

My thought

Education Sunday 2019

September 1, 2019

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Education as a Ministry of the Church

I will lift up my hands unto thy commandments, which I have loved; I will meditate on your statutes (Psalm 119: 48).

Education as a Ministry is of the utmost importance in the life of the Church. Eph 4.12 ಆತನು ಕೆಲವರನ್ನು ಅಪೋಸ್ತರನ್ನಾಗಿಯೂ ಕೆಲವರನ್ನು ….. ಉಪದೇಶಿಗಳನ್ನಾಗಿಯೂ ಅನುಗ್ರಹಿಸಿದನು. Scripture authenticates 'teaching' is one of the ministries of the church. To educate and get an education, in **Scriptures, has been important both in Old and New Testament times. The process of receiving or giving systematic instruction(s) found in the scriptures are** beyond earning degrees. It is more than bookish knowledge. According to scripture, **education** means inculcating moral and kingdom values, positive thinking, attitude of helping, attitude of giving to society and ethical values these kind of students/members are only able to bring changes in church and society.

Jesus, the Teacher, and the Example of All Education (Matt. 5: 1-12). A sound philosophical statement is not enough, however, to experience the transformation of lives, What is on paper must be put into practice for it to make a difference. The Sermon on the Mount is very famous (Matt. 5,6,7). Many are impressed by these teachings of Jesus and have accepted Jesus as their Guru. In this portion, **Jesus our Guru gives us knowledge** not to get influenced by the world but to influence the world around us and change it into something better. The **main purpose of his teaching** was to open up the mind of his disciples and prepare them to face the real world, its trails, & challenges. His focus was to bring his hearers to enlightenment (self-realization) & life-changing experiences (Mat 5:13-16).

When God designed the church, he designated leaders to lead the church, teachers to teach the church, servants to serve the church (Acts 18: 24-28). You know that each believer has been given a spiritual gift by the Holy Spirit. When Paul left Corinth, Aquilas stayed with Paul and stayed at Ephesus. Upon arriving, they received Apollos and taught him the way of Christ (Acts 18: 24-28). **With the aid of his brothers and sisters in Christ, Apollos' spiritual gifts matured until the reached maximum effectiveness.** After encountering Aquila and Priscilla, he was more adequate in communicating the way of God. Apollos became most adequate in debating and proving the deity of Christ. Aquila and Priscilla are an example in teaching others God's Word.

The Christian Education ministry of the church is not a one person job. It takes many people working at different levels and in different capacities. Charles Swindoll asks the following: who taught Martin Luther his theology and inspired his translation of the New Testament? who visited Dwight L. Moody at a shoe store and spoke to him about Christ? who was the elderly woman who prayed faithfully for Billy Graham for over twenty years? who financed William Carey's ministry in India? who helped Charles Wesley get underway as a composer of hymns? who personally taught G. Campbell Morgan, "the peerless expositor," his techniques in the pulpit? you probably don't know, do you? Swindoll writes, **"Had it not been for those unknown people - those 'nobodies' - a large chunk of church history would be missing and a lot of lives would have been untouched"** but they were people just like you and me, and God used them to encourage and empower others, and as a result church history was changed. God can use you to empower others.



Teaching the Law was an important ministry among the people of Israel (**Neh. 8: 1-8).** Scribes were trained in reading various languages as well as copying literature and interpreting what it means to the people. Many scribes were also priests and/or community leaders, as Ezra was to study and interpret the Law systematically (Matt. 23:2,13,14,15,23,25,27,29). The scribes were legal advisers. They were guardians of culture and tradition (Matt.12: 35; Mark 14: 43,53). Ezra was the leader of a group of Jews who had returned from exile to Babylon with Zerubbabel. He was an expert in the Law of Moses (Ezra 7: 6,11,12). Through his ministry, people started obeying God's Word again. The Temple was also rebuilt. Look at how his ministry was described: He "had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel" (Ezra 7:10). look at Neh. 8:2. Ezra is now at the forefront. Don't miss this: "they told Ezra." Who told Ezra to start reading? THE PEOPLE! "Bring out the book Ezra! Give us the Word!" Wow. The people wanted it. Ezra reads from it for six-seven hours according to Neh. 8:3. Ezra stands on a huge platform and addressed the crowd. Remember, we are talking about 50,000 people here! Apparently, he is not alone according to Neh. 8:4, as some thirteen men join him, who were probably all priests, Levites or lay leaders. **The reading and teaching of Ezra led to the restoration of Israel. Even in the New Testament, Paul instructs Timothy to give attention in church meetings "to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching" (1 Tim. 4:13).** See, ministry is not just for the pastor. The ministry belongs to everybody. The same thing happened during the Reformation, which at its heart was a revival of God's Word. Here is the point for us today: John Wycliffe and William Tyndale labored to get the Bible translated into common English. Martin Luther translated the Bible into German. John Calvin began to preach expository sermons, explaining and applying the Word to the people of Geneva. The Reformation theme, *sola scriptura*, renewed God's people. Undoubtedly, **The center of this revival is the education and exposition (reading, hearing, studying, teaching, and applying) of Scripture.**

EDUCATION IS THE GREAT ENGINE OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT. IT IS THROUGH EDUCATION THAT THE DAUGHTER OF A PEASANT CAN BECOME A DOCTOR; THAT THE SON OF A MINEWORKER CAN BECOME THE HEAD OF THE MINE; THAT THE CHILD OF FARM WORKERS CAN BECOME THE PRESIDENT OF A GREAT NATION.

- NELSON MANDELA

Major Challenges in Education today:

- **Unqualified teachers and shortage of quality teachers. More than 30% of them not having a degree**
- **Lack of professional training programs**
- **Poor Infrastructure**
- **Inadequate payment**
- **The ratio of public schools to private schools in India**
- **Family and Economic Factors**
- **Technology**
- **Bullying**
- **Student Attitudes and Behaviors**
- **Parent Involvement**
- **Political influence**
- **Defective Educational Administration**
- **Unsatisfactory Teaching Standard**
- **Defective Curriculum**
- **Does our education system morally and spiritually motive to liberate from ignorance, energising to fight for the rights and to build a new World Order of Peace or is it self-centered and money minded?**
- **What is the purpose of secular education?**
- **Is there room for raising 'Critical Consciousness'?**
- **Are the christian Institutions reaching out its hand to engage fully in service to the poor, the oppressed and the suffering?**
- **Is Didache clear of its goals?**

In the present scenario of commercialization of education, the New Education Policy further erodes the basic principles of education. Today, both Catholic and Protestant churches are largely involved in Education ministry. Many Indians who achieved great things attended Christian schools. Nevertheless, Christian Institutions, especially CSI Schools, should be well aware of the basic problems in the education system, we should meet the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regards to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make our society a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry. The present environmental and economic challenges, and those of human development, global poverty, and social evils etc prevalent in our midst can only be faced by creating Christ-centered climate in our church and society through education ministry.

HAVE A BLESSED SUNDAY