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IN WHOSE IMAGE?

I loved Miss Hook. She had pretty hair and beautiful clothes. She let me ring the bell once at the end of noon hour. When she came to visit me in the hospital with cards from my kindergarten classmates, I decided no one could be more loved than a teacher.

I loved Miss Joyce. She had a first name—none of my other teachers seemed to have first names. Miss Joyce let us make fake fruit out of paper towel strips and glue and paint. I was convinced in second grade that it must be wonderful to be as loved as a teacher.

Gradually I realized that not everything about my teachers pleased me. Sometimes they gave me lower grades than I thought I had earned. Sometimes they assigned more homework than I could manage. Sometimes they got tired and angry. Sometimes they seemed unfair. I began to realize that some people ridicule teachers.

When I became a teacher I learned a fact that every teacher must eventually realize: the school community will judge you — and perhaps misjudge you. The Christian school community too (in some areas, *especially* the Christian school community) will judge you by the image which you project and the image it perceives.

Many times the community's judgement hurts committed teachers. Sometimes such judgement compels teachers, including some very competent ones, to leave the profession. I have much compassion for them.

I have often suspected that we teachers ought to do a better job of preparing our students to stand alone, even to suffer, for being right. But perhaps we teachers need to encour-

age one another as well, for we are called to stand alone sometimes, both in our student dealings and in our style of living.

I suppose every reader can think of an example or two of teacher abuse, as a witness, as a participant, or as a victim of somebody's revenge or immaturity. If you are the victim, possibly a student or his parents have insulted you for the way you have spoken or disciplined or taught. Gone are the days, you soon realize, when "the teacher is right until proven guilty."

While that sacred trust of former days may have provided teachers with a greater sense of security, it may also have prevented them from fully understanding how insults can bless. When we are called to discipline a student who struggles to learn obedience, we may have to make unpopular choices. How difficult we find it to bear up under the brunt of criticism, especially when parents join in with their children and judge us on the basis of their angry child's distorted view. We are tempted to fight back, to accuse, to get revenge. How much harder we find it to love the student whose mother or father has refuted our judgement and authority.

Yet God reminds us through the words of Peter that if we have done right before him we need not submit to despair. In I Peter 4:12, 13 we read, "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed" (NIV). The key comes in verse 14, however. First we must make certain that we have really acted in the Lord's name. Then we may claim the following: "If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you."

Peter's warning of the former chapter must guide us if we will truly bear the image of God in our professional lifestyle. He tells us to live in harmony, to be sympathetic, to love, to be compassionate and humble (verse 8). That means God expects a Christian teacher to live a life that repays insult with blessing, to answer hostility with gentleness, to meet disrespect with respect (verse 15). That's a big order when a parent comes blustering into the faculty room demanding, "Why are all you teachers picking on my kid?" That's a big order when parents tell their child to " test the rule and see what the teachers do." Those experiences baffle us and anger us. But if we allow the Holy Spirit to transform us, we can respond in self-control and respect, and the image of God will shine forth as it cannot do in our anger. God calls us in I Peter 4:19 to commit ourselves to our "faithful Creator and continue to do good."

I am sure my students are not always delighted by what I do and say. I am sure their parents do not always appreciate the image I project. I am sure that at times I have wronged my students and their parents. I know, however, that my first concern must not be my students and their parents' image of me. My first concern must be my image before the Lord. If I bear Christ's image within myself, then I can go forth with the assurance that the Spirit of glory and of God rests on me. ■

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WHEN fledgling teachers become part of a school community, they soon learn that the members of that particular community already have a well-defined idea of what constitutes a Christian teacher. Fortunately, most teachers can accept the community's criteria or at least adapt sufficiently so as not to create too many waves. But there are instances in which an enthusiastic, outspoken new teacher blithely moves outside of that preconceived framework. Much to his chagrin he finds himself judged and rebuked before he has even had a chance to prove himself. Added to that is often a feeling that there is a double standard in which he is judged differently from adults who are not teachers. And that judgement can be quite harsh.

Much is expected of a Christian teacher, and rightly so. However, some of those who expect the most of a teacher expect very little of themselves. They expect a teacher to avoid the use of language that is derogatory, off-color, and lacking in finesse; and rightly so. Yet from their own mouths such language flows very freely. They expect a teacher to avoid activities which are not conducive to a Christian lifestyle; and rightly so. But they themselves frequently participate in such activities. They expect a teacher to assume more and more of the significant roles with which a young person needs to identify. But at the same time, they themselves avoid many of those roles. In the face of such disparities, the Christian teacher increasingly struggles with what exactly his role should be, what the image is that he should portray.

The Christian community has every right to expect a teacher to portray a certain image if that teacher professes to be a Christian teacher. Likewise, however, the Christian teacher has every right to be accorded a certain freedom in how he or she lives out that image. That all sounds much simpler than it is, for there is an area where the two meet or overlap or even gap. For me, as a Christian teacher, the question of what the Christian community expects of me is a valid one, but it can lose much of its validity when it becomes reduced to a list of legalistic dos and don'ts.

What then is the answer to all of this? I am convinced that the answer lies in a question: Is the image which I as a Christian teacher portray one that emulates the image of the master teacher, Jesus Christ? That is an image which is so rich, so varied, that it will never stifle, never limit, never distort the personality which makes me the individual I am. A teacher who strives to emulate that image will be worthy of being called a Christian teacher.

Let us examine the image which Jesus portrayed while here on earth. One of the greatest facets of that image was love. Love brought Jesus to the lowly manger and love brought him to the agony of the cross. Love can bring us to accept all that comes our way as teachers, the pleasant as well as the agonizingly frustrating aspects. Love made Jesus take on himself a human nature—an assuming of our frailties. Love enables us to put ourselves in another's place, to understand and show genuine care for each student, to accept their frustrating characteristics as well as their endearing ones. In love Christ blessed the children, those lowest in importance in the eyes of the disciples. Love can make us see the worth of every student, the slow as well as the capable, the unattractive as well as the attractive, the aloof as well as the vivacious, the disobedient as well as the obedient, the unlovable as well as the lovable. In love Christ accepted those whom society rejected. Consider Mary Magdalene, Zacheaus, the woman at the well, the thief on the

THE KING!

GERTY HEINEN

cross. In accepting our students in love we can help them handle the feelings of rejection they may suffer due to parental, sibling, peer, or societal conflicts.

A second major facet of Jesus' image was authority. Jesus demonstrated authoritative anger at legitimate causes. The buyers and the sellers in the temple were left in no doubt that Jesus was angry, that he meant business when he drove them out of the temple, and that he had the authority to do so. We, too, have every right to demonstrate anger when we observe wrongs. But, like Jesus, our anger must be rational and controlled and directed at legitimate causes. At such times we not only *may,* but we *must* use the authority which God has given us and not minimize the wrong or take the easy way out. Jesus also used his authority to point out the wrongs in those around him, and then to call such people to responsibility for their actions. Consider again the woman at the well, and the Pharisees whom he repeatedly addressed as hypocrites. Remember that when there was genuine repentance, as on the part of the woman at the well, he forgave and did not condemn. Rather he used that situation to re-direct her from the wrong to right behavior.

Another aspect of Jesus' authority was that he always maintained the position of the one in charge. The disciples were never in any doubt as to who was the master. Jesus loved them and he was their friend, but not on a buddy-buddy basis. He was always recognized as master. However, while being master he was never a dictator. As master he was also a servant. He washed the disciples' feet. A dictator would never do that. There are so many occasions when we as masters are also servants: the wiping of tears, the cleaning of scratches, the zipping of coats and boots, the compassionate listening to a teenager's tirades, the offering of help to students outside of school hours, serving as pseudo parents. Because Jesus was master and not dictator, he allowed his followers to make their own choices and decisions, even though he knew beforehand the disastrous results. He could have ordered a stop to Judas' betrayal and to Peter's denial. We, too, must not deny students the right to make their own decisions after we have offered direction. But, then, just as Judas and Peter had to face the consequences of their choices, so too, we must lead our students to realize that with decisions come responsibility.

ANOTHER facet of the image Jesus portrayed was directness and honesty in facing the issues of life straight-on. When asked by the Pharisees whether the followers of God should support the leaders of the ungodly Roman Empire, he asked for a coin of the realm and stated, "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's." He did not try to avoid the question, nor did he give an answer that would make him look good or that would win him points with the religious leaders of his day. In today's world I do not think he would shy away from such issues as nuclear armaments, teenage suicide, abortion, marriage and family breakdowns, growing world hunger, rampant sexual immorality, the feeling of emptiness that fills the masses. Rather, he would face the issues and present informed and Christ-like direction. As a teacher he would instill in his students the unshakable truth that God is King and that through his divine power all of the wrongs of this world can be righted—if not in this time frame, then in eternity. And I think Jesus would make clear the individual responsibility each person has for the immediate, day-to-day righting of those wrongs. He would fill them with the realization that each individual can make a difference in the bigger picture. He would not leave them ignorant of what the bigger picture is, for as the Bible says, "without a vision the people perish."

Can a Christian teacher who portrays such an image make a difference? Yes! There is so much truth in the old saying that Christianity is more caught than taught. With such an image we can convey to our students the joy and satisfaction and "raison d'etre" that results from personally living out God's concern for others. Then our students will catch from us that sense of awe and majesty that is ours, student and teacher alike, for we are children of the King! ■

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WHERE HAVE YOU GONE, JOAN OF ARC?

LARRY J. CAMERON

JOB descriptions seldom describe or explain all that is expected of an employee. They often provide only a vague guide, outlining major duties or categories of responsibility. If one were to compose a job description for a prospective Christian teacher and further include comments on image, I believe there would be few takers. For if the job of teaching were not sufficiently challenging of itself, the job of maintaining a proper Christian image would add to it a "heavy burden grievous to be borne."

Let us consider such a description.

CERTAINLY administrators and parents expect the Christian teacher to be well educated. This education assumes a depth of knowledge in three general areas. One must first be a master of the subject matter that one is teaching. (Elementary teachers need only concern themselves with reading, English, spelling, arithmetic, geography, history, science, health, and art.) The Christian teacher should also have sufficient understanding of the Bible to be able to supply chapter and verse references to questions on both the Old and New Testaments and on basic biblical doctrines. As a capstone the Christian teacher should also possess knowledge of child psychology, current curriculum practices, proper lesson preparation and test construction, and modern pedagogical techniques. Did you think there were no John Miltons alive today?

Next in our job and image description we should include the Joan of Arc interpersonal skills. Expressed simply, the Christian teacher should at all times be gentle, meek, gracious, kind, and holy. (Parents frown upon the teacher who raises her voice.) Yet this teacher should also have armor and weapons always ready for use. When those soldiers of bad attitudes, tardy arrivals, misplaced homework assign-

ments, confused minds, and impudent mouths threaten, the Christian teacher can promptly design correct strategy and thus dispatch the intruding ogres valorously and gloriously.

Finally, the Christian teacher should demonstrate financial skills that might amaze the President's Council of Economic Advisors. Occupying one of the lowest-paying professional positions in society, the Christian teacher must first remove a tithe or offering from each paycheck. Then she must pay the mortage or rent, her credit accounts, the local supermarket, and her life and medical insurance bills. She must still, however, have sufficient money to purchase the clothes she needs which enable her to present the neat and fastidious image expected of a Christian teacher. Nicodemus would be proud of her.

WHILE the above may be somewhat entertaining, anyone who has been involved in Christian education recognizes the truth in the description. Administrators, parents, and the public do hold a lofty image of the Christian teacher. This is evident from their demands.

Administrators look for people to serve as Christian teachers who demonstrate competency in a broad range of activities. Usually the candidate must hold a four-year college degree and be certified to teach. He should be a knowledgeable person who is an effective communicator with both adults and children. He must be able to manage a classroom well, for poor discipline is the greatest killer of teachers. No principal can afford to have on his faculty teachers who fail to maintain order in the classroom.

The prospective Christian teacher should also be aware of current literature. He cannot be a mole. He should display interest in current events as well as in recent developments in his field. He should be willing to volunteer to assist with extra-curricular duties — with athletic teams, clubs, or field trips.

Parents have additional demands. They want for their children a teacher who is warm, loving, and caring. They want a person who views their child as a unique individual with special needs and a person who has the ability and desire to meet those needs. They want someone who is a fine role model for their child. In short, they want a teacher who is a temporary substitute parent.

Finally the churches or boards which govern Christian schools have one other set of demands. They want their teachers to be active members in good standing in a local church. This usually involves attending services regularly, assuming a position of responsibility (teaching, singing), and visiting in the community. Christians who teach are expected to be a cut above other Christians.

Evidently, the image that a Christian teacher is expected to maintain is physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually demanding. When I began by suggesting a comparison of a Christian teacher with John Milton, Joan of Arc, and Nicodemus, I was not overstating the case. In fact, I could add that the Christian teacher should also have the strength and stamina of Samson, the patience of Job, and the prayer life of the apostle Paul. Interestingly, all of these people had difficulty measuring up to the image that the public maintained for them.

THERE is, however, a solution to this problem. Colossians 3 holds encouragement and comfort for all Christian teachers trying to uphold the right image. Let me note a few special promises:

(1) The "new man" which we have put on (v. 10) is "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

(2) The Word of God should be within us a source of wisdom and encouragement (v. 16).

(3) Our rewards will be commensurate with our work for Christ (v. 24).

In other words, God has already clothed us with a new spiritual self which he is constantly renewing, with a full or perfect knowledge, according to the image of him who created the new self. God is gradually stamping his image upon us. While he is doing this work, we should be immersing ourselves in his Word, knowing that there are great rewards.

Edward Taylor, an American Puritan, pastor, and poet developed this truth in a poem entitled "Am I Thy Gold?" In the poem Taylor likens himself to a coin stamped with God's image, and he is seeking assurance that he does indeed bear the Lord's mark. Several lines read as follows:

> Am I new minted by thy stamp indeed?
> Mine eyes are dim; I cannot clearly see.
> Be thou my spectacles that I may read
> Thine image and inscription stamped on me.

The Christian teacher's image is not one that he must struggle to maintain, but one that he must patiently allow the Lord to engrave upon him. It is, in fact, the image of the Lord. ■

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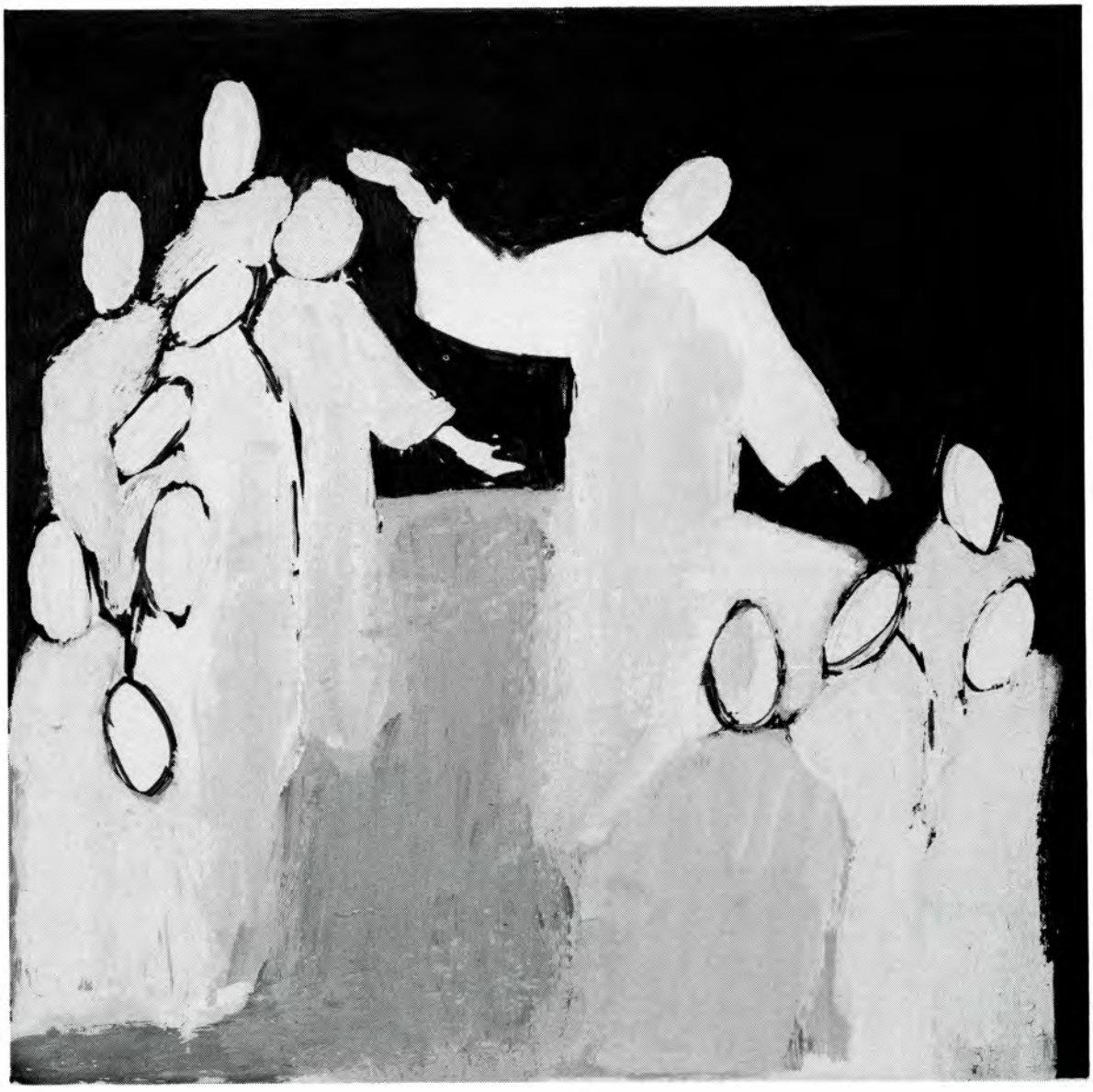

BETH VANREES

JESUS, THE CONTEMPORARY TEACHER

ANGUS M. GUNN

MORE than fifteen years ago I began to observe a high correlation between the ideals advocated in the educational literature and Jesus' teaching style. I have been fascinated ever since by the ways in which Jesus taught. This correlation is relatively new. Earlier in this century Socrates would have fit the aspirations of educators far more acceptably than would Jesus. Not so today. I have no explanation for this phenomenon; I am only intrigued by it.

My reference point, my data source, is the New Testament, in particular the four gospels. I am not going to deal with the critical analysis of these documents but rather take them as given. In these sources the terms *teaching* and *learning* are frequently used. Jesus is named teacher more than fifty times. Furthermore the usage of these terms implies teaching and learning experiences that range far beyond the confines of a classroom. The general experiences of life are seen as learning agents. In one reference, in Hebrews 5, Jesus is identified as a person who learned obedience through the things he experienced in everyday living.

The word education is a popular term today, yet it is neither a biblical term nor an accurate description of current practice in schools. Since the meaning of this term is 'drawing out' it was a fitting description of the teaching style of Socrates who always sought to draw out information from his pupils. If we were coining a word to describe the present day school practice it might be 'accumulation' since we seem to be bent on pouring in as much information as is possible. In extreme form it could easily be portrayed as follows:

> Cram it in, slam it in, children's heads are hollow;
> Ram it in, bang it in, still there's more to follow.

Unfortunately, in spite of the efforts made, accumulation-style teaching does not work very well. We forget so soon. Think back to your school days and ask yourself, what are the vivid memories? Not, for the most part, the content, but people, peers and teachers. So, as a model for long term learning, this style of teaching and learning is not very good.

Interpreting the Gospels

Jesus has long been accorded the status of a great teacher, usually as a corollary of his status as Son of God. Because he was Son of God, the argument frequently ran, everything he did was perfect. Supportive evidence focussed on typical aspects of his teaching techniques. His use of simple language and his allusions to everyday things have been cited to illustrate these techniques. For example, he linked the problem of introducing his new ideas to that of patching an old garment with new cloth or filling old wineskins with new wine. He taught by parables such as the one in which the shepherd's search for the one lost sheep is used to illustrate God's concern for a single lost individual. In all of these his questioning was simple, relevant, brief, and clear.

I want to look at Jesus in the two ways that part company with these traditional approaches. First of all, I want to look at Jesus as a teacher apart from his attributes as Son of God. Although he lived a sinless life and was, therefore, different from anyone we could ever be, we can still fully identify with him in his humanity because he dealt with sin and freed us from its control. He is thus a model for all Christian teachers, not just a star performer beyond our reach. Second, I want to go beyond the generalized treatment of his teaching techniques and deal with some less obvious features of his performance—his person as a man, his reasons for choosing content, his purposes in his questioning activities, and his relationships with learners.

Our approach to the gospels could start with contemporary school needs, then could examine the gospels for evidence of content that might meet those needs. Several writers have done just that. The problem with this approach is the transient nature of school practices: they sometimes change very rapidly. Witness the big swings in pedagogical values from the early fifties to the early sixties, again to the seventies, and now once more to the eighties. The validity of findings from this approach would be short-lived.

My preference is to start with the gospels and identify the characteristics of Jesus, the teacher. Once these are clearly delineated we can use the information to critique what is happening in schools of all kinds. This model will, as at the present time, nicely fit the needs of the system. At other times it may well be in conflict with current practice and its role will be different. Either way, we have a reference standard that is permanent.

Let us examine, then, the teacher, the content, the techniques, and the learners.

The Teacher

We are always teaching by what we are, positively or negatively, consciously or unconsciously, whether awake or asleep, active or passive. Again think back to school days and reflect on the trivial details that are stamped on the memory as images of the particular people who influenced us. It is a profound and disturbing challenge that every teacher must face. In its most negative form it consists of these words: I can't hear what you are saying because what you are is shouting so loudly.

We tend to overlook this fundamental fact because in recent times we have thought of teaching as transmission of content, the accumulation

process I mentioned earlier. We forget that personal influence has been the dominant consideration in the long history of teaching. The values evinced in the total lifestyle are the teacher's most important contribution.

Jesus' teaching activities were always self revelation because he modeled what he taught. When he wanted his disciples to learn that the highest levels of responsibility and leadership were represented by the lowliest kinds of service, he took a towel and a bucket of water and washed their feet. This was the type of menial task normally undertaken by those at the bottom rung of the social ladder.

In spite of its proven place and power in the lives of teachers, modeling is still largely neglected in the literature because it cannot easily be defined or measured like ideas or techniques. It involves the whole person. One recent example of the power of modeling was written up in the Harvard Educational Review. It involved a first grade teacher from Montreal, Canada.

Miss Iole Appugliese lived and taught in one of the poorest sections of the city. Her students could not pronounce her name so they called her Miss Apple Daisy. For 35 years she taught the young beginners and gradually, over the years, the successes in life of those who had been under her care began to catch the attention of others. School records were examined. The findings were startling. Intelligence quotients, the most common measures of ability, normally change by small amounts in the course of the elementary school. In the case of Apple Daisy, however, her students showed abnormally high increases between grades one and six. It was also noticed that when former students were brought back to the school after a lapse of twenty or more years, Apple Daisy would greet them by their first names.

Gradually there emerged a picture of a caring person who had loved her first graders into levels of self-respect, loyalty, and performance far beyond normal expectations. One person described her as singing to her students, laughing with them, gently scolding them, wiping runny noses, finding lost mittens, providing money for lunches, and drying copious tears. Her exemplary performance had inspired a correspondingly rare level of achievement in her students.

So, the teacher who would maximize his effectiveness must, like the prophets of Old Testament times, live as well as communicate what is being taught.

The Techniques

These, as I have already indicated, are the best known aspects of Jesus's teaching style. Some lesser known facets of his questioning styles need, however, fresh emphasis, because they related to real life issues.

Almost all of his questions are responses. Inquirers knew that he wanted to meet them where they were rather than convey a body of information, so they came with their questions. Frequently Jesus replied with another question instead of an answer in order to involve the inquirer in responsibility for the answer.

Of the approximately forty questions of Jesus recorded in Mark's Gospel, thirty are responses. It is a similar story in John's Gospel. It is a pattern that is completely at variance with present day school practice. In the average North American classroom the teacher asks twenty questions for one asked by a student. Furthermore, unlike Jesus, it is the teacher, not the student who initiates the questioning sequence.

Knowing the kind of people to whom he spoke tells us quite a lot about Jesus's questioning methods. To the Pharisees who came with trick inquiries he would often answer enigmatically. The following is an example. It is taken from Luke's Gospel, chapter twenty:

> "Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" But he detected their trickery and said to them, "Show me a denarius. Whose head and inscription does it have?" And they said, "Caesar's." And he said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

To those who were sincere in their quests, he rarely provided definitive answers. Instead, he would reply with a question that pushed the inquiry to a deeper level of thought. This aspect is probably the most valuable insight into his work. He knew that the inquirer had to be deeply involved in finding the answer if true learning was to take place. His response to John the Baptist was one of the most poignant examples of this kind of response.

John the Baptist had been a devoted disciple. He was the first to announce to the public the imminent coming of Jesus. He warned of the need of repentance as essential preparation. He baptized Jesus in the Jordan and, subsequently, urged his own disciples to leave and follow Jesus. His fearless denunciation of wrongdoers got him into trouble with the authorities. He was arrested and imprisoned.

It was at this point that he sent two of his disciples to Jesus with the question, "Are you the one who is to come or do we look for another?" The question clearly revealed a deep sense of doubt, even disillusionment about things he formerly thought he knew with great certainty. It was the sort of question we would be inclined to answer directly with some sort of reassuring expression of confidence. Jesus, by contrast, tells the two disciples to observe what is happening and take the information back to John so that he can tackle his own question in the

light of this information.

The degree to which Jesus responded with more difficult questions than the ones initially addressed to him can best be seen if we put all of his questions into categories. One common method of classification is as follows. It is arranged in ascending order of difficulty.

1. *Rhetorical:* Teacher provides the answer to his own question; *e.g.* Did not Moses say . . .?
2. *Factual Recall:* Teacher asks for specific information; *e.g.* What did Moses say about . . . ?
3. *Probing:* No obvious correct answer. There may be more than one correct answer; *e.g.* Why did Moses allow this to happen?

If we apply this system to Mark's Gospel we find that about twenty-four questions are of the probing type, twelve are factual recall, and less than six are rhetorical. It is a similar pattern in John's Gospel. Clearly dogmatic answers were not his style. No simplistic cliches. Instead his characteristic approach might be summed up in the injunction to go search deeper.

In summary, Jesus' methods of questioning were fundamentally opposed to fixed answers like those found in catechisms. Rather, he sought to guide inquirers, step by step, into finding the answers to their own questions.

The Learners

There was a core of learners who became the focus of most of Jesus' teaching activities. They were the twelve. Later, as opposition to his ministry increased, this core group received almost all of his attention. Following the crucifixion and resurrection, they were the vanguard of the early church. They feature in the Book of Acts and from time to time in the letters written to churches and individuals in the years following the events recorded in Acts.

From these records we get a picture of the continuing impact of Jesus' earlier teaching. This is a rare thing in the histories of great teachers. As a general rule we are left with nothing more than their biographies and their ideas. This longitudinal record of the behaviours of the core group of those whom Jesus taught is a unique confirmation of the permanency of his influence.

Relationships with learners have taken on new significance in recent years. We used to think that learning is something under the control of the teacher. Now we know better. Learning is strictly an activity of a learner. If we compare the process to gardening, then the learner is a plant that grows by its own internal resources provided the gardener sees to it that warmth and water are provided, and interfering plants and insects are kept under control.

Wilfred Wees, the well-known Canadian teacher, called love the "First and only principle of education, one that will be as valid 2000 years hence as it was 2000 years ago in the words of Christ." That principle of love was expressed everywhere in Jesus' teaching. It was the warmth that provided a climate of freedom and reality within which learning could flourish.

Genuine love is non-judgmental of the person even though critical of particular actions. Every teacher knows the problem of maintaining this kind of stance in day to day contacts with students. There is always the temptation to dislike and reject one student.

Judas Iscariot was the black sheep among the inner core of disciples. At various times in the course of their three years together he expresses selfish, deceitful propensities. There was every reason for Jesus to reject him. Yet, at the final supper, just before the crucifixion, when Jesus told the group that one of them was going to betray him, no one knew of whom he spoke. If there had been a judgmental attitude on the part of Jesus it would have been obvious to those who had traveled and lived with him throughout the years of public ministry. Nonverbal signals would have made it plain.

A climate of fear has a powerful inhibiting effect on some parts of the brain, freezing as it were much of the individual's creative energies. We often create this fear by our systems of examinations and threats of failure. By maintaining a climate of love, Jesus eliminated fear and thus maximized the performance of those he taught.

Out of all of this, there is one big question that must be asked: if the highest ideals of the contemporary educational literature are met by the performances of a teacher of 2000 years ago, what have we learned since then? It is a disturbing question but one that demands a response. ■

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

JAMES W. BEEKE

CHILDREN learn much from what we *say,* more from what we *do,* but most from who we *are.* For teachers in Christian schools, seeking to "train up a child in the way he should go" means that students examine our walk, our talk, and our personhood.

I believe that Christian schools are teaching biblical truths. I believe that teachers are talking about these truths in opening devotions, in Bible classes, and in their attempts to teach from a Christian perspective in all subject areas. But I would like to pose some questions regarding the deeper elements of influence and training in the lives of children. What am I modeling? Am I the person who I tell others they should be?

Let's examine some of the basic Christian moral truths we teach our students and see how well our talk matches with our walk:

☐ A high school teacher writes on the chalkboard his marking scale for English essays: 70 percent for content, 20 percent for spelling, grammar, and punctuation, and 10 percent for neatness. His students strain to decipher the last word he has scribbled on the board. At the close of the school year this teacher might look back with satisfaction upon his teaching of the Christian virtues of careful work and neatness. After all, he counted 10 percent for neatness on every one of his assignments. The importance of neatness was *taught*—but was it *caught*? Do his students really believe that neatness is important?

☐ An elementary teacher completes a desk inspection and keeps certain students inside during recess to clean their desks. When she opens her own desk drawer to write down their names, it takes her nearly a minute to find her note pad under the assortment of papers and other items that have accumulated in the last month. This teacher might conclude that she *taught* the Christian truth that one must be careful with the materials which God has given us and one must use good organization. But what was *caught* by her students?

☐ A junior high teacher lowers a mark by one grade and records one demerit for a student's late assignment. "We have to teach our students the importance of promptness and personal responsibility for completing their tasks," she devoutly proclaims. To her students who have asked her on Wednesday, and again on Thursday to see their scores for a test they wrote on Monday, she replies, "Possibly I can mark them this weekend." She may have *taught* the Christian value of promptness, but did she model it? Was it *caught?*

It is good that 10 percent is counted for neatness, that students are kept in during recess to clean their desks, that a grade is subtracted for late assignments; these principles need to be taught. But are we sincere in our Christianity if we fail to provide living examples for our students to follow?

Think about these examples:

☐ The teacher consistently arrives at school ten minutes late and proceeds to mark students tardy who arrive in their seats ten seconds late.

☐ A disgusted high school teacher speaks to his principal quite impatiently " . . . and I'm not going to remind him or chase him; he's in eleventh grade and old enough to know when things are due. He's an adult now." This same teacher appears totally oblivious of the fact that he has not yet handed in the item his principal requested to be returned last week Friday.

☐ In the hallway during recess time, an elementary teacher overhears her students grumbling about a new classroom rule. Angrily she marches these students into her room and lectures them thoroughly on the biblical principle of respect for those whom God has placed in authority over them. She is, however, quite vocal to several others about some practices of her principal or decisions of the school board which she does not like. I believe promptness, personal responsibility, and respect for authority are *taught* in Christian schools, but I ask you—what is being *caught?*

CONSIDER further. When we guide our students, for what targets are we aiming? For which fruits are we searching? We teach our students God's Word. We teach them that God's law must be the pattern for their lives. What is God's law and what does it require? In one word, God's law requires love—love to God and love to others. I believe that we teach Jesus's summary of God's commandment in Mark 12:30-31:

> And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like it, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Let us concentrate briefly upon the second table. The Lord Jesus gave a most treasured and valuable rule (the Golden Rule) of guidance regarding how we should express love and concern for others. Matthew 7:12 says, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." I believe that we teach the second table of God's law and that we teach the Golden Rule in our Christian schools. But do we live them?

☐ An elementary teacher feels that he does not have time to organize his class into two groups for a softball

TAUGHT OR CAUGHT?

game. He quickly appoints two students as captains and says, "Choose two teams." If you were one of the poorest in the class in softball skills, how would you feel in this situation as you again painfully and publicly endure being chosen last by your classmates?

☐ A high school teacher looks at the student sitting closest to a window and commands, "Hey, open the window. It's hot in here!" How would you feel if your principal said to you during a staff meeting, "Hey, close the door there. It's drafty in here!" Certainly a bit of politeness conveys a different message, doesn't it?

☐ An elementary teacher returns from an all-school assembly with her second grade class, slams the door, and begins her lecture: "I am disgusted. The way you entered and left the auditorium was terrible. You were rowdy, loud, and rude. You sounded like a herd of elephants." I see that very sensitive second grade boy or girl who behaved well (as did eighteen others from the class, for nine were actually noisy and only three were really rude) cringing under this torrent of words and emotions. The teacher's words hit like darts. How would you feel if your principal violently accused you falsely in front of your peers at a staff meeting and compared the whole staff to a herd of elephants?

The Golden Rule of love and concern for others is a central theme of Scripture. This theme is *taught* in our Christian schools—but is it *caught*? Are we modeling a genuine or a hypocritical teaching of the Second Table of the Law?

☐ You have finished teaching the Parable of the Good Samaritan in class and walk out into the hall. A student trips, and his books and papers fly all across the hallway. Do you stop to help? Do you pour oil on his wounds or do you simply walk by on the other side?

☐ If you walked into a lecture late and the speaker stopped in the middle of his speech and asked, "Why are you late this time?", how would you feel? If he noticed that your mind was wandering and that you were not paying attention at the moment, and he told you to stand in a corner of the room for the rest of his presentation (the front corner, of course, where everyone could see you better), how would you feel?

The Second Table of God's Law—love and concern for each individual human being—is *taught* in our Christian schools, but is it *caught*? Children learn something from what they hear, more from what they see, but most from who we are.

DISCIPLINE is very necessary. We may not spare the rod of correction nor deal with sin lightly, but our discipline must be given in a manner which upholds God's law of love. In our schools, is each child handled with carefulness, tenderness, and respect? Do the communities in which our schools are located testify of us, "Behold, how they love one another"?

When we arrive at school and work together as principals and teachers, do we go about doing good? Are we giving meat to the hungry ones—those starving for our attention? Are we taking in strangers and those who feel themselves to be outsiders? Are we giving special attention to the academically, emotionally, and socially sick, wounded, and needy in our schools? Are we specially visiting and comforting them? Are we clothing those often left naked by their peer groups' teasing and mocking? Are we spending time with those who are locked up in their prisons of internal cares, doubts, and fears?

Failure to live by the Second Table of the Law may reflect one's disregard for the First Table—love for God. Do your students see in you one who knows, deeply loves, and diligently serves the Lord? Do they hear this in your talk? Do they see this in your walk—in fruits of self-sacrificial love? Do they know this from who you are? The first Table of God's Law—love to God above all—is *taught* in our Christian schools, but is it being *caught*?

Many times my thoughts return to the living room of the home in which I was reared, when I was a young child of three or four years of age. My father loved to read to us on Sunday evenings from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. The words he read escaped me, but there were times when he read something that touched his heart, and I saw tears well in his eyes and I heard his voice tremble. I didn't understand many of the lessons from the story at that time, but one thing I caught—that faith is real.

Is faith real in our Christian schools? What impressions of this reality have you left upon your students?

You may become very discouraged when you try to answer these questions, when you see his law, his Word, his requirements, his expectations. I hope, then, that you realize how impossible it is to find answers in ourselves.

If salvation depended upon us or upon the perfection of our labors, then we could close all of our school doors. But Christ offers a rich faith, hope, and expectation in God. May this spirit of expectation in the Lord and in what the Lord will do not only be *taught,* but may it also be *caught* in our schools. ■

James Beeke is principal of Timothy Christian School in Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada.

"A MATTER OF IMAGE"

H.K. ZOEKLICHT

IT was a mismatch. Everyone had agreed on that at once. And they blamed Dr. Peter Rip for it; after all, it had been his idea to assign student teacher Nick Goldhoff to John Vroom. They understood, of course, how Rip's mind worked: he thought Vroom's staidness might moderate the irrepressible Nick a bit while at the same time Nick's creativity and charisma might perk up John's own teaching.

Wrong! Matt DeWit had wryly observed that Rip's judgment wasn't improving at Servant College; or was Rip trying to settle a score with his former obstreperous faculty member? In any case, Vroom suffered from a serious bout with unacknowledged inadequacy.

Even the glorious spring sun on this late April Thursday failed to raise Vroom out of the deep freeze of his affections for either Nick Goldhoff or his students. He opened the door of the Asylum, and impervious to the presence and the chatter of colleagues, he headed straight for the faculty Coldspot, mechanically pulled out his brown bag, and fell heavily into his favorite vinyl arm chair.

Ginny Traansma was the first to notice that John hadn't moved in five minutes. His brown bag still resting, unopened, in his lap, John was staring into the horror of nothingness, trance-like, entering deeper into the darkness of his tormented soul. Before Ginny had a chance to retrieve John from whatever abyss he was edging closer to, the roar of a Yamaha 750 blowing in through an open window effectively accomplished her purpose. John Vroom jumped up like a Jack-in-the-Box, spilling his lunch bag on the floor, and rushed to the window as if to welcome the Judgment Day.

"Just as I thought!" he bellowed. "There goes that young whippersnapper again, and who's he enticing this time? Ah, you might have known it would be that Angela Hietbrook—she's been making goo-goo eyes at him from the first day he stepped in class."

Vroom, face flushed now, eyes blazing as he turned to his colleagues, stood ready to challenge all of the demons of envy and doubt that were threatening his self-image.

"Well, that does it!" Vroom spat out. "There's gotta be a limit, and this is it! There's no way that I in good conscience can allow that student teacher of mine to continue." John strode to the table as he continued, heedlessly almost stepping on his own lunch bag which still lay neglected by his chair. "It's a matter of image, after all. We're teachers, we're a Christian school, for Pete's sake! And this Nick Goldhoff isn't playing his proper role. He's, he's . . . hanging around those students all the time. He even dresses like them. And that hot-rod motorcycle he wheels around—well, that's worse than the students! Is that how we're supposed to act around here?"

"Would you charge Nick as guilty of conduct unbecoming a teacher and a gentleman?" prodded Rick Cole, tongue-in-cheek.

"That's it, that's it exactly!" responded Vroom, leaning eagerly in Rick's direction. "Conduct unbecoming, yes, that's what I'll tell Peter Rip. I can't have that in my classroom; none of us should stand for that. "And by the way," John intoned dramatically as he turned to his other colleagues, for another thought had just sparked in his rapidly overheating brain, "don't we have an example here of a flagrant defiance of the rules? No student leaves the school grounds during noon hour without permission, right? But here Nick Goldhoff is taking one of his students for a joy ride. Who gave permission, I'd like to know."

John Vroom asked the question rhetorically, but a voice answered quietly, "I did." Bob DenDenker had just entered the faculty room in the middle of the Bible teacher's tirade.

Vroom stared at his principal incredulously, the fire in his eyes retreating now. "You did? Why?"

"Why?" returned DenDenker as he made his way calmly toward the Asylum's Mr. Coffee. "Well," he chuckled, "I guess I felt like doing something like that myself today. But seriously, Angela had to pick up a prescription or something, and Nick had promised her a ride sometime, so I thought, why not. Why, is something wrong?"

DenDenker joined the group at the table with his mug of Brim and looked curiously at Vroom who was retreating now to his own chair.

"Yeah," sputtered John, "I'd say there's something wrong when young male teachers cruise around in our community in broad daylight for pure pleasure with an eager beaver female student in tow. What are the parents supposed to think, huh? What kind of image are we projecting, anyway!"

DenDenker set his coffee mug down as he responded to his chagrined teacher. "Well, John, on the basis of what I've been hearing from parents, I'd say that Nick Goldhoff's image ranks pretty high with them. In fact, some have been asking me about the possibility of giving him a position here next year."

Vroom looked stricken. The demons were regrouping and readvancing in full force. Still the Bible teacher fought back, wildly now.

"Have these parents ever seen this guy, huh? Barefoot in canvas shoes, loud T-shirts under a flimsy jacket, like a "Miami Vice" character? Or leather jacket and goggles like some Easy Rider of the sixties? Have they seen him in the classroom like I have, talking about all that so-called relevant stuff? Or are they just listening to

the oohs and ahs of their kids who go wild over anything that's different and *fun*!"

A sneer of bitter derision contorted Vroom's face as he spat out those last words. A moment of painful silence followed. Then Bill Silver, munching on a handful of Pringles, entered the fray. "Isn't he doing a good job in the classroom, John? I got the impression from students that he was really doing a great job."

"Sure, he's doing a great job if you listen to the students! Because he's making himself *popular*! He's talking about things they want to hear about, he's taking guys on overnight hikes, he's taking students on rides and treating them to whatever. Well, is that what we're supposed to do? Is that the image you have of a teacher? Am *I* now supposed to enter some kind of popularity contest and talk with students about *sex* and popular entertainment and invite them over to the house and have Minnie treat them to pizza and cokes and be big buddies with them? Is *that* what we're here for?"

The defiance was still in his voice, but the fire was already receding in his eyes as John Vroom's demons advanced steadily.

Bill Silver licked the Pringle salt from his fingers, then turned to Vroom. "Let me tell you something, John. That Nick Goldhoff has been bothering me too. First, because he's unconventional in style. You know what a stickler I am for proper dress around here. And more than once I've been tempted to tell him to get with it. But somehow I couldn't do it. Why? Because I couldn't find a good reason why he should dress and act exactly like us old fogeys. He's Nick Goldhoff, not John Vroom or Bill Silver. No, hear me out a minute," as Vroom snorted his disdain. "There's a second reason he bugged me. You see, I've been observing him closely, I've been listening to what his students say about him, I've been watching the tremendous rapport he's obviously established with his classes, I've been noticing students taking their Bibles to his class and to study hall as they study for his class, I know several kids he's helped tremendously with their personal problems—and I'll tell you honestly: I've felt jealous and guilty."

It was very quiet in the Asylum now as Bill paused momentarily. Vroom was hunched deep into his chair, his eyes on his untouched lunch bag on the floor but seeing only his own dwindling image of self-importance.

"Nick's got something special," Bill resumed softly. "He's got a gift for teaching and for relating to young people that I'll never have. But he's also got commitment. And I have no excuse for not demonstrating mine at least equal to his. All of us can at least be models of taking our work and our students and our faith as seriously as Nick does. Isn't that what the image of a good teacher is all about, after all?"

The question hovered heavily over Omni's faculty as the bell signalled the end of noon hour. One by one, the teachers began to gather their things in readiness for the next class. Finally only John Vroom was left; his student teacher was teaching his next class.

Mechanically, Vroom reached for his briefcase, groped around a bit, and hauled out a student journal. The journal writing had been Nick Goldhoff's idea, of course, but John had reluctantly promised to read some of them. Now he forced his eyes to focus on Angela Hietbrook's April 15 entry:

> I always thought Bible study and doctrine and all that stuff was a bore. But boy, was I wrong! I should tell Mr. Vroom soon that his subject is now my favorite. In fact, I think it's the most important subject in school. Goldhoff is helping me see (I guess he would say it's the Holy Spirit) how much the Bible has to say about everyday things that matter to us. For example, I'm just beginning to realize what it means to be created in the image of God . . .

John Vroom closed his eyes and began to pray the demons to their final defeat. ■

TEACHERS AS ROLE MODELS

TIM ROSENDALE

FIFTEEN thousand hours. That's about how much time the average student spends in school through the twelth grade. Almost two solid years. During these two full years, students are free from the tight rules and constraints of the home. They become smaller parts of a larger whole, which has less tight-woven unity and homogeneity than the family, and where they are constantly buffeted by conflicting and contradictory ideas and actions. How, then, are students to develop "correctly" (that is, within the bounds of a certain set of moral and religious standards)? In a large body, direct influencing and shaping of people, especially their morality and emotions, is difficult if not impossible. In the absense of direct personal communication, people respond to their innate need for order by looking to some authoritative figure for guidance. Students will learn from experience by emulating those in authority over them—in this case, their teachers.

Teachers do serve as powerful examples for their students. Many times I have seen students emerge from a petulant teacher's classroom brooding and ill-tempered (albeit relieved), while students have come out of a nearby classroom smiling and exhilarated because of the cheerful pedagogue inside. The personality and teaching style of an instructor affect the students' attitudes and, therefore, their learning ability; students of a boring teacher will be bored while students of a stimulating teacher are more likely to be aroused and interested.

In the same way, a teacher's knowledge of the subject affects the learning process. A floundering, distressed teacher will never convince cynical students that what he or she is teaching is of any consequence, but a skillful, knowledgeable educator will almost automatically communicate the significance of the subject at hand.

Perhaps the most important feature of the teacher as role model is his or her ability to relate what is being taught for the students' own private and public lives, particularly in the area of religion. Christian education is unique in that it attempts to relate all of life to one's religious beliefs. If a teacher can't relate his or her subject to a student's relationship with God, the student probably won't; on the other hand, an educator who forges a firm link between learning and religion adds a new dimension of meaning to the subject taught.

THE most visible mark of the teacher as role model is her ability to relate the distinct qualities of the Christian perspective in her subject to her own daily life. Some teachers dichotomize learning and life. Despite their claims that all areas of study belong to God, their moral and religious behavior and commitment belie their claim. Teachers are then seen as hypocrites, charlatans, and Pharisees. On the other hand, teachers whose lives reflect and are consistent with their teachings will be recognized and respected (dare I say loved?) for it. One of the finest teachers I have ever known was extraordinary in his ability to incorporate and apply to his personal life and beliefs almost everything he taught and learned. The smallest facts bolstered his conviction of his faith and showed in his behavior, enthusiasm, and commitment. I found it almost impossible not to emulate, to some degree, his response to learning.

A Christian teacher is not just a schoolmaster or schoolmistress. He or she is indeed a "part time parent," responsible not only for teaching facts, but also for setting a personal pattern of godliness for the lives of the students. ■

Tim Rosendale is a junior at Eastern Christian High School and serves as feature editor of the Eastern Times, *his school's newspaper.*

TEACHER IMAGE LIVING COMES FIRST

HARLAND E. NAVIS

WHAT is teacher image? It is the life style and characteristics of the teacher which students so readily emulate in their own lives, whether of a positive or negative nature. That is why it is so important that as Christian teachers we can say to our students even as the apostle Paul said to us, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" I Corinthians 11:1.

I firmly believe that teacher image is not taught as much as it is caught. Therefore, a Christian teacher must exemplify the likeness of Jesus Christ in his or her life, not only in the classroom but also in his or her private life. What we are and how we conduct ourselves speaks so loudly to students that they are watching our walk to see if it is in conformity with our teaching.

We are not first of all concerned with the transmitting of factual information, but rather with the formation of lives. Teachers, while your academic excellence is praised, excellence alone is merely academic. It is not your teaching, first of all, but your Christian example (image) which will leave a lasting impact in the lives of your students. Christian image is Christian education in its excellence!

DISCIPLESHIP teaching and living is most essential to a successful teacher image. A teacher must put Christ—"the Way, the Truth, and the Life"—central in every facet of his or her teaching. Discipleship teaching and living requires that our students learn the way of Christ. They are not only to learn certain facts, skills, and principles, but also to know how to live as Jesus lived. The *Way* is not an *it*, but a person, a *him.* If we are to teach our students the Way, we must be living examples of him.

When a teacher ceases to be an example of Christ in his or her teacher image, he forfeits his right to instruct anybody, let alone impressionable students. For example, a teacher who does not pray may teach all about prayer but leave his students prayerless in their lives. A student must see and experience the power of prayer evident in his teacher's life if prayer is going to become a living reality in the life of the student. This same application applies in the teaching of joy. If a teacher can radiate the joy and love of the Lord as his or her strength in his daily life, then the student also may catch it and imitate that same joy and love. The same holds true for teaching all of the "Fruits of the Spirit" found in Galations 5:22 and 23. Teachers, it is not first of all what you teach that will lead your students in the Way, but rather how your life projects your relationship to the living Christ. If you are faithful in modeling the "Fruits of the Spirit" in your daily teaching and living, I can assure you that your students will come to see Christ as the focal point in every facet of life as you convey the WHOLENESS of Christ through your teacher image. That's Christian education—the challenge is ours.

YOU may ask, what is necessary to make my Christian teacher image effective?

I believe the teacher must show love for the student. Knowledge, wisdom, and truth without love (Agape love) cannot be received effectively. The love must be as the love of the good shepherd—"the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep" John 10:11. Love requires that the teacher gives of his or her total self for the student. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend" John 15:13. Pointing to Christ—the Way, the Truth and the Life—in the classroom or on the playground can only take place with this kind of sacrificial love. Teachers must emulate Christ's love for the student. In I Corinthians 13:2 we read this: "And if I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith that can remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

Teacher image becomes effective when you can convey the very life and

When a teacher ceases to be an example of Christ in his or her teacher image, he forfeits his right to instruct anybody, let alone impressionable students.

principles of Christ into the daily life of your student. An unknown poet expressed the huge responsibility of training a student when he wrote:

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day;
And as my fingers pressed it still,
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again when days were past;
The bit of clay was hard at last.
The form I gave it still it bore,
But I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day,
And molded with my power and art
A young child's soft and yielding heart.

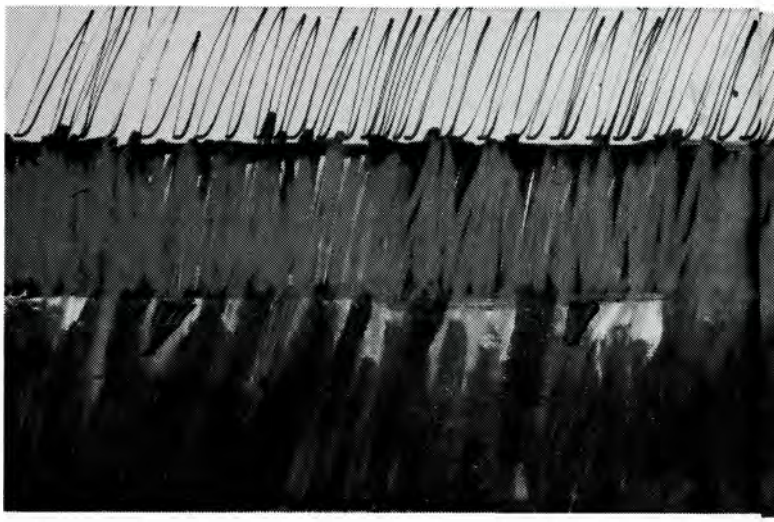
I came again when days were gone—
It was a man I looked upon.
He still that early impress wore,
But I could change that form no more.

We are told that "Jesus Christ began both to do and to teach" Acts 1:1. We have here a divine rule that should never be altered: *Living comes first*. Some day as we stand before our Lord, he will not say, "Well taught"; he will say, "Well done." I urge you to remember each day anew as you bring before your students this example of Jesus: *He began to do and to teach and they found the Way.*

What kind of an image are you projecting as you stand before your students? Remember that education's only foundation is Christ. It is my prayer that Christian teachers will find a new joy in their teaching as they model the love of Christ to each of their students. ■

Harland Navis is teaching-principal at Ebenezer Christian School near Lynden, Washington.

PLACE



A gust of cold air accompanies them as they rush into the room. They shriek excitedly as they place cold hands upon each other's necks and faces. Bright eyes watering, red noses sniffing, they bubble restlessly around my desk, demanding I peep into rustling paper bags to see their selections of spring flower prints and candy-colored cottons. Extracting cards of bright buttons and spilling spools of Dual Duty pastels, they dig out sales slips and compare costs. They hold yards of light, crisp fabric up to their bodies, close to their faces, preening before the mirror and exchanging compliments.

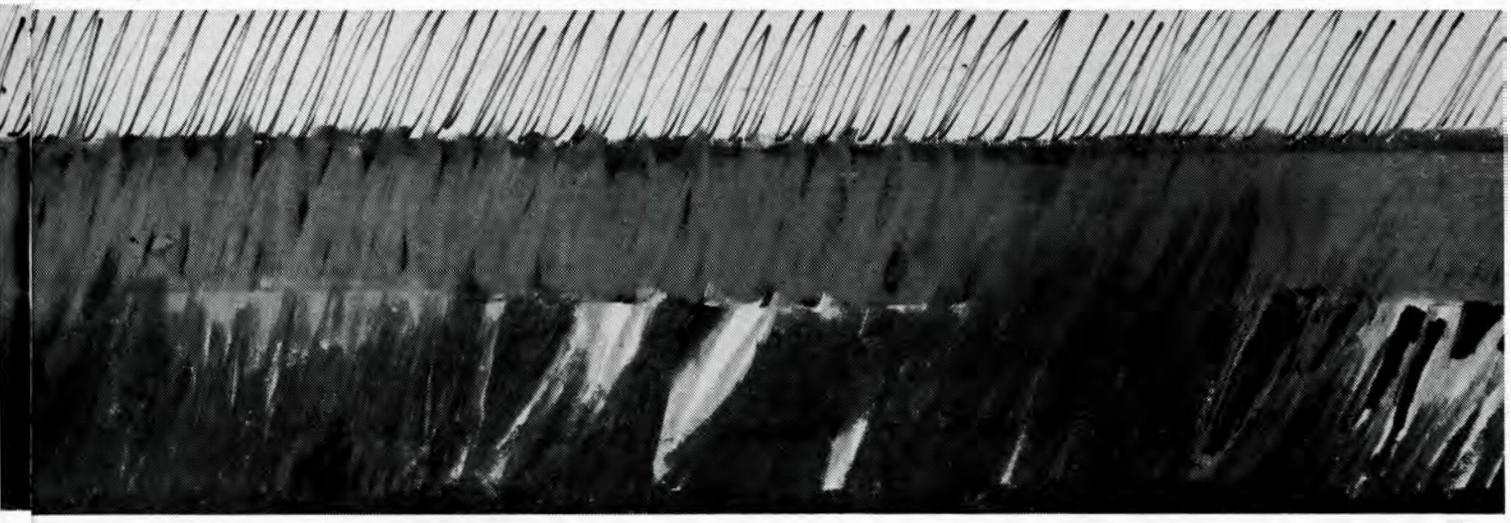
The brilliance and color in this room against the cold, gray gloom outside our windows is a glorious foretaste of spring. Suddenly I'm grateful for these irrepressible, unsophisticated freshmen in the excitement of their first real sewing project. I'm excited too, anticipating for each one the joy that comes from creating something beautiful.

As they check measurements and adjust patterns, each girl, even the shortest, heaviest, and plainest, sees herself as the tall, slim beauty pictured on the pattern envelope in a perfectly made garment. The two boys in class, Danny and Fritz, observe. I hope they are learning something—at least about girls. Earlier, they eagerly mastered the sewing machine and saw themselves as superior to the girls in mechanical ability. Now they are hesitant about bringing in material for jogging shorts, fearing ridicule from other boys.

I picture myself patiently instructing each student as needed in such a clear way that the knowledge they receive will be with them forever. I picture each one's pride as they show the perfectly stitched zipper to Mom and the invisible hem to Grandma. For each, I visualize a future happily designing and constructing clothing for themselves and their families. For some, there may be a satisfying fashion

ON THE STRAIGHT GRAIN

BETTY LOU BRUTON



BETH VAN REES

career. I recall how well Karen did on her machine practice apron. It was perfect, and she cried real tears of pride and joy when she tied the pink and white checked gingham around her tiny waist.

Now the students pair up to straighten and lay out their fabric on tables and on cutting boards which are spread across the machines. "Who goes first" seems to be determined by the type of personality each student possesses. Danny and Fritz are chosen for partners right away. Having no fabric, they will not compete for table space. The submissive ones give in by putting away their own fabric to assist the more aggressive.

I notice Vickie, who always insists on being first in everything, helping Karen, who usually waits serenely for the pushy ones to finish. Then I remember Vickie's practice apron. Headstrong and heavy-footed, Vickie couldn't guide her fabric any better than she controlled herself. The machine ran away with her, and her stitching was unbelievably crooked. She hid the ragged tangle from the others and showed it to me only after I insisted she do so. I remember how easily a project can make a child feel a complete failure. No wonder Vickie was in no hurry to start. My visions of a classroom of super seamstresses vanish and are replaced by practical prayers.

Oh, Lord, deliver them from sewing through fingers and making irreparable mistakes. Help me get around to all the students, especially the quiet ones who don't demand my help. Give me patience, and don't let me add to the inevitable feelings of frustration and inadequacy. Please help each one finish the garment before wearing it or themselves out completely. May this be a positive experience for every student.

May Vickie learn to accept herself, develop self discipline, and realize the improvement that comes with practice. Help me give her reason to hope, to know she will do better.

May Danny and Fritz's appreciation of beauty and of differences increase. May they and the girls lose their sex biases regarding skills and tasks. May they take pride in what they learn and become open to new possibilities.

For Karen, may these sessions refine her talents, increase her self confidence and satisfaction. May she come to understand that all her gifts come from you.

Don't let me, in mistaken kindness, keep anyone dependent on me, but help me teach each one to follow the guide sheet. Give to each the self esteem and independence that come with the ability to follow written instructions.

The classroom now blossoms under the florescent lights with colorful cloth spread from one end of the room to the other. Black, brown, auburn, and golden heads bend intently over the fields of fabric, completely absorbed in pinning on tissue patterns as I check for correct placement.

In this moment I feel our kinship to you, Heavenly Father. I glimpse a little of what you must have felt in creating the universe. Every child and I experience just a tiny bit of that glory each time we make something new. Thank you for sharing your creativity with us. May it bring us all closer to you so that we may learn the greater creativity of loving relationships. ■

Betty Lou Bruton has taught home economics, family life, and child care. She now resides in North Carolina.

MONSTERS IN THE HALLWAYS

RUTH BROERSMA

IF you were to visit our school this month, you would be greeted at the front entrance by an enormous creature, who, if you paused a moment for a closer look, would bring a smile to your face.

The creature is Jabberwocky, an eight-foot-high sculpture, delightful in its coloration and intriguing in its construction, for obviously many components went into its fashioning. Inspired by Lewis Carroll's poem, which students were memorizing in English class, the 8-1 class constructed the monster. They started with boxes taped together for the foundation and covered that with papier-mache which they painted a "ghoulish green" with spray paint and sponges. Michael, who letters beautifully with India ink, wrote the entire poem on a large poster and hung it on the wall next to the free-standing sculpture.

At the opposite end of the corridor is another monster. This one is a relief sculpture hanging on the wall, as an interpretation of Jabberwocky by the 8-2 class. They used colorful pages from magazines for the body, egg cartons and cut-up paper towel rolls for teeth, and a shaving cream cap with half of a styrofoam ball for the eye. (How's that for recycling!) As the final step they sprayed it with shellac to give it a shine.

These creatures do not reside in our hallways in order to frighten visitors. On the contrary, we welcome people in our building and hope they will enjoy our monsters and the other artwork that graces the walls of our hallways—from the encaustic paintings of the second graders (yes, that's their word now) to the pastel portraits of a junior-high class.

But why make sculptures in English class at all? The papier-mache was a messy, sticky job; and the project took considerable class time and after-school time. It also took much patience and perseverance on the part of both teachers and students.

It was fun to make something together, to imagine what the Jabberwocky might look like, and then to figure out the problems in creating it. Students are proud of the results, too. They enjoy the reactions of the younger children in the building who are very much interested in the monsters and ask lots of questions. They were gratified at conference time when parents came and commented favorably about them.

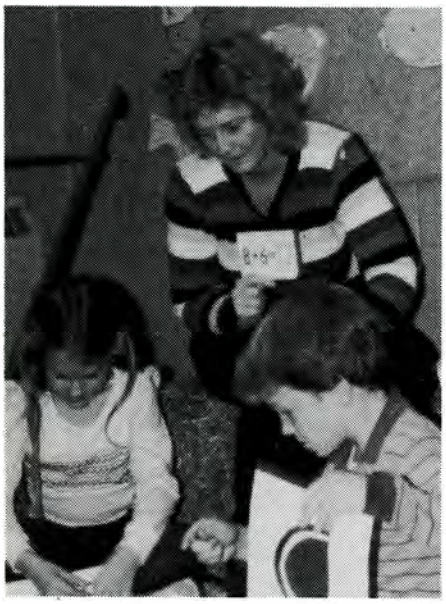
The project began as a collaboration between the art teacher, who likes poetry, and the English teacher, who appreciates art but professes to know little about "doing" art. Both are convinced that good things can result from experimenting with ways to combine the two.

Too often, perhaps especially in junior high, our organizational structure to a great extent compartmentalizes subject matter. In the real world, art and language (and music and science and Bible and history and math, for that matter) overlap. In school it is possible, with a little imagination, to find ways to integrate these disciplines. Creative teachers working together have always done this in a variety of ways, of course, but talking about this particular project may encourage others who have felt timid about venturing into new territory.

Let me warn you though: once you have completed a collaboration as satisfying in as many ways as the Jabberwocky one described here, you'll start seeing many more ways to combine art and poetry. And then—watch out in the hallways! ■

Do you have other ideas about integrating subjects across the disciplines? Note the topic of special focus for the April 1987 issue and submit your ideas in writing. See information on the back cover of this issue.

FIVE SISTERS



Joan Katje, grade 2, Jenison Christian, Jenison, Michigan.

RIFFLING through Christian Schools International's directory, you'll find plenty of Joneses and Smiths, but the five Katjes listed there have the unique distinction of all belonging to the same family. Last November I had the privilege of meeting Betty, Emily, Dorothy, and the twins, Joyce and Joan—half of the children of Garry and Bessie Katje of East Martin, Michigan.

The Katje sisters share several similarities besides their name. All five have graduated from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, and by next summer all five will have completed master's degrees in education. (In 1970-71 five family members attended Calvin College at one time: Emily, Dorothy, Joyce, Joan, and brother Bob.) In addition, these five sisters share a special interest in art and photography, which they attribute to their mother's influence. At this time all five are known in their various classrooms as Miss Katje, but Joyce will become Mrs. Steve Sytsma this summer.

Collectively the sisters can claim 70 years of teaching experience, all in CSI schools. Among the five they have taught all grades from kindergarten through ninth, and they often joke about starting their own school. With brother Bob serving as a social worker in the Holland, Michigan, school system and their one remaining sister having secretarial and company buying experience, the Katjes figure they could run a successful system. They even include their parents, but the elder Katjes are not ready to leave their picturesque dairy to clean a school or prepare hot lunches.

The Katje sisters readily credit both of their parents with more than casual interest in education. Since neither parent was able to get secondary schooling, they always placed a high value on their children's education. Both parents are avid readers, and Mr. Katje, who loves to tell stories, also enjoys math and history.

In addition to parental encouragement, Betty, the family's first teacher, definitely influenced her sisters by reading to them often. But she did more than read to her sisters; she also played the teacher role in their many "play school" sessions at home. Emily comments, "I loved books and wanted to read, so Betty taught me how to read before I went to school." Emily, in turn, shared her enthusiasm for reading with her classmates. She decided then already to become a teacher. Betty and Emily both became members of their high school's Future Teachers of America Club, and they sometimes assisted various teachers with their classroom activities. Betty also told stories and helped students on the school bus with assignments.

Dorothy mentions additional reasons why she decided to become a teacher: the encouragement of friends and her own dislike of elementary school. "I wanted to become a teacher," she says, "who could make learning fun and school a place where kids could feel comfortable about themselves." Consequently, she uses

Emily Katje, grade 1, Dutton Christian, Caledonia, Michigan.

SERVE IN CSI SCHOOLS

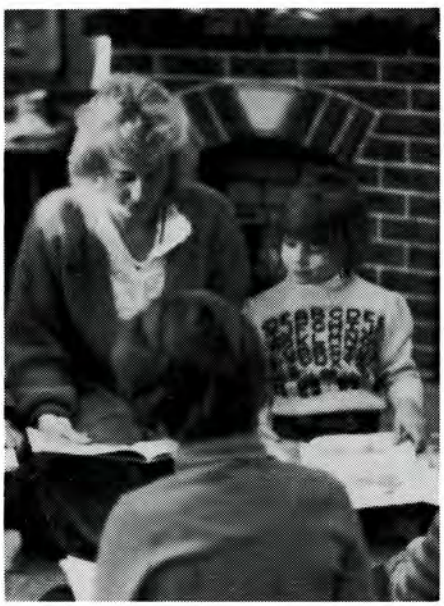
LORNA VAN GILST

learning centers (as do Joyce and Joan) and runs a more activity-oriented classroom than she herself experienced as a student.

The sisters educate not only in their classrooms, but they also eagerly promote the cause of Christian education elsewhere. Joyce has served on the Christian Educators Association Convention Planning Board. Joan has twice spoken at the CEA convention on Talents Unlimited, and in various area schools she has given presentations on individualized reading, learning centers, and Talents Unlimited. All five sisters have been involved in church leadership roles such as teaching Sunday School, Bible School, Calvinettes, or catechism.

The Katjes admit that vacations and holidays at the family home include a lot of "teacher talk." Together they share and compete and encourage and maybe even complain a little about school problems. But they also reminisce about the games and walks and stories they shared as a family. They remember the programs performed for their parents, who listened attentively and always encouraged them to be creative.

From their comments, it is evident that the Katje sisters feel called to serve in the classroom—and they serve joyfully, for Christ's sake. ■



Joyce Katje, grade 1, De Motte Christian, De Motte, Indiana.

Dorothy Katje, grade 1 and 2, Rose Park Christian, Holland, Michigan.

Betty Katje, junior high, Millbrook Christian, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Five Katje sisters and brother Bob.

CHRISTIAN STUDENT WIRE SERVICE

STEFAN ULSTEIN

THE newspaper wire services—AP, UPI, Reuters, etc.—are a mainstay of the western press. By subscribing to a wire service, a small paper in northern Alberta or southern Alabama gains access to the news and opinions of the world. The editor and a small staff can personally cover the local scene and then pull world and national news right off the wire. Look at the bylines on articles in town and city newspapers and you'll see that only about half of the articles are written locally. Wire services make a broad spectrum of good journalism available to small and large papers alike.

High school and college journalism classes don't usually have this opportunity, and as a result their publications can be provincial and bland. Small schools especially, have a hard time filling up a newspaper or magazine with interesting, informative articles.

In a school like mine, with 280 high school students, the news travels best by word of mouth; and printing that news is often a redundancy. We need informative, well-researched feature and opinion pieces, but these require time and expertise to produce. My public school counterparts can fill a class with twenty highly motivated writers selected from a student body of 1,500, but I end up with a new batch of journalists each semester, and they run the gamut as far as writing ability goes. Because they see mostly what they themselves write, the standard is lower than it needs to be.

But the advent of affordable personal computers and telephone modems can change all that. I propose the formation of a Christian school wire service using an electronic bulletin board. This would allow Christian high schools and colleges to contribute their best articles to the wire service and pull out others' articles for use in their own publications. The only operating cost would be the price of a long distance phone call.

Here's how it would work. One school would serve as the data center of the wire service by "dedicating" a computer and modem each weekend. That means that instead of being idle all weekend, the computer would be left on and plugged into the telephone line. This way, there would be no need to buy a separate computer. Phone bills would be kept down since long distance rates are lower on the weekend. Member schools would access the central computer via telephone modem and scan the menu (table of contents). When they found an interesting article they would simply pull it off the wire and store it in their own computer.

Any computer—i.e. IBM, Apple, Commodore—would work. The only extra equipment needed would be a Hayes compatible modem and the software to run it—about $600. Regardless of which word-processing program was being used, the text, including punctuation, would be transferred intact. The member school could then edit and paste up the article to conform to its own layout style. If member schools standardized their computer and software, enhancements—e.g. boldface, underline, subscript—would also be transferred intact.

Initially, the data center could store the information in a second disk drive. The storage capability would be about 50 typed pages, so it would have to be emptied every week or so. In the long run, a five or ten megabyte hard disk would allow the storage of thousands of pages.

The advantage to the wire service is that the best student writing would get a wide audience. That would encourage and reward good journalists just as league participation encourages and rewards good athletes. Being exposed to the talents of others would help students to see what is possible and raise their own expectations.

A look at student publications reveals that there are some fine writers in Christian schools. In spite of the small size and relative inexperience of my journalism class, a few excellent articles have been produced. Last year we published a thought-provoking feature on Christian lawyers, and another on Christians who work with sexually-abused children. This year a student has developed a first class analysis of Disney Studios and the near demise of its family oriented film division. Any of these articles would enhance another school's publication, and I'm sure that there are hundreds more good articles in other schools that are being written for an audience of two or three hundred. A Christian school wire service would expose the best student writing to an audience of thousands.

Besides spicing up small publications, these articles would raise the overall standard of Christian school journalism. Communication between Christian schools would increase and everyone would benefit.

There are other benefits to a computer wire service too. For example, teachers could create curriculum files, donating their best work and constantly pulling out new ideas. An English teacher could type in the name of an author or book and see what other teachers have done with it.

Anyone interested is invited to write to me and I will put you on a mailing list. I will then pool the ideas and the names of the other respondents so we can try to get the Christian Student Wire Service on line as soon as possible. ■

Stefan Ulstein teaches English and communications at Bellevue Christian School, 1601 98 NE, Bellevue, Washington, 98004.

LAURA NIEBOER

AUTOGRAPHS

An innovative way for students to practice their handwriting skills is to allow them to trade and collect autographs from their classmates. First, let them make an autograph book. Then encourage them to collect as many autographs as possible and to enter their own name in other's books as neatly as possible.

BIBLE STORY BOX

Make a Bible story box to put in a corner of the room with your flannelgraph. In the box include file folders of flannelgraph figures from Bible stories you've told. Use one folder per story and label it with the story title and a picture. Children can review the stories by retelling them with the figures.

If you have children who have difficulty remembering a story after only one telling, put the story on tape and the students can manipulate the figures as they listen to the story. This is especially helpful for students who have missed a story because of illness.

REVERSALS

Try this exercise with the child who reverses letters and/or words: Stand behind the child, both of you facing forward. Write a letter (or word) on the child's back, using your finger as a pencil and the youngster's back as the paper. The child can then write on the board or on the paper as the teacher writes on her back.

SIMPLIFYING SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES

Understanding science is made easier when teachers help their students associate the study of science with everyday examples of scientific principles in operation. For example: *air pressure*—bicycle pump, a drinking straw, a medicine dropper, and a siphon; *diffusion*—perfume, dissolving sugar in Kool-aid, odor of food cooking in the kitchen and being smelled in other parts of the home; *velocity*—wind, a fast pitch, a speed limit sign.

The teacher can present a list of such examples for various scientific principles; however, this would also be an opportune time for the students to use their "brainstorming" skills in class.

LIBERAL ARTS OR VOCATIONAL TRAINING? A WRONG QUESTION

As is evident from the February/March issue of *Christian Educators Journal,* the question about the role of vocational training and industrial arts in the Christian school curriculum continues to occupy much of our attention. Of course, the issue is not limited to Christian circles. In the larger educational world, too, the debate rages on, often accompanied by animosity, antagonism, and mutual disdain. Proponents of liberal education, often somewhat ivory-towerish, consider practical professional training as inferior or misguided, while technical and vocational schools tend to regard the liberal arts as largely irrelevant. This kind of debate is not infrequently encountered among us as well.

In almost every case the debate assumes that the liberal arts and vocational training constitute two separate, antithetical categories. As a result, the one is often perceived as posing a threat to the other. Moreover, liberal education and the industrial arts are commonly presumed to pursue totally unrelated, even incompatible, sets of educational goals. Expectedly, such an assumption leads to the conclusion that a coherent Christian curriculum composed of both liberal and industrial arts is an impossibility. Unchallenged in all of this, however, is the very legitimacy of this traditional, conflicting distinction between the liberal arts and vocational training.

From a biblical perspective the polarity between liberal education and vocational training represents essentially a false problem. The dichotomy between them—as well as other distinctions such as between content and skill, between professional and nonprofessional occupations, and between general insight and specialized competencies—has a long and complicated history going all the way back to the ancient Greeks. The Greeks drew a sharp line of demarcation between knowing and doing, between theory and practice, and between understanding and action. They considered knowing to be of a more excellent and exalted character than doing. This pagan view, liberally embelished with various sorts of intellectualism and elitist professionalism, was successfully transmitted through the ages and has done much to shape contemporary education.

The Scriptures, however, do not separate insight from action. Particularly in the Old Testament, knowing and doing virtually coincide. The contrast, indeed, is not between knowing and doing, but between hearing and doing. Knowing is a form of doing. Obedient knowing is a form of obedient doing, and both of them, together with all of life's functions, are to constitute one continuous and integrated obedient response to what we hear to be the Word of the Lord. As the celebrated text has it, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, a good *understanding* have all they that *do* His commandments" (Psalm 111:10, italics mine, JVD).

What is wisdom? According to the Scripture, wise are they who *both* understand *and* do the will of God (Eph. 5:15-17). Wisdom, then, is not just theoretical or factual knowledge, nor merely broad understanding as such. Wisdom always involves knowing *and* doing. Wisdom is insight expressed in concrete loving service. Knowledge and action, though formally distinct, are inseparably fused in wisdom. They cannot exist apart from one another, if we are to be biblically wise.

Imparting such wisdom must be the high goal of Christian education. Our aim must be to teach our children to integrate knowing and doing. We must enable them to understand broadly and to act specifically, in whatever situation they find themselves. In sum, the ultimate task for us teachers is to enable our children to walk as disciples of Jesus Christ.[1] Discipleship is, in fact, the Kingdom task to which each one of our children is called. It is the overarching *vocation* for which we seek to train our youth. So in a sense we may say that all Christian education is vocational in character.

Teaching for discipleship, then, means to impart the ability to put biblical understanding and spiritual discernment into concrete practice everywhere in one's life, whether in work or occupation, in one's marriage and family life, in one's political and financial responsibilities, or wherever. Such teaching requires a diversity of interrelated curricular components and learning experiences geared to stages of student growth, levels of maturity, and variety of talent. To divide the curriculum into two detached—if not conflicting—categories of liberal arts and vocational training means, in effect, to fracture the unity of the biblical goal of wisdom. To ask, therefore, whether we should opt for liberal arts or vocational training is to ask a wrong question. The right question to ask is, "What curricular experiences will most effectively prepare our youngsters for true wisdom and discipleship? How can we as Christian school teachers equip our youth to carry out its Kingdom task in every sector of life?"

To put the question this way removes the polarity between liberal education and industrial arts and enables us to see that they, together with

NOTE

[1] Cf. my booklet "The Beginning of Wisdom: the Nature and Task of the Christian School." Grand Rapids: CSI Publications, 1985.

many other subjects and courses of study, are merely components of what ought to be an integrated curriculum designed to lead to discipleship. Rephrasing the question in this way reminds us that ultimately all Christian instructional activity must seek the same goal, namely, the development of genuinely biblical wisdom. Seeing the liberal and industrial arts in this light, furthermore, means that decisions about their place in the curriculum require criteria no different than do decisions about any other curricular components. And, lastly, casting the discussion in these terms will undoubtedly open the door to more fruitful conclusions than those currently drawn, and thus enhance the overall effectiveness of Christian education. ■

John VanDyke
Souix Center, Iowa

IS WINNING THE ONLY THING

I appreciate your inclusion of articles like "Winning Is the Only Thing" by Jim Timmer in the December-January issue. I think we need more dialogue in our Christian school community concerning the value and function of sports. In an attempt to continue the discussion, I would like to offer some reactions to Dr. Timmer's article.

I applaud Dr. Timmer's distinctions between sports and physical education. Too often we lump those two activities together while historically they were activities that functioned very differently from each other. Simply stated, physical education was interested in physical fitness and inter-school sports was interested in athletic competition. Dr. Timmer is speaking only to inter-school sports in his article, and I am limiting my comments to the same activity. There is good reason, I believe, for discussing the appropriateness of such a distinction, but that is an issue that I shall forego at this time.

Dr. Timmer then suggests two "operatives" concerning sport and declares them both unacceptable because they give too great importance to sport. Sports should not be seen as an institution, he asserts, but simply as an experience like any other experience. As a sociologist, I have trouble with his use of "institution," but I agree with what I think is his main point here. That is, people and society have placed sports in a position far too important, thereby implying that it is something that should be experienced by everyone.

Having taken sport off its pedestal and arguing that sport does not really inculcate important cultural values, Dr. Timmer does a curious thing. He picks one of the cultural values attributed to sports and that he earlier seems to suggest is not really true and he unquestioningly accepts it as the single most important goal of sports, that of "winning." The argument seems to be that since the core of competitive sports to beat the opposition, and since competitive sports is part of our culture, then God wants us to do the best we can at it. It seems to me that the Christian must evaluate activities and experiences as to whether or not the activity itself allows one to express and behave Christianly. We cannot simply accept whatever is part of our culture as a good gift from God.

This acceptance of winning as the good and central goal of sports leads Dr. Timmer to some very serious inconsistencies. I point to three below:

1. At one point, for example, he states, "If sport is simply a human experience, then the value of sport is essentially intrinsic and not measureable" (p.24). But if scoring more points than the opponent is the major goal, the value has become essentially extrinsic and necessarily measured.

2. At another point, Dr. Timmer decries the fact that fans often leave a sports event when the score is lopsided and the outcome no longer in doubt. But if the major goal is already accomplished, what is left to observe?

3. And again, the Christian professional athlete is castigated for believing that winning brings glory to God. But later we read, "As Christians, more than anyone else, we must be motivated to prepare to perform to the very best of our ability so that we can achieve what is essential in the athletic contest *to win*" (p. 24, italics mine).

In sum, I think the key to my disagreement with Dr. Timmer is in the following statement of his: "The joy and excitement. . . . (in sports) . . . is ultimately the result of wanting to excel and therefore, to win. That's the goal" (p.24). I don't believe that the desire to excel must be equated with "winning" or beating the other. To excel is to improve, to grow in your ability, to become more effective, whether that results in beating an opponent or not. Some coach somewhere must have once said, "It's not whether you win or lose that counts, but how you play the game" or "Play to the best of your ability and the winning will take care of itself." Aren't these better notions for the Christian athlete to work with than "winning is the only thing"? ■

Gordon DeBlaey,
Grand Rapids, Michigan

ANOTHER LETTER TO JANNA

When I read Bob Bruinsma's letter to you about the *Writing Road to Reading* by Romalda B. Spalding in the February-March issue, I felt compelled to write you also and let you know my experience as an elementary

teacher with the Spalding method.

I agree very much with Mr. Bruinsma's statement that it is the teacher, not the method, that makes the difference in children's reading achievement. If the teachers in your school are willing to learn the Spalding method and are flexible enough to make changes in the program to meet the needs of individual children, then it could be used very effectively. I see it as one tool among many to use in teaching children to read and write. It was not designed to be a total language arts program, but a method of teaching handwriting, spelling, and reading. Our colleges are doing a thorough job of educating our teachers in teaching children to read by the language experience approach, but few teachers come to the classroom able to explain to their students the phonetics of the English language. There are many children who need a structured phonics approach. With the Spalding method 93% of English words are phonetic.

I see myself as a strong whole language teacher, using the children's experiences in all my teaching. Yet, I depend on Spalding to explain the rules for the spelling of English words.

Much of the Spalding method is centered around learning the seventy phonograms, and this requires drill. For me, this is really the only "regimented" part of the program. I compare learning the phonograms to learning number facts or Bible verses. It takes work. Often the meaning is not understood until well after the memory work has taken place, but this does not mean we do not encourage memorization. With Spalding, such drill is handled quickly and is eliminated once the children know the phonograms fairly well because they are applying them daily in their spelling lessons.

In all of our teaching, we must consider the type of learner we are teaching and where she is in the learning process. Some children become frustrated with the phonics approach and do much better with the whole word approach. Others come to us reading and spelling with fluency. Should we require these students to learn phonics? NO! I think our teachers are competent enough to recognize these students and plan alternative approaches for them.

Some things I particularly like about Spalding are that words are taught in the order of their frequency and not in categories, that rules for spelling are taught by examples in the context of the words being written, and that students can be tested individually and placed in the Ayres List of 1500 words at the level of difficulty that they are capable of. Spelling is taught as a very precise skill, and there is movement back and forth in the list as the children work for mastery of the words.

I also like Mrs. Spalding's emphasis on good literature as a base for the reading program. The children read silently every day in books of their choice, and they read orally each day from a teacher-chosen book. This is a whole class lesson and is a basis for discussion of both the context and the style of writing of the author.

In our school, we use a basal reading program that is primarily whole word with some incidental phonics. We feel that the Spalding method has equipped our teachers with another method to use alongside the basal. Hopefully, by using both methods, we are meeting the needs of more of our learners.

As you make your decision on whether or not to include Spalding in your curriculum, there is one more thing to keep in mind. In the published report of the National Academy of Education, *Becoming A Nation of Readers,* reseachers report that "children who were taught phonics got off to a better start in learning to read than children who were not taught phonics."

Planning a language arts program is an ongoing responsibility. We must be in constant touch with the changing needs of our students and the information that recent educational research has to offer us. "Christian teachers, especially, must help students to enjoy, to appreciate, to understand, to evaluate, and to use language and literature. Our ultimate end is God's service."

Norma Bohm
Grand Rapids, Michigan

NOTES

1. Spalding, Romalda B. *The Writing Road to Reading,* 2nd ed. New York: William Morrow and Company Inc., 1969.
2. *Becoming a Nation of Readers.* The Report of the Commission on Reading, 1985. (Available from Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois, 174 Children's Research Center, 51 Gerty Drive, Champaign, IL 61820)
3. An exerpt from the philosophy of the Language Arts Curriculum Study, Grand Rapids Christian School Association, 1985.

DONALD OPPEWAL

REPORTING TEACHER GROWTH
Authors: Carl Mulder and Arnold Snoeyink
Christian Schools International
Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1984
102 pp. $5.25 pb.
Reviewed by Nick Kool, Western Michigan Christian High School, Muskegon, Michigan.

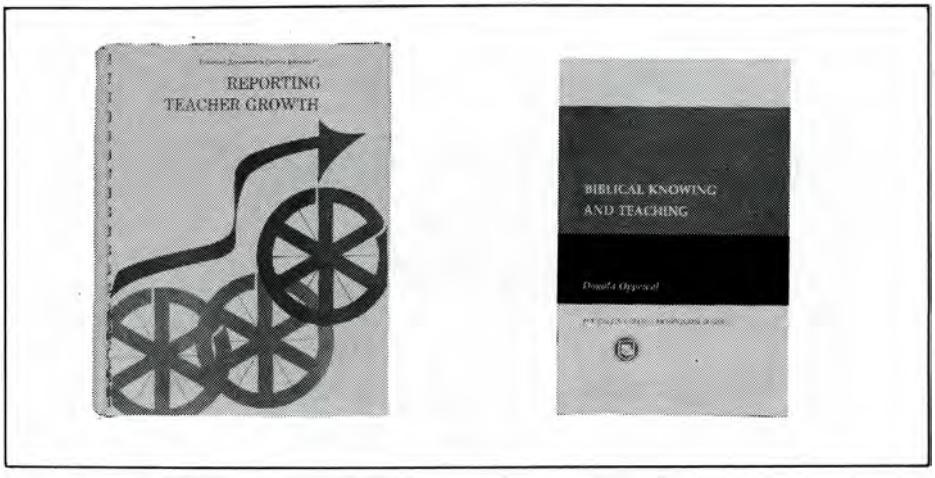
This is the seventh in a series of modules aimed at improving the quality of Christian education and educators. This work is long overdue in our Christian schools. With the current concern over the effectiveness of education we should step back and examine how we can better accomplish our task. *Reporting Teacher Growth* does just this. It presents a comprehensive plan of action we review current systems of evaluation or create an effective evaluative tool for teacher growth.

The organization is easy to follow. The sessions suggested are in logical sequence, with detailed plans for each. It also leaves room for creative thinking and planning on the part of each individual staff.

Reporting Teacher Growth calls for four separate staff meetings of approximately seventy minutes each. Each requires some preparation on the part of all participants. Session one examines the biblical perspective of evaluation. Provided are practical assessment exercises to determine interpersonal relationships on your staff and suggestions for the development of the biblical basis for evaluation.

The second session explores a very interesting subject: effective teaching. This is an excellent chance for your staff to identify what effective teaching is for *your* school. The session provides insights into the history of and current dimensions of effective teaching. Included are two current articles on the subject of effective teaching. This session helps identify traits, competencies, and practices necessary for effective instruction.

The third session is geared toward answering the difficult questions of who should evaluate, what should be evaluated, and how to use the evaluations. A number of activities are provided to assist in the development of evaluation for many groups including self, peer, student, administrator, board, and parent. The appendix provides a large number of forms which can be used for the various observations.



The final session deals with the critical question of teacher growth. Session four gives practical suggestions of how to motivate teachers toward improved teaching, how to assess each individual teacher's needs, and how to meet those needs. The exercises suggested are excellent tools to show how we can improve.

The module concludes with an epilogue where evaluation for decision-making is discussed. A brief look at biblical principles is given with some helpful suggestions on how to deal with the difficult questions of retaining or releasing teachers on the basis of their competence.

Reporting Teacher Growth encourages a maximum of teacher involvement and imput. It is a hands-on process for the development of evaluation for growth in K-12 schools. The module develops a thoroughly biblical and educationally sound basis for evaluation. ■

BIBLICAL KNOWING AND TEACHING
Author: Donald Oppewal
Calvin College Monograph, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1985, 28 pp. $2.00, pb.
Reviewed by Robert L. Mulder, Assistant Professor of Education, Wittenburg University, Springfield, Ohio 45501

Consider, choose, and commit. These three concepts are at the heart of *Biblical Knowing And Teaching*. Their presence is implicitly clear in the manner in which Oppewal approaches his topic, and their presence is explicit in the methodology he recommends for all teachers who would create optimum conditions for biblical learning. An ambitious essay, an acknowledged "profession of educational faith," this monograph distills nearly thirty years of considering, choosing, and committing as a professional philosopher/teacher seeking to understand and integrate faith, learning, and action in a biblical manner. It should be of interest to every Christian educational theorist and to every Christian classroom teacher.

Establishing in the introduction his acceptance of the view that the Bible presents a holistic picture of the nature of man, and that holism has implications for the theory and practice of schooling, Oppewal divides this essay into three sections: Holistic Epistemology, Holistic Classroom Methodology, and Holistic Curriculum. In the first section he considers epistemo-

logical assumptions upon which theories of curriculum and methodology might be grounded. He shows preference for an interactive model, where "knowing" is both a verb and a noun interdependently; it is a process of direct physical and mental interaction between the knower and the to-be-known. Oppewal believes this model characterizes "knowing" as it is presented in Scripture and believes it to be a paradigm for all knowing. This interpretation affects the second and third sections.

In the second section he considers a methodology for classroom instruction. Predictably, it features interactive "biblical" knowing, and it consists of three sequential phases for instruction: consider, choose, and commit, reminiscent of Terry Borton's "Sensing, Transforming, and Acting" as presented in his book *Reach, Touch, And Teach*. In the consider phase, teachers should enable a student to encounter the "is" of the to-be-known, and to begin to relate to it personally. In the choose phase, teachers should enable students to encounter whatever "oughts" might be involved. Moral tensions are to be sharpened, and the principles governing choosing among options are to be studied in greater detail. In the commit phase, teachers should enable students to move toward a commitment to act in response to the "is" and to the "ought."

In the third section Oppewal outlines a curriculum compatible with such an epistemology and methodology. The reader might wish Oppewal had stated explicitly the definition he holds; by inference, the definition of curriculum which appears to be operating is one embracing the content, the methodology, and probably the aims of any specifically identifiable teacher-directed student learning activity.

Oppewal's credentials as an educational theorist and an educational practitioner are implicitly clear, but this essay is neither an abstract treatise nor a concrete curriculum guide. With equal respect for both biblical theorizing and the practice of Christian education, he explores the middle ground between them, not to bridge a gap, but to fill it. In so doing, he contributes to the development of a much-needed holistic understanding of education which does justice to the concerns of both theory and practice, and is compatible with Scripture. This, finally, is the chief virtue of the monograph. ■

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