. Even when we don't hear His voice, if we diligently seek Him, then we can live in faith trusting that He is using us to accomplish His purpose.

Christian educators serve in obedience to his Word.

**Q:** What is the difference between information and transformation?

Education is the act or process of imparting or acquiring knowledge or skills. Educators impart information to their students; however, students cannot be transformed by what they've learned until they internalize the information and act upon it. As a culture, we are skilled at amassing information. But we often fail to put into practice what we learn. For example, dietary guidelines say that to maintain good health, we need to drink eight glasses of water and eat at least five servings of fruit and vegetables daily, yet how many of us put this into practice? Often our intentions are good but that is where our effort stalls.

**Q:** What is something you know you should do but haven't acted on?

Christians often have the same problem of not following through in their spiritual lives as well. We amass all kinds of information on Christian living by attending church, Bible studies, adult discipleship classes, seminars, and conferences. We listen to tapes, read books, and memorize scripture. But we will not be transformed into the likeness of Christ unless we internalize biblical truths and put them into practice.

The Biblical teaching on this subject is very clear.

**Read the following scripture verses.**

**James 1:22-24**

**Q:** Those who only listen to the word are

**Matthew 7:21**

**Q:** Who will enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

**Luke 11:28**

**Q:** When we obey God's Word we are

## 1 John 5:3

**Q:** How do we show love for God?

**Q:** Is there an area of Christian living you need to put into practice? Make a commitment to begin today.

As we examine the attitudes and attributes of those who uphold a biblical worldview through this Bible Study, don't be satisfied with simply obtaining knowledge. The Bible is clear that God is not pleased with our knowledge; He also expects us to put His Word into practice.

Christian educators serve with a spirit of humility.

*Karen had always wanted to continue her education, but she had put her desire on hold to raise her children. As soon as her youngest went off to college, she enrolled in classes at a local university and was surprised at how much she enjoyed the entire experience. The only exception was one class that was taught by a professor who had more doctorates and master's degrees than anyone she had ever met. Karen found him to be prideful; he talked more about his credentials and who he knew than he did the coursework. Karen thought it was ironic that the professor with the most credentials was the least effective educator. She was certain this was due to his pride overshadowing his knowledge.*

**Q:** Have you ever worked with someone who was prideful?

**Q:** What was the experience like?

**Read the following scriptures.**

Summarize what each verse teaches about pride and/or humility.

**Proverbs 13:10**

**Proverbs 22:4**

**Proverbs 29:23**

**James 4:6**

**James 4:10**

**Isaiah 66:2b**

**Matthew 23:12**

**1 Peter 5:5**

In **Philippians 2:3-4** Paul writes, “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” Scripture clearly states that we are to be humble servants. We are to hold our students, peers, and administrators in high esteem and look for ways to meet their needs.

**Q:** What are some of the ways you put the interests of others before your own interests?

**Q:** Are there areas of pride you need to address in your own life? What are they?

Think about your co-workers and students. Are any of them facing an unusually challenging time right now? Make a list of some ways you can support or encourage them and then put it into action this week.

Christian educators who uphold a biblical worldview serve sacrificially.

*Elizabeth was an outgoing 8th grader who had a good sense of humor and was well-liked by her teachers and peers. Her bubbly personality made it possible for her to mask her ongoing struggle with anxiety and depression. The only person she confided in at school was Mrs. Benson, her 6th-grade science teacher. Since they had grown especially close, Mrs. Benson went out of her way to encourage and support Elizabeth. She gave Elizabeth her home phone number and email address and told her to contact her at any time. She wrote a year-long pass allowing Elizabeth to come to her classroom each morning after she got off the school bus so they could talk before the school day began.*

*When Elizabeth was a high school junior, she decided to get baptized and she was asked to share her testimony with the congregation. Elizabeth talked about her battle with depression. Elizabeth said, “Mrs. Benson is the reason I am able to stand here today. I honestly don’t know if I would have survived middle school without her love and support.”*

*Mrs. Benson could easily justify wanting to spend her time before class each morning preparing for the school day. But instead, she chose to sacrifice her prep time to meet the needs of one of her students.*

**Q:** Have you ever given up something you wanted or needed in order to support a student or fellow educator who had a special need?

**Q:** If a peer asks for your help when you have some free time, do you grumble about it or view it as an opportunity to bring glory to God?

### **Read Ephesians 5:1-3**

**Q:** Who are we to imitate?

**Q:** How are we to live our lives?

**Matthew 16:24-25** states, “Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.’” Just as Christ sacrificed His life for us, we are called to deny ourselves and sacrifice our lives to share His love with others.



**Q:** Do you look for ways to go above and beyond the expectations of your job description to help your students or fellow educators?

### **Point to Ponder**

...the great commandment 'Love God and your neighbor' must be the guideline for us as Christian teachers. Consequently, all the classroom teaching decisions we make must be made in response to the question; How will this serve the Lord? And how will this serve the young people in my care?<sup>2</sup>

### **Make a Plan to *Let Them See***

We bring glory to God when we serve sacrificially. What can you do to find opportunities to share Christ's love through acts of service at school.

## Prayer

*Father, it's difficult for me to fathom that You would come to earth and take on the form of a servant in order to save me. I will never be able to fully comprehend the price You paid for my salvation. You sacrificed so much for me. Yet much of the time I am unwilling to sacrifice my desires to pursue that which would please You.*

Forgive me for my disobedience and for my arrogance in thinking my agenda is more important than Yours. Thank you for loving me even when I am disobedient. Help me to shine the light of Christ to others by humbly serving them. In Jesus' name, Amen.

*Forgive me for my disobedience and for my arrogance in thinking my agenda is more important than Yours. Thank you for loving me even when I am disobedient. Help me to shine the light of Christ to others by humbly serving them. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

## Source

<sup>1</sup> John Van Dyk, *The Craft of Christian Teaching, A Classroom Journey* (Sioux Center, Dordt Press, 2000), p.32

<sup>2</sup> John Van Dyk, *The Craft of Christian Teaching, A Classroom Journey* (Sioux Center, Dordt Press, 2000), p.50

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## Lesson 7: The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)

We are called to lead others to Christ

*Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask God to give you opportunities to be a witness for Him.*

God issues the command to go.  
The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)

**Matthew 28:18-20** is known as the Great Commission. A commission is an order, charge, or direction given by someone in a position of authority. Another way it has been described is as a co-mission, involving two parties collaborating together on a mission.

According to research, the majority of Christians will never lead a single person to Christ. Christians cite two common reasons they don't take the call to evangelism personally; 1) they either don't know how to evangelize or 2) they feel God only calls those with the gift of evangelism to witness, so they are off the hook.

Bill Bright from Campus Crusade for Christ says, "We only fail at witnessing when we fail to witness."<sup>1</sup>

### Read Matthew 28:18-20

The Bible tells us Christ has been given all authority on heaven and earth. With this authority, Christ doesn't make a suggestion or hint at what His disciples are to do. He issues a command.

**Q:** What are the key components of the commission Christ gives to his disciples?

Our mission is clear: we are to be Christ's ambassadors to a lost world. The first component of our mission is "Go and make disciples." To be a disciple simply means to be a student or follower of Christ and His teachings. Jesus gave His disciples instructions about where they were to go and testify about Him. These instructions are recorded in the book of Acts.

## God tells us where to go.

### Read Acts 1:8

**Q:** What places were the disciples commanded to go and be a witness?

It's interesting to note the significance of the towns mentioned. The disciples lived in Jerusalem which was located in the region of Judea. The disciples were instructed to witness at home and in their surrounding communities as well. Next, Christ told his disciples to witness in Samaria. This idea would have turned the disciples' worldviews upside down. They must have wondered if they had heard Him correctly. The Jews and Samaritans hated one another and were mortal enemies. Samaria was located just north of Judea. When the Jews traveled between Judea and Galilee they walked miles out of their way in order to go around Samaria as they refused to set one foot on Samaritan soil. Now, Christ was calling them to go into enemy territory and witness to their enemies. The last place Christ told the disciples to witness was to the ends of the earth which is self-explanatory.

**Q:** Identify the territory below that best describes your school.

- Jerusalem - close-knit community of family and friends
- Judea - professional acquaintances who you don't know on a personal level
- Samaria - hostile territory, people who you would like to avoid
- Ends of the earth - foreign territory, those who you know nothing about

**Q:** Why do you view it this way?

Educators who uphold a biblical worldview believe their call to witness includes the workplace.

The way you witness within your school will depend on how you view your school. If you identified your school as a “Jerusalem,” you will relate differently to your peers than you would if you identified your school as a “Samaria.” We relate differently to our friends than to those whom we feel are hostile to us and our beliefs. Building strong relationships is the foundation to becoming an effective witness. You must love the people you witness to and identify ways to build bridges to them in order to establish rapport.

Cultivating a relationship takes time and energy. But the gospel message is better received when it is sown in a heart that has been properly prepared. Many evangelism training resources are available. We recommend *Finding Common Ground* by Tim Downs or *Just Walk Across the Room* by Bill Hybels. Both books give insight into how we can witness anywhere regardless of how hostile the environment may be to the gospel message.

*I'll never forget that Thursday in May. The spring concert was a week away. I had a wonderful chorus. In fact, I had not taught a class like this for quite some time. But, they weren't quite ready. We had lost several rehearsals due to unforeseen circumstances, and I had only this one rehearsal left before performance day. Stress! But then, I found myself facing a trial that threatened the very life of my husband. He was in the hospital with a deadly infection in his foot, and doctors warned of a possible amputation.*

*Through those days of hospital vigils, preparations for substitutes, last-minute concert preparations, and sleepless nights, the Lord stood with me. Everyone on my school faculty knew about my Christian faith. I knew they were watching to see if and how God would get me through this time. I celebrated the victory and spoke of God's goodness during that high-tension week. The concert went well, but more importantly, by God's grace, He spared my husband's life. During the difficult time, I prayed that not only would God heal, but that He would show to my non-Christian faculty friends His power and goodness. And I believe He did.*

## God tells us what to do.

The second component of our mission is “teach these new disciples to obey everything I have commanded you.”

**Q:** What did Jesus command (in the statement above)?

Leading others to Christ is only the beginning of our commission. Just as students need to be taught when embarking on something new, our disciples need to be mentored as well. **2 Timothy 2:2** states, “You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others” (NLT). The command is clear. We are to be a witness so others will come to know Christ. Then, we are to teach these new disciples how to witness and bring others to Christ.

**Q:** Are you currently witnessing at your school for Christ?

If so, what is your strategy? If not, what is stopping you from witnessing to others?

Jesus showed us that our strategy is evident through our priorities. His example teaches that the weapons we use are our demeanor, character, and the presence of the Holy Spirit of God working through us. And His word instructs us that the mark of success is the identity and the commitment we bring to the role.<sup>2</sup> George Barna

### **Read 1 John 2:4-6**

These are sobering words. It's not enough to just believe in Christ, we must put our faith into motion and walk the talk. We can know Christ, but cannot have a relationship with Him unless we obey His commands.

God gives us a promise when we obey.

The third component of our mission is not a command, it is a promise. In **Matthew 28:20**, Christ says, "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." When we obey Christ's commission, He promises He will be with us.

### **Read John 14:26**

**Q:** What will the Holy Spirit do for us?

**Q:** What level of success would your students experience on their exams if you sat beside them and reminded them of everything you taught them?

We can expect this same level of success because God is always with us. The Holy Spirit dwells in us, teaches us, and brings to mind everything we need to know to effectively witness to others.

## Read 2 Corinthians 2:14

A triumphal procession means we move forward in victory. Christ leads the procession and He works through us to spread the knowledge of Him. We do not go into enemy territory alone.

### Point to Ponder

Success in witnessing is simply taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, and leaving the results to God. If you obey, no matter what the results, you cannot fail.<sup>3</sup>

### Make a Plan to *Let Them See*

If you are not actively witnessing to your students or co-workers, make a commitment to begin today. If you do not know how to begin, read *Finding Common Ground* by Tim Downs or you can call Christian Educators for advice. In the meantime, ask the Lord to show you who needs His salvation and begin to pray for them daily. List the people below whose names come to mind.



## **Prayer**

*Dear Father, you have given us a command to “go and make disciples”. I don’t often take your command seriously and leave that responsibility to others who seem more gifted in the area of evangelism than I am. Forgive me for not following your command. I want your Holy Spirit to work in me. I ask that he break my heart for those who are lost and empower me to be a mighty witness to them. Give me the words when I am unsure and give me boldness when I am timid. May you find me to be a faithful witness in both word and deed. In Jesus name, Amen.*

## **Reflection**

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

## Sources

1 Bill Bright, Witnessing Without Fear ((Peach Tree, Campus Crusade for Christ/Bright Media Foundation, 1987,2003), p.71

2 George Barna, Revolution (Wheaton, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005), p.71

3 Bill Bright, Witnessing Without Fear (Peach Tree, Campus Crusade for Christ/Bright Media Foundation, 1987,2003), p.73

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## Lesson 8: Shine your light before men

Christian educators are called to witness to unbelievers.

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord for wisdom and courage to be a witness for Him.***

Students look forward to performing experiments and educators have found it to be an effective way to learn. Do the following experiment to reinforce the lesson we will read in **Matthew 5:14-16**.

**Experiment:** Wait until it's dark. Turn off the lights in your kitchen. Open your refrigerator door and observe the light.

**Q:** Does the light spill into the kitchen or does the darkness from the kitchen advance into the refrigerator?

**A:** If you've observed correctly you will conclude that the light spills into the kitchen. That's the way it is with darkness and light; light always overcomes darkness. Many Christians conclude that the darkness in our culture is growing. If we understand the nature of light and darkness, we will understand that the darkness isn't growing. Instead, the light isn't shining. In other words, if our culture is growing darker, it's because Christians are failing to shine the light into the darkness. There is no true power in darkness. The power is in the light!

## Read Matthew 5:14-16

**Q:** Who is the light of the world?

**Q:** Where is our light to shine?

**Q:** What is the outcome of shining your light?

Every Christian is called to be a light. Christian educators often think it is against the law to be a witness for Christ in their school. However, there is no law in the United States preventing us from shining our light and doing good deeds while at school.

The Holy Spirit gives us power.

Being a witness at school can be intimidating. But we don't need to be concerned because God is always with us.

## Read Philippians 2:13

**Q:** Who works in us?

**Q:** What does He work in us to do?

**Read Acts 1:8 and Ephesians 3:16**

**Q:** How does God empower us to witness?

We are given the Holy Spirit. God himself works in us and gives us the power to achieve His purposes.

**Q:** What is God's purpose for us as stated in **Acts 1:8**?

**Q:** Who helps us achieve that purpose?

**Read Acts 11:20-21 and Acts 14:27**

Men from Cyprus and Cyrene were missionaries to the Greeks in Antioch. Verse 21 states that a great number of people turned to the Lord because the Lord's hand was with them. A Christian educator's mission field is their school and they can be assured that the Lord's hand is with them as well.

The Bible gives us instructions.

### Read 1 Peter 3:15-16

This verse gives us several important instructions about witnessing to unbelievers.

**Q:** What does it mean to “set apart Christ as Lord” in your heart?

**Q:** How can you prepare to give the reason for your hope?

**Q:** How are we to behave when witnessing to others?

*Bethany grew up in the city of Cleveland. When she was in lower elementary school, she participated in a gardening program that was a partnership between her school and the city. Older students helped younger ones plant vegetables in the sunken garden on the front lawn of her primary school. During the summer, students tended their gardens and were able to harvest and take home the vegetables they had grown in their little garden. Bethany, an adult now, still loves to garden and believes this love sprouted from the seeds that were “planted” in her through this gardening program she participated in during her early elementary school years.*

Jesus spoke about seeds, planting, and harvesting to teach his disciples some spiritual truths.

### Read Matthew 13:3-7

**Q:** Where did the farmer scatter his seeds?

**Q:** Did all of the seed fall on good soil?

**Q:** What happened to the seed that did not fall on good soil?

This parable is often called the parable of the seeds. But it could also be called the parable of the soil. Gardeners must know a lot about the soil, sun, and other preferred conditions their plants require to grow. Some plants like dry, sandy ground while others prefer to be planted in moist humus. Hostas require shade while roses require full sun. Seeds won't thrive unless the soil is conditioned to their liking.

**Q:** Have you ever planted something that you just couldn't get to grow?

The soil where I live is composed of mostly clay. I love to grow flowers but they prefer soil rich in organic materials. Each spring, I purchase a truckload of leaf humus and use it to enrich my garden soil. It took a few years to cultivate the soil so flowers could grow, but it was worth the effort.

Christians are called to be sowers. But first, they must determine the condition of the soil (culture) before they plant the seed (gospel message). If the condition of the soil is hostile to the seed, the seeds won't thrive. Instead of planting seeds, Christians can prepare the soil.

Once the soil is properly prepared, this parable tells us that we are to sow generously. We note that the farmer didn't plant each seed individually; rather he scattered handfuls of them, causing some to fall in unexpected places.

**Q:** What was the yield of the crop from the seeds that fell on good soil?

Every seed planted will not fall on good soil. But those that do yield a huge bounty.

*Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant. - Robert Louis Stevenson*

**Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-6**

**Q:** Who planted and watered the seeds?

**Q:** Who makes the seeds grow?

A Christian's responsibility is simply to plant and tend the garden; the results are up to God. So how do we cultivate hostile soil?

Christian educators need faith to witness to unbelievers.

**Read Hebrews 11:1 and 11:6**

What do these verses tell us about faith?

We can't possibly lead others to faith if we do not possess it ourselves. We need faith to please God. What are some of the other ways we benefit from faith?



Read the following verses. Summarize what each verse says about faith.

**Acts 11:23-24**

**Romans 1:12**

**Ephesians 6:16**

**Colossians 1:3-6**

**1 Thessalonians 1:3**

Christian educators show the love of Christ through their actions.

If we are to be a light in the world, we must act differently than the world. There should be a sharp contrast between those who possess the light of Christ and those who are living in darkness. It is not enough for Christians to have the character of Christ; they must demonstrate his character in speech and deeds.

Read the following scriptures. Note the attribute we are to possess after each one.

**Matthew 5:6**

**Matthew 5:7**

**Matthew 5:9**

**Matthew 6:2,4**

## Point to Ponder

How do you demonstrate God's love to your students and peers?

## Make a Plan to *Let Them See*

Analyze the "spiritual soil" in your school and develop a plan to "enrich" it. Pray for your school, the administrators, the teachers and staff, the students and the parents. Identify other Christians at your school and invite them to help you.

How can you encourage them in their Christian walk?

Identify the people in your school who are the most hostile to the gospel message. In what tangible ways can you begin to demonstrate God's love to them?

If possible, meet with other Christians and strategize a way to enrich the soil at your school. Prayer is a great first step. Consider starting an educator's prayer group at your school or church.

Begin preparing the "soil" by praying for your school and then ask God to give you wisdom and insight for reaching the lost and hurting in your building.

## Prayer

*Father, in 2 Corinthians 6:3-10 we read about the hardships Paul and the other apostles endured to be your witnesses. Today these words are my prayer. I ask you to help me to follow their example. I thank you for the sacrifices of the saints who came before me.*

*In the words of Paul, I pray the following: Lord, help me to live in such a way that no one will stumble because of me, and no one will find fault with my ministry. In everything I do, I will show that I am a true minister of God. I will patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind. Even if I am beaten, put in prison, face angry mobs, work to exhaustion, endure sleepless nights, and go without food, I prove myself by my purity, my understanding, my patience, my kindness, by the Holy Spirit within me, and by my sincere love. I faithfully preach the truth. God's power is working in me. I use the weapons of righteousness in the right hand for attack and the left hand for defense. I serve God whether people honor me or despise me, whether they slander me or praise me. I am honest, but they call me an impostor. I am ignored, even though I am well known. I live close to death, but I am still alive. I have been beaten, but I have not been killed. My heart aches, but I always have joy. I am poor, but I give spiritual riches to others. I own nothing, and yet I have everything. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

## Sources

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*Let them see.*

## **Section 4**

**Equipping: Christian Educators receive  
power and knowledge from God**

### **Lesson 9**

God equips us for every good work

## Lesson 9: God equips us for every good work

God will give you what is needed to accomplish any task  
He has called you to do.

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord to reveal opportunities to serve Him at your work.***

God creates us with a specific set of talents and abilities.

At some point in time, we will realize our gifts and talents. When choosing our career path, most of us make a decision based on areas where we excel or find enjoyable.

**Q:** What are some of your natural talents?

**Q:** In what ways do these talents benefit you in your calling as an educator?

We are all born with unique DNA blueprints that determine who we are. DNA gives the instructions that determine our physical characteristics, our emotional makeup, and our natural gifts and abilities. As Christians, we understand that we are who we are, not as the result of some random luck of the gene pool, but rather we are fashioned by the hand of our Creator God.

Read **Psalm 139:13-16**: “You [God] are the one who put me together inside my mother’s body, and I praise you because of the wonderful way you created me. Everything you do is marvelous! Of this I have no doubt. Nothing about me is hidden from you! I was secretly woven together deep in the earth below, but with your own eyes you saw my body being formed. Even before I was born, you had written in your book everything I would do” (CEV).

**Q:** What did God do before you were born?

It's awesome to think that even before we were born the Lord knew everything we would do.

### Read Ephesians 2:10

**Q:** What purpose were we created for?

God specifically planned the way He would use you before He even created you!

**Q:** Do you ever wonder why God called you to the field of education?

**Q:** Do you wish he had called you to a career that was less stressful or that paid better?

Too often we compare ourselves to others which can lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction with where God has placed us.

When you face times of discouragement, remember that God has created you for a noble purpose. He has entrusted a new generation of students to your care.

*Tom loved his job as a fourth-grade teacher, but the class he was given this year was enough to make him wonder if this year would be his last. Tom was the only male fourth-grade teacher in the building and as a result, he was assigned a classroom full of children with behavioral issues. Tom assessed that in a class of twenty-eight, only six students seemed to have any desire to learn. By mid-year, his job was beginning to affect his health. Tom was having stomach issues and he wondered if he was getting an ulcer.*

*Tom began to pray about making a career change, but he still felt the Lord calling him to teach. One day, he read Romans 9:20 & 21 and the words nearly jumped off the page. Romans 9: 20 & 21 says, "But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?' "Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay, some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?"*

*Tom began to understand that since God created him, God had the right to use him where he saw fit. Tom didn't have to be happy with where God had placed him this year, Tom just had to be faithful to carry out the task the Lord had called him to do. When Tom came to this understanding, something in his spirit seemed to settle.*

*Tom was able to find peace and satisfaction at work in spite of the tumultuous circumstances that surrounded him each day.*

Just as God creates us with a specific set of abilities to carry out the task He has created us to do, He imparts spiritual gifts to us as well.

### God imparts practical job skills and spiritual gifts.

The Lord gave Moses charge over the construction of the tabernacle. Moses was given very specific instructions that covered every detail of the construction. This would have been a huge undertaking even under the best of circumstances, but try to imagine undertaking this task with the only labor source being nomads wandering in the desert! God is faithful to equip His people for the task He calls them to do.

#### **Read Exodus 35: 30-35**

**Q:** Who chose Bezalel and Oholiab to help construct the tabernacle?

**Q:** How were Bezalel and Oholiab equipped to do the work?

**Q:** How did others become master craftsmen and designers?

God doesn't always call the equipped, but He will equip those He calls.

### **Read Hebrews 13:20-21**

**Q:** What will God equip you with?

*Coleen loved being a Middle School art teacher. For as long as she could remember, she wanted a career where she could use the artistic abilities God had given her. At times, Coleen accepted freelance art jobs to supplement her teacher's salary. Recently, Coleen submitted a quote for an illustration job. But then she started having second thoughts about undertaking this project; she wondered if the job would be more than she could handle at this time.*

*Coleen and several of her peers met before school every Thursday for a Bible study. Mary Lou, a teacher new to the group, approached Coleen one day after Bible study. She said, "I hope you don't think I am crazy, but the Lord has been prompting me all morning to give you this scripture verse." Mary Lou handed Coleen a slip of paper and said, "I'm not sure what it means, but I know He wants me to give it to you."*

*Coleen smiled politely, took the slip of paper, and thanked her. When she got back to her classroom, Coleen looked up the scripture verse that Mary Lou had scribbled on the slip of paper. The verse was 1 Chronicles 28:20 which says, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work ... is finished." Coleen couldn't believe her eyes, she knew exactly what the scripture verse meant. She would be awarded the freelance job, and the Lord was telling her she would be able to successfully accomplish the task. Coleen wasn't at all surprised when she received a phone call the following day offering her the illustration job which she accepted without reservation and completed without difficulty.*

Sometimes we are hesitant to accept the task God has called us to.

### **Read 2 Timothy 1:7**

**Q:** Should we ever be afraid to undertake any job God gives us to do?

God gives us spiritual gifts, He empowers us, and He will give us wisdom and knowledge to complete any task He calls us to do.



God is the source of all wisdom and knowledge.

**Q:** How does one receive wisdom from God?

**Read Jeremiah 33:3**

**Q:** Who does God give wisdom to?

**Read James 1:5-8**

**Q:** When we need wisdom, what does God instruct us to do?

**Q:** What is the condition for receiving what we ask for?

James tells us not to be double-minded. What he is basically saying is that we are not to search for wisdom in a variety of places. We will receive wisdom when we ask God in faith to give it to us.

God reveals wisdom and knowledge in scripture.

Read the following verses and note the benefits of reading scripture.

**Psalm 119:105**

**Psalm 119:130**

**Psalm 119:165**

**2 Timothy 3:15-16**

### **Point to Ponder**

God has called you to be a missionary in your school. What might that look like?

### **Make a Plan to *Let Them See***

Wisdom and knowledge come from God, but that does not absolve us from gaining knowledge through additional resources available to us. How can you become better equipped to carry out the role of a missionary in your school?

Be diligent to learn about your religious freedoms and gain a thorough knowledge of how to legally live out your faith at school. Start a prayer or fellowship group with colleagues or a Christian club for students. Contact Christian Educators if you have questions or need resources.

## Prayer

*Father, I can't carry on in this life without You. I praise You for giving me guidance through Your Word, and I thank You for giving me Your Spirit to dwell in me. There is such a comfort in knowing that when I seek Your will, Your Word and Spirit will direct me. God lives in me and I am never alone. The thought of this is too amazing for words. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

## Resources for further study

Rise Up Conference session video: [Teach With Faith \(Not Fear\)](#)

Rise Up Conference session video: [How to Reach More Students with Clubs](#)

## Sources

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*Let them see.*

## **Section 5**

**Application: Christian Educators live  
according to Biblical truth and principles**

**Lesson 10**

Love one another

**Lesson 11**

Integrity

**Lesson 12**

Holy Habits

## Section 5: Application: Christian Educators live according to Biblical truth and principles

Christian educators live according to Biblical truth and principles

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord to give you opportunities to share what you have with others.***

Christian educators demonstrate love to others through service.

**Romans 13:8:** “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.”

*Dale Johnson had Mr. Koljon as an instructor during both his freshman and sophomore years. As a high school junior, he was in his vocational shop class for three hours each day. Mr. Koljon had learned that Dale’s father was an alcoholic and his home life was unstable, so he made a special effort to reach out to him.*

*Near the end of Dale’s junior year, Dale told Mr. Koljon that his parents were divorcing and that he, his mother, and his twin sister would be moving across town because their house needed to be sold. His mother had called the school board to inquire if her children could continue to attend Central High after the move even though their new home was in a neighboring district. She reasoned that both her children would be seniors next year and they would both be bused to Central High for their votech classes half of the day anyway. But the administration said it was against policy and they couldn’t make an exception. Both Dale and his sister would have to attend North High once they moved even if there were just a few months left in the school year.*

*Mr. Koljon decided to do some research. He learned that if the family of a high school senior moved once the school year had started, the student could continue to attend and graduate from that high school. Mr. Koljon called Dale’s mother to suggest she hold off notifying the district of their move. Her house hadn’t sold yet so she still owned the property. But Mrs. Johnson said waiting to notify the school would create a problem. Her children were bused to school because she worked and couldn’t provide a ride. When they move, her children would no longer be close enough to walk to the bus stop. She would have to notify the district so transportation could be arranged.*

*During their conversation, Mr. Koljon realized that the neighborhood where the Johnsons were moving was one he passed on his way to work. He told Mrs. Johnson that if Dale and his sister would walk to the end of their street each morning, he would pick them up on his way to work and drop them off there again each evening. Mrs. Johnson agreed to this arrangement and Mr. Koljon transported her children for the rest of the school year.*

*Mrs. Johnson notified her district of their move as soon as school began again in the fall. She was able to purchase a used car so her children could drive to Central High to finish their senior year.*

**Q:** Have you ever served someone “sacrificially”? If so, what did you do?

**Q:** In what ways do you currently serve others at your school?

Read the following scriptures and record what they teach about servanthood.

**Matthew 20:25-27**

**Mark 9:35**

Scripture tells us that we become leaders by serving others. We demonstrate our love for others through servant leadership. The phrase “you can catch more flies with honey than vinegar” is in some ways an analogy for servant leadership. If you treat others with respect and you go out of your way to serve them, you become “sweet” to them. If you speak harshly to others and order them around, you become like vinegar to them. People will naturally follow your lead and help you out when you take the initiative to support them and see that their needs are met before your own.

Christians are to grow into the likeness of Christ.

**Read Philippians 2:5-8**

**Q:** What does this verse say about Christ's attitude?

Jesus Christ is God, yet He became a man made of flesh and blood and willingly took on the role of a servant. He was obedient to the Father and was obedient to carry out that role even to the point of death. Our life is not our own. We were purchased at the highest price. Christians are called to follow Christ's example and serve sacrificially. Matthew 16:25 states, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it."

Christian educators demonstrate love to others through generosity.

Just as we love others by serving them, we also demonstrate God's love for them through generosity. Everything we have is a gift from God.

Read the following scriptures and record what they say about sharing with others.

**Hebrews 13:16**

**2 Corinthians 9:6-8**

**Proverbs 3:9, 10**

**Proverbs 11:24, 25**

**Luke 6:38**

## Acts 20:35b

*Pam taught first grade at a suburban school. Her class took a mid-afternoon break to eat the cupcakes Betsy's mother had dropped off in honor of Betsy's sixth birthday. Pam noticed that rather than eating his cupcake, Bobby quietly wrapped it up in a napkin and tucked it into his backpack. Pam wondered if he was getting sick. Bobby often came to school hungry and she wondered if the government-subsidized lunch was the only meal he ate each day. Pam stooped down next to Bobby's desk and asked him if he was feeling OK and to her surprise, he said he felt fine. Pam asked him why he put the cupcake in his backpack instead of eating it. Bobby got wide-eyed and said, "We never have cake at our house so I'm taking it home to share it with my sisters." Pam wanted to cry. Why is it that those who have so little are the ones most willing to share what they have?*

### Read Matthew 6:2-4

The first thing to note in this passage is that it says "So when you give to the needy." It doesn't say "if" you give or "when you can afford to give," it says "when" you give.

**Q:** What does this passage say about the way we are to give?

**Q:** How does God respond to those who give in secret?

Christians often say they would love to give generously but find themselves unable to do so because they are trapped under a burden of debt. However, giving of our treasure is not the only option. We can also share our talents and our time.

Christian educators live in peace with everyone.

Christian educators don't complain or argue.



**Q:** Do you know someone who constantly complains or argues?

**Q:** How does spending time with them make you feel?

**Q:** How do you respond to them?

**Q:** How do you respond to them?

**Read Philippians 2:14-15:** “Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.”

Place a checkmark next to the things it’s okay to complain about.

- You received an unfair evaluation
- There will be a cut in benefits in your new contract
- One of your peers is spreading false rumors about you
- Your class has the greatest number of students with behavior problems

Have you ever gone to the countryside far away from the city lights to stand in a field and gaze up at the stars at night? If so, what did you feel? Most likely you stood in awe and wonder at the beauty of God's creation. It's difficult to understand how stars can shine a light so bright that it pierces the darkness on a planet millions of miles away.

This verse tells us if we do everything without complaining or arguing, we will shine like stars in the universe. This doesn't mean we have to be a doormat and let people walk all over us. That may happen if we allow ourselves to fear those who hurt us, but if we fear God alone, He will help us to bear these burdens victoriously! He will show us the way to handle conflict and disagreements without arguing and complaining. This is one way that God gets their attention!

**Romans 12:18** says, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

Putting it into practice: Learn to become conscious of your feelings. When you feel the need to argue or complain, take it to the Lord in prayer. God is able to change your heart, your circumstances, and even your enemy.

Christian educators build others up.

### Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11

**Q:** Has someone ever encouraged you at a time when you really needed it?

**Q:** What were the circumstances?

**Q:** What did they say?

**Proverbs 12:25** says, “An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.”

There are many ways we can offer encouragement. The sticker system is an effective tool to encourage children to obtain a goal. Primary school educators use this system often. When a child demonstrates a desired action or behavior, they receive a sticker to place on their chart. When the chart fills up with stickers, a reward is given. Charts are a tangible way to encourage a child to behave or act in certain ways.

However, children aren't the only ones who need to be encouraged. Adults need encouragement too. Being an educator is often a difficult and thankless job.

### **Read Ephesians 4:29**

**Q:** What does this verse tell us to control?

**Q:** What should we say when we talk to others?

### **Point to Ponder**

We will be held accountable for what we say to others. Our words can be used to tear down or build up. We are to choose the latter.

## Make a Plan to *Let Them See*

1. Meet with other Christians on a regular basis for the sole purpose of encouraging one other. Hebrews 10: 24–25 states, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”
2. Make it a habit to praise your students and peers for a job well done.
3. Resolve to get out of debt so that you are free to practice generosity. Seek counsel to help you develop a plan of action.

### Prayer

*Heavenly Father, I can't give away what I don't have. Fill me to overflowing with Your love and peace so my overflow can spill onto others. Your Word says that everything I have belongs to You. I must be faithful with the little You give to me before You will trust me with more. Help me to be a careful steward and to use my resources wisely. Help me to spend my time, talent and treasures in a way that is pleasing to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

### Sources

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## Lesson 11: Integrity

Christian educators are to be people of integrity.

**Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord to help you to demonstrate integrity in speech and deed.**

Christian educators understand what it is to have integrity.

### Define Integrity.

J. C. Watts states, “Character is doing the right thing when nobody’s looking. There are too many people who think that the only thing that’s right is to get by, and the only thing that’s wrong is to get caught.”

**Q:** Have you ever been tempted to do something you wouldn’t normally do because you felt you wouldn’t get caught?

*When my daughter Carrie was four years old, she asked me if she could have soda pop for breakfast. I told her “no” and then I proceeded into the bathroom located directly off our kitchen. Carrie came to the doorway and as she began to pull the door shut she said “Don’t come out of the bathroom until I tell you, and I’m not going to have any soda pop!” I waited about thirty seconds and sprang out of the bathroom and into the kitchen just as Carrie was grabbing the bottle of soda. She had guilt written all over her little face and she became defensive and angry that I hadn’t followed her directions to stay in the bathroom until the coast was clear.*

The fear of getting caught is actually beneficial to us. It’s difficult for us to always choose to do the right thing, so the threat of punishment gives us that little extra incentive. That’s why our justice system uses punishment as a way to enforce the laws. There is a problem, however, with relying on law enforcement to build our character. As followers of Jesus Christ we must choose to do the right thing simply because it is the right thing to do. When we choose to do what God commands, it pleases Him and brings Him glory.

George Barna writes,

*We know that Jesus was not a political reformer in the sense of seeking position or power in the public arena. But He did want to reform government – self-government. His message was clear: you cannot rely upon public policies and the enforcement of laws to shape your character and lifestyle. It is not your title, fame, fortune, or network that gives you lasting influence; that comes from who you are in light of your character, your values, and your core beliefs. It is those components that drive the decisions and activities in your life.<sup>1</sup>*

### Read Psalm 139:7-10

**Q:** What does this passage tell us about God's presence?

**Q:** If we truly believe God is always present, how should we respond to temptation?

### Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

**Q:** What does this verse say about our being tempted to do the wrong thing?

As Christians, we benefit from the belief that God is omnipresent and omnipotent; He is always with us, nothing is hidden from His view, and He is all powerful. He has given us His spirit to dwell in us. We can rely on His presence and power to help us always choose to do the right thing.

There is a saying "You may be the only Bible some people ever read". You live out your testimony in front of God and man. People will watch you to see if you actually live the way you profess one should live.

Christian educators follow through with their commitments.

**Q:** Have you ever counted on someone who didn't follow through on their commitment?

**Q:** What was the result? How did you handle the situation?

At times, people will agree to do something they don't want to do because they are afraid to say "no" when asked. Instead they choose to not follow through on their commitment and they feel justified because they never wanted to do it in the first place. This is a form of passive-aggressiveness.

**Q:** Do you have a difficult time saying "no" to some people?

### **Read Matthew 21:28-31**

**Q:** Which son did the will of his father?

It is better to choose not to do something and then change your mind and offer your help than it is to commit and then not follow through.

### **Read Matthew 5:37**

**Q:** What does this verse instruct us to do?

*Eileen excelled in all her classes but art was her favorite subject. She decided back in fourth grade that she wanted to be an artist when she grew up because she wanted to work at something she enjoyed.*

*Eileen, now in ninth grade was thrilled when her art teacher, Mrs. Sprock, said she was entering one of Eileen's paintings in the Scholastic Art Show Competition. Eileen couldn't wait to get home and share the good news with her family.*

*Later that week, Mrs. Sprock casually informed Eileen that Amy had just finished a painting Mrs. Sprock wanted to enter in the competition and there was a limit to the number of pieces she was allowed to submit. She casually mentioned to Eileen that she was going to enter Amy's painting instead of Eileen's.*

*Eileen was heartbroken and she fought back her tears until she got home. She felt Mrs. Sprock had betrayed her and Eileen was so upset she told her mother she was done with art; she wanted nothing to do with it. Later that evening after Eileen had calmed down, her mother encouraged her to continue with her art classes. She told Eileen she shouldn't give Mrs. Sprock the power to take away her dreams.*

It is important to follow through on our commitments even if the follow through will cost us something.

**Q:** Do you always follow through on your commitments?

Christian educators are honest in all they do.

Has it never dawned upon you that the essence of witnessing is just plain honesty? You are salt—whether you feel like it or not. You are not told to act like salt but to be what you are. You are a light. God has done a work in your life. Don't try to shine. Let the light that God put there shine out. It demands no more than honesty. It demands honesty before unbelievers. In fact, such honesty is ninety per cent of witnessing. Witnessing is not putting on a Christian front as to convince prospective customers. Witnessing is just being honest, that is, being true to what God has made you in your speech and everyday behaviour. - John White

**Read the following passages.**

Note next to each verse what it states about honesty.



**Colossians 3:9**

**1 Peter 3:10**

**Proverbs 11:1**

**Proverbs 12:17**

Christian educators are careful how they speak about others.

**Q:** Have you ever confided in someone and later found they broke that trust and told someone?

**Q:** Did you confront them about their lack of confidentiality? Why or why not?

**Q:** Would you ever confide in that person again?

The Bible gives us many warnings about our speech. Christians have to be especially careful. Often, gossip is passed on to others in the guise of a prayer request. A good rule of thumb is to never repeat another's concern unless you have received their expressed permission to do so.

**James 1:26** says, “If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.”

*Jenny was involved in a conflict with some of the girls at her middle school. Jenny’s mom encouraged her to go to her school counselor, Mrs. Baines, for advice but Jenny refused. At first, Jenny’s mom thought she was just being stubborn. One day, when they breached the subject again, Jenny told her mom the reason she wouldn’t go to Mrs. Baines was because Jenny had overheard her talking about some of Jenny’s classmates with another teacher as they walked down the school hallway. Jenny told her mom a portion of what she had overheard. Jenny exclaimed, “I don’t want Mrs. Baines talking about me where everyone can hear her.”*

**Read the following scriptures.** Note next to each verse what it states about our speech.

**Proverbs 12:13**

**Proverbs 12:18**

**Proverbs 13:3**

**Matthew 12:36**

**James 3:7-8**

**2 Timothy 2:16**

### **Point to Ponder**

A life lived with integrity—even if it lacks the trappings of fame and fortune is a shining star in whose light others may follow in the years to come. - Denis Waitley

## **Make a Plan to *Let Them See***

1. Don't participate in gossip. Don't repeat it and don't listen to it.
2. When others approach you to gossip, redirect the conversation to a non-gossip topic.
3. Ask a coworker to hold you accountable for your speech.

### **Prayer**

*Dear Lord, You say I will be held accountable for every word I have spoken. I stand here convicted for the many times my words wrought destruction instead of life. Forgive me, Father, for speaking words that hurt my brothers and sisters. Help me to bridle my tongue especially when I am frustrated or angry. Bring to mind opportunities each day where I can choose to speak words that bring life to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### **Reflection**

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

### **Sources**

1. George Barna, *Revolution* (Wheaton, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005), p.70  
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## Lesson 12: Holy Habits

Christian educators develop holy habits.

***Begin your lesson with prayer. Ask the Lord to give you a hunger and thirst that can only be satisfied by spending time with Him.***

Christian educators spend time in relationship with God.

**Q:** Who are the one or two people you know the best?

**Q:** How did the intimacy in your relationship develop?

We must work to become knowledgeable about any subject. Likewise, learning about another person requires work as well. We must work at gaining knowledge about someone before we can truly know them. When we spend time in relationship with someone, we begin to learn their likes and dislikes. As a relationship grows, trust is built. Once a relationship is set on a foundation of trust, we are free to reveal our true selves, both the good and the bad.

To build intimacy with others requires time and commitment and the same is true of our relationship with God. We can commune with God through the study of His Word, prayer, and worship.

### **Read Hebrews 5:11-14**

The writer of Hebrews tells us maturity happens through constant training. The Bible is our training manual and we grow in maturity by studying His Word. We can gain insight both through individual study and group study.

I have heard that the average Christian has an 8th grade education when it comes to their faith. An 8th grade education is not sufficient for our children to navigate as an adult in this world, and it's not sufficient for us as children of God to navigate in the spiritual world as well.

Christian educators learn about God through His Word.  
Commit yourself to serious Bible study.

As educators, we want to impart knowledge to our students yet, at times, they teach us some valuable lessons as well.

The following email was written by a Christian educator teaching in a public school:  
*I supervise two Bible studies at my middle school every Thursday and Friday morning. Last Thursday, twenty-five 7th and 8th graders came. They had to sneak in because the school counselor and principal had told them they could not having Bible study during testing week.*

*When I entered the room assigned to us for Bible study, the room was dark, the lights were out and about eighteen students were hiding quietly behind and under the chairs and tables, and seven others sneaked in the back door to attend the last part of the study.*

*On Friday, 27 sixth graders filed quietly through the hallways and past the principal's office to attend Bible study. God is so good.*

These students acted in error because they did not approach the principal to resolve the conflict and they did not submit to his authority. Notwithstanding their error, this story demonstrates the students commitment to meet for Bible study. Their Bible study time was important enough to them that they risked meeting even though they could have been punished for going against the wishes of the principal.

**Q:** Do you make Bible study time a priority or do you put it off to do other things?

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Through Scripture, God teaches, rebukes, corrects, trains, and equips us for every good work. God reveals Himself to us in His Word, and through it we will foster intimacy in our relationship with Him.

Knowing God's Word affords us many benefits.

## Read Psalm 19:7-8

**Q:** What four benefits does this passage say we gain from studying His Word?

## Read Psalm 1:1-3

**Q:** What does the Psalmist say will happen when we walk in the Lord's ways and meditate daily on His Word?

**Q:** Do you feel thoroughly quenched like a tree planted along a riverbank? Scripture tells us we can tap into streams of living water. **Revelation 7:17a** says, "For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water." Spend time in God's Word and He will lead you to springs of living water.

**Q:** If you were given an aptitude test today on your knowledge of the scriptures how would you score?

Some suggestions to help get you started:

1. Commit to daily personal Bible study; the Lord will direct you through His Word.
2. Commit to meet weekly or with other Christians for Bible Study. The group will benefit from one another's insights and encourage one another in their study as well.

Christian educators communicate with God through prayer.

God tells us to pray. So why is it that we are surprised when He answers?

*Sue Walters, a high school guidance counselor, looked forward to being a part of the After Prom planning committee again this year. She believes After Prom is a wholesome activity for students to participate in once their senior prom has concluded for the evening.*

*Tonight's After Prom planning meeting took a turn Sue hadn't expected. In spite of her objections, the committee decided to invite a fortune teller to be a part of the After Prom entertainment. Sue knew several women in a Mom's in Touch group who met each week to pray for the high school. She contacted the group leader and asked her to have the women pray. During the next few months, the group faithfully prayed, asking God to intervene in this situation.*

*The night before the prom, powerful thunderstorms swept through the area and downed power lines, leaving much of the town without electricity. The committee hoped the power at the high school would be restored. But when it hadn't come on by noon, they decided to move After Prom to the elementary school at the other end of town.*

*Committee members called vendors to inform them of the change in venue. They were successful in connecting with everyone except the fortune teller. As a result, she never showed for the event. Sue knew why the fortune teller hadn't come; it was a direct result of the power of prayer. She could hardly wait until the morning to inform the Mom's in Touch group of how the Lord had answered their prayers.*

Prayer is an offensive weapon. Yet many Christians fail to recognize the power of prayer.

There is a difference between believing that prayer is important and believing it is essential. 'Essential' means there are things that will not happen without prayer. - Dee Duke

**Read 1 John 5:14-15**

**Q:** How can we approach God?

**Q:** What can we ask God?

**Q:** How will God respond to our requests?

If we want God to answer our prayers, we must pray. God says we will have what we ask for if what we pray for is within His will. **John 16:24** says, “Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.” Answered prayer brings us joy and builds our faith. When you recognize an answer to prayer, remember to praise God and thank Him for His faithfulness!

We are transformed through prayer. As we experience the power of prayer, we become empowered to stand firm against pressures to conform to the world. A beautiful example of this can be found in the book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem and had the best and brightest Israelite men brought to Babylon. Daniel was among them. The men were taught the language and culture for three years and then they entered into the king’s service.

**Read Daniel 6:1-10**

**Q:** Why was the king going to promote Daniel?



**Q:** What did the administrators have against Daniel?

**Q:** How did Daniel respond to the king's decree?

Daniel's character and work ethic were flawless. His coworkers, jealous of his success, wanted to bring him down, but they couldn't find anything negative to use against him. Daniel's enemies observed his faith and they used it to plot a way to undo him. It seems the men are successful as Daniel is thrown into the lion pit; however, the Lord shuts the mouths of the lions, sparing Daniel's life. In the morning, Nebuchadnezzar discovers Daniel has survived and he realizes Daniel's God is powerful and issues a decree for the people to fear and revere the God of Daniel.

**Q:** Have you or your co-workers experienced persecution at school because of your faith?

**Q:** What lesson do we learn from Daniel about dealing with persecution?

Prayer is an effective weapon of warfare that we often don't utilize to its fullest potential.

PUSH is an easy acronym to help you remember to be diligent in prayer. It means:

**P**ray  
**U**ntil  
**S**omething  
**H**appens

**Q:** What challenges are you or your co-workers currently facing at school?

Remember to be diligent and PUSH through them.

**Personal Application:**

If possible, meet before school to pray with other Christian educators on a regular basis.

1. Ask individuals at your church to commit for one year to pray for you and your school.
2. Prayer walk at your school. As you move through the building, cover each hallway and room you pass in silent prayer.
3. At the beginning of the school year and during the year, pray over your classroom. Touch each desk and pray for each student who will sit there.
4. Pray regularly for the salvation of your co-workers and students. Pray for them by name.

Christian educators experience God through worship and fellowship.

In **Matthew 18:20** we read, “For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

We commune with God through worship.

In **Leviticus 23:3** we read, “...the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the Lord.” God tells us to assemble together one day each week to worship Him.

**Ephesians 5:19** (CEV) tells us, “When you meet together, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, as you praise the Lord with all your heart.” When we come together in His name, God is there with us. We commune with God through worship.

We worship God because He deserves our worship. Read the following scripture passages. Note beside each passage the reason it states we should worship God.

**2 Kings 17:39**

**1 Chronicles 16:29**

**Nehemiah 9:6**

**Psalms 86:9**

**Psalms 99:5**

**Luke 4:8**

**Hebrews 12:28**

**Revelation 14:7**

**Revelation 15:4**

**Q:** What is your motivation for going to church? Do you attend worship to give praise to God or do you attend worship to receive something from Him?

**Q:** Do you enter worship with the expectation that God will meet you there?  
Why or why not?

God does not put boundaries on when or where we can worship Him. Look for ways to worship Him during your week. Be creative. Play worship songs in your car on the way to school each day. Set aside one lunch period and stay in your classroom to worship Him there. Schedule an hour or two each month to take a mini spiritual retreat. All you need to do is grab your Bible and go to the park or another favorite spot and simply commune with God.

We worship to give our praise to God. We receive refreshment and renewal when we spend time in His presence.

**God communes with us through His people.**

God dwells within each of us individually. But there seems to be a special way He communes with us when we commune with other Christians.

We are all adopted into God's family and each family member has a unique role to play within the family.

**Read 1 Corinthians 14:26**

**Q:** What is the reason stated for coming together?

**An isolated Christian is an ineffective Christian.**

Christians need one another. Read the following scripture passages and note beside each one the reason(s) we need to meet with one another.

**Hebrews 10:24-25**

**Galatians 6:2**

**Ephesians 4:11-13**

**Philippians 3:17**

**1 Thessalonians 5:11**

**Colossians 3:16a**

**Hebrews 3:13**

**James 5:16**

**Q:** What benefit from meeting with others do you value the most?

**Q:** In what ways in the past have other Christians made an impact on your life?

**Q:** Do you meet with other Christians on a regular basis? Why or why not?

### **Point to ponder**

Does your church view an educator's role as one of a missionary in the classroom?

**Q:** How can you help to foster a change in the worldview of your church community towards the role of education and educators?

### **Make a Plan to *Let Them See***

What will you do to help develop opportunities for connection, community and fellowship among believers at work? One idea is to help start a LIFT Group, using resources from Christian Educators. [christianeducators.org/lift-kit](http://christianeducators.org/lift-kit)

## Prayer

*Father, I desire to draw closer to You. So often, I allow the things of this world to take precedence over my spending time with You in prayer, worship, and Bible study. I understand it is not for Your benefit that I do these things, it is for mine. I need You more than the air I breathe. Give me an unquenchable hunger and thirst that can only be satisfied by spending time with You. Help me to grow in maturity. Grant me a holy boldness and wisdom to carry out my calling to the teaching profession in a way that honors You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Reflection

What information presented in this lesson did you find helpful to equip you in your calling as a missionary in the classroom?

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## **Christian Educators**

A word about the publisher:

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### **Our Belief**

We believe God has a purpose for every Christian educator...

### **Our Mission**

So we encourage, equip, connect, and protect them...

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Through strategic initiatives, training, support, and legal coverage...

### **Our Vision**

In order for them to serve as thriving ambassadors for Christ in our schools.

### **Statement of Faith**

At Christian Educators, we believe in...

- One God eternally existent in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- The Bible as the inspired Word of God.
- Christ, the Son of God, His virgin birth, His miracles, His atoning death for our sins, His bodily resurrection and His return.
- The need and reality of spiritual conversion by the Holy Spirit through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- The ministry of the Holy Spirit Who enables us to live a godly life.



Are you looking for ways to connect  
with a community of other  
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Scan this QR code to learn more  
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Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

**Philippians 2:14-16, ESV**

A red square logo with the text "Christian Educators" in white, stacked vertically.

**Christian  
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*Let them see.*