

An Educational Philosophy for Lutheran Education

Some Key Priorities and Assumptions

Lutheran education should not simply be designed to prepare students to make a living. It should prepare them to make a life. If a person can successfully address the temporal and spiritual challenges of making a life - both now and in eternity . . . making a living is easy.

There needs always to be a vital link between knowing and doing. Only as students learn what is good can they place it above themselves and do it.

Students need to hone the fundamental language skills (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) so that they can successfully carry out their own inquiries into what is significantly true, good and beautiful. Students need to become educated persons. This means, in part, to receive an education that enables them not to have to depend on what others tell them to comprehend the meaning of important events that swirl around them in life.

Since Christian men and women inhabit both the world and the Kingdom of God, our children need an education that will equip them simultaneously to engage the world's fight and trust in the soul's salvation. For this you need to impart good knowledge, form good character, and nurture good faith. There is no other way.

Students become voracious learners when they become hooked on learning. This is done by relating the great ideas of Western Civilization to the three most engaging questions of human existence that have dominated the Great Conversation down through the ages: What is life? What is death? How can I secure the future? I believe that every human being is passionately interested in finding real answers here. The interest is forced by human existence itself.

Christian parents often fear when their children go off to a secular university that they might "graduate" from the Church's confession before they graduate from Secular U. These fears are well founded . . . many do. It is vital that Lutheran education provide the means whereby a Christian's faith life may grow in knowledge that is shaped by the Christian world-view.

We believe that Christian young people need to know not only what the faith is, but also why it is true. If they do not know why, in terms of faith, then they cannot answer why not to the challenges of unbelief. Christian young people must learn the whys of faith as well as the whats to calm honest and serious doubts and to give a defense for the hope that is in them.

We believe that excellent Christian schools are not just the educational answer for Christian families over against poor or mediocre secular schools. Excellent Christian schools are especially the answer over against the really good secular ones. No education is innocent of an attitude toward man and his purposes. All government public institutions teach all subjects where meaning, purpose, and value are formed by the absence of God and His revelation. They are legally required to do so. They also teach students how to be socialized devoid of the moral absolutes of the Creator. It is in the really effective and competent public schools that students effectively learn to understand the world and how to live in it without God.

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