

CURRENTS

UPDATE ON THE CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF THE
CHRISTIAN PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION OF BC

More Than Icing

By Trent De Jong, English Teacher, Abbotsford Christian School

There are different types of Christian schools. Ours is of one type and our philosophy of Christian education has significant implications as to how one treats movies used in class. In his book, *Christ and Culture*, H. Richard Niebuhr describes various Christian perspectives on the relationship between Christ and culture. These responses are useful for distinguishing these different types of schools.

One group of Christian school sees an antithetical relationship between the culture and those who proclaim Jesus as Lord. Niebuhr calls this stance, *Christ against Culture*. Adherents believe that to be loyal to Christ one must reject culture. One of the problems with this view, according to Niebuhr, is that separation from the world isn't really possible. Further, this view seems to presuppose that sin lies in culture and that by avoiding culture, one can avoid sin. A final problem is that, at its root, the *Christ against Culture* model seems to suggest that Christ has little or nothing to do with culture—that the material world of which culture is a part, is at odds with the spiritual world, ruled by God.

The purpose of the Christian school, then, would be to further the separation of the Christian community from the culture as a whole.

Not all Christians frame the relationship between Christ and culture as an either/or proposition. Most see much good in culture that may, or even ought to, be embraced. Some of these views can give rise to a second type of Christian school. In these schools, because of a positive attitude toward culture, there is little reason for the curriculum to be much different than that of the local public school. It is a Christian school because various devotional practices have been added to the schedule. These would be things like devotions at the beginning

the day, weekly chapels involving corporate worship, religious instruction and prayer, and Bible or religious education classes. We might think of the Christian aspects of this sort of school as the creamy icing spread over the already pretty decent cake that is the standard curriculum taught in the public school.

Where the first anti-culture view underemphasizes the good in creation, the critique of this pro-culture view is that it underemphasizes the extent to which sin has distorted God's good creation—including culture. The failure to appreciate the extent of sin's corrupting effects, often results in a corresponding failure to appreciate the scope of Christ's redemption.

There is a third type of Christian school, one that is unlike the *Christ against Culture* model in that it has a far more hopeful view of culture. It is unlike the second in that it places greater emphasis on the depth and breadth of the effects of sin. The view of culture from which ACS arises is what Niebuhr calls the *Christ transforming Culture* model. Adherents of this third type of Christian school recognize three fundamental truths.

First, that culture is a manifestation of God's good creation and a product of human creativity and community. Second, that sin distorts every part of this good creation, including human culture. Thus, there is nothing created, that was not created good, but there is nothing that has not been distorted by the Fall. A third truth is that Christ is the redeemer of all that God created.

This process began with his death and resurrection, and continues, even now, by the work of his Spirit in and through his people. The task of the Christian, then, is to explore what it means to live faithfully by enhancing and celebrating the creational goodness and also discerning the presence of sin and working to reduce its effects.

CPABC/SCSBC Leadership Certificate

The CPABC and SCSBC have been working together on reinstating the Leadership Certificate. It has been lying dormant for the last number of years and with recent changes coming to the principal's contracts, we are looking at ways to be proactive in ensuring our members are developing professionally as leaders. The purpose of the Leadership Certificate is to encourage ongoing professional development in the area of Christian educational leadership. Leadership development is a journey that does not end with earning a degree, but rather an ongoing activity of deepening one's understanding of self, the role of a leader in serving our Christian school communities, and knowledge of leadership and educational issues.

The certificates are granted at two levels -Interim and Professional. The Interim Certificate is for those who have administrative experience along with leadership training. The Professional Certificate is awarded at the completion of the approved program of four courses in educational leadership. To encourage further professional growth, the Professional Certificate needs to be renewed every three years. Deadline for applications/renewal is March 15 of each year, with the goal of acknowledging and celebrating our member's certification at the annual Spring Leadership Conference. Visit the CPABC website www.cpabc.ca/ for more information.

Spring Conference

educational leadership conference

The Power of Love: Practising Forgiveness

with Steve Bell
and Jon Coutts

As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison.
- Nelson Mandela

Among the best known Christian musicians in Canada, Steve Bell is an accomplished songwriter and record producer. He has an extensive catalog of songs including Deep Calls to Deep, Promise and Fresh and Green. Before embarking on his solo career he was a long time member of the group Elias, Schrist, and Bell. In 1988, Bell founded the independent recording label Signpost Music. His first solo album, Comfort My People, was released on Signpost that same year. Bell now has seventeen albums, two films, and many other awards to his credit.

cpabc Spring Conference
April 30-May 2, 2014

Cedar Springs Christian Retreat Center, 4700 Minaker Road, Sumas, WA

Taking Care of Your Blindside with Walter Wright – Videos on the CPABC Website

If you missed our fall conference, we videotaped Walter's session and are providing them for you on our website. It was a great day together and we wanted to give all of our members the opportunity to hear Walter whether you could make it or not.

www.cpabc.ca/fall-conference-2013.html

Mentoring

We have received only a handful of applications for the NEW Mentoring Program. We had hoped to receive more. If you are considering to be a mentor or *to be* mentored, please fill out an application form. You can either download an application form, or submit an electronic form. The deadline for either submission is January 15, 2014. Please check out our website for more information at

www.cpabc.ca/mentoring.html

Coming Soon – Don't Miss This!

Christian Schools Canada
7th Leadership Conference
September 18 - 20, 2014
at the Inn at Laurel Point, Victoria, BC

Imagining the Kingdom

with keynote speaker James K. A. Smith

CSC Fall Conference

Suggested Christmas Reading:

- *The Advantage*, by Patrick Lencioni
- *David and Goliath*, By Malcolm Gladwell
- *PBL Starter Kit*, by The Buck Institute for Education
- *Education Nation: Six Leading Edges of Innovation in our Schools*, By Milton Chen