

Your Christian School: A Culture of Grace?

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Leader's Guide to be used with the conference on DVD
(Ten 25 minute sessions on 3 DVDs)
for In-Service Days, School-wide Development,
Classes, Small Groups, or Personal Study

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YOUR CHRISTIAN SCHOOL: A CULTURE OF GRACE?

INTRODUCTION

No matter what your role in education is - teacher, administrator, or support staff - much is usually expected of you. You can often feel pulled in multiple directions and as a result you can often feel discouraged, burned out, and ineffective. What should be your priority as an educator? How do you decide where to focus your energy and time? Are you really supposed to attend to *all* the needs of *all* the students? How should Christian education be different from secular education?

As an educator, you have probably been exposed to multiple instructional tools, methods, and theories that inform and assist your role in education. New ideas and new technologies have become a constant part of education often claiming superiority over past practices. As Christian educators, however, we follow an unchanging standard based on God and the gospel of Jesus Christ that is the central theme of His Word. How does this story of transforming grace inform your methodology, theory, and practice?

Your Christian School: A Culture of Grace? will allow you to examine your priorities in your role of education. It will help and compel you to create a school or classroom that is aligned with the work God is doing in the lives of students.

May God bless you greatly as you continue to serve him in your role in education!

LEADERS' GUIDE

Your Christian School: A Culture of Grace? is intended to be viewed by anyone involved with Christian education.

One or Two Day Option:

You can interact with the material in many ways but a sample schedule is provided to break down the sessions into either one or two in-service or professional development days. These possible schedules are provided at the end of this leader's guide. As facilitator, watch the DVDs and read through each session's material before doing it school-wide. Determine which questions and activities should be completed as a whole group and which questions and activities would best be covered by dividing into smaller groups. Whether you decide to cover the material in one day or two days will determine how much time you will give to discussion time. If you cover the material in one day the amount of time you have for discussion and application will be about 50 minutes of discussion time before the lunch break and about 30 minutes of discussion time at the end of the day. If you cover the material over two days each session (DVD, questions, and activities) requires about an hour of time and there is time for discussion after each session.

Ten Session Option:

Each of the ten sessions could be viewed separately over the course of a school year in small groups. Each session contains review/discussion questions and activities. In this format each session (DVD, questions, and activities) requires about an hour of time. In this format, it is probably best to view the DVDs and complete the questions and activities with other similar-level or similar-topic teachers.

Other:

You can customize your schedule of showing the video material and handling of the discussion questions to best fit your needs.

SESSION 1

REVIEW

1. “Heart” = causal core of your personhood—the seat of your thoughts, emotions, values, and desires. The behavior of children is caused more by what is inside of them than what is outside of them.
2. “Apple nailing” is doing something that only fixes the outside appearance and not the root cause; it is only training/teaching/disciplining for correct behavior instead of examining the heart.

SESSION 2

REVIEW

1. The teacher is an instrument of God to extend his grace, truth, and love toward students; the teacher can make use of little moments to instruct and address issues of the heart. It is important that a teacher examine his/her own heart so that he/she is not speaking out of selfish desire or personal comfort; the heart of the teacher must be set on what is best and right for the student.

DISCUSSION

1. Heart issues should be a priority over academic issues because the heart can stand in the way of our mind; the heart directs the focus of our thoughts, priorities and values; and God is most concerned about the heart.

SESSION 3

REVIEW

1. As teachers, we cannot ignore the heart issues of our students because the heart is the casual core of everything a student does; it is where lasting change occurs; the selfishness of sin gets in the way of learning because a student’s focus becomes his/her own pleasure. As teachers, we need to help students understand their own selfishness because they cannot understand it on their own.

SESSION 4

REVIEW

1. Rules provide a standard of correction; rules provide protection; rules provide a guideline toward heart change, but rules do not rescue students from their sinful hearts].
2. a) Threatening. Problem—it does not address the heart.
b) Manipulating. Problem—it encourages the students’ selfish desires.

SESSION 5

REVIEW/DISCUSSION

1. A) Demolishing is to completely tear down and is done with a wrecking ball—demolishing a child’s heart is motivated by wanting to rid a child of foolishness by injuring the child.
B) Remodeling is keeping everything the same at its roots but more livable or acceptable—remodeling a child’s heart is not seeking deep heart change but only trying to control behaviors so that the child is easier to work or get along with.
C) Restoration creates something totally new—restoring/transforming a child’s heart happens when we help a student see his/her own sinfulness and we bring the truths of scripture to help the child live for God’s kingdom.
2. Children are worshippers because they will always give their allegiance to something or someone; they make decisions based on what they value.

SESSION 6

REVIEW

1. It is important to remind students that they are sinners because it is the truth; it provides them with an accurate diagnosis of the real problem so that they can seek the best cure (grace of God).
2. It is important to remind children that they live in a broken world because it provides them with realistic expectations—they will be sinned against; it helps them know that there are deceiving temptations all around them.
3. Hope leads to honest revelation of your own sins and weaknesses knowing God is willing and able to give grace and forgiveness; hope seeks help.

SESSION 7

REVIEW

To create a “Culture of Grace” we build a relationship with students in which the work of God can thrive; we get to know a student to discover where areas of change are needed; we share with students the areas of weaknesses we see in their lives; we encourage and help students as they work toward change.

SESSION 8

REVIEW

1. To intentionally love our students we need to enter into relationship—we try to understand the world they live in; we need to incarnate Christ—we determine what Jesus’ love would look like for this student and situation; we need to identify with the struggles of the child; and we need to accept the child as a child of God and as a work in progress.
2. To intentionally know our students we can talk to the student; organize what you know about this child in writing; identify needs and ways you can help.

SESSION 9

REVIEW

1. Change in your students’ hearts requires a “culture of grace” because you will not be able to affect change alone—each person plays a role by God’s design and purpose.

2. It is necessary to help others see their own spiritual weaknesses because we are blind to our own blindness. We do this by gently confronting the sin and speaking to the person about it. We answer the questions: What does God want this child to see that he is not seeing and how can I help him see it? Where does God want this child to own responsibility for his words and behavior? Where is God calling this student in this situation to a brand new way of living? What will these changes look like?

SESSION 10

REVIEW

1. To help support change in a child's heart we can ask questions of the child; share wisdom, encourage, warn, make sacrifices of our time to help the child. We want the child to desire God's will in his/her life.

ACTIVITY

A CULTURE OF LAW	A CULTURE OF GRACE
Focuses on rules, regulations and expectations without aiming to shape the hearts of the children.	Focuses on the hearts of the children.
Aims for quick, comfortable solutions.	Seeks to love and understand the motivations and desires that drive a child's behavior.
Settles for a temporary change in behavior..	Aims to see God's work done in the hearts of the children.
	Aims for lasting heart change.
	Is willing to sacrifice for the good of the child.

Sample Schedule – for doing all the material in 1 In-Service day

8:30 AM to 4:00 PM - Overall schedule

8:30 AM to 9 AM – Session 1 (30 min)

9:00 AM to 9:30 AM – Session 2 (25 min)

9:30 AM to 9:40 AM – Break

9:40 AM to 10:05 AM – Session 3 (27 min)

10:05 AM to 10:30 AM – Session 4 (25 min)

10:30 AM to 10:40 AM – Break

10:40 AM to 11:10 AM – Session 5 (27 min)

11:10 AM to Noon – Discussion Time (with the leader selecting questions/activities provided for Sessions 1-5)

Noon to 1:00PM – Lunch

1:00 PM to 1:25 PM – Session 6 (23 min)

1:25 PM to 1:50 PM – Session 7 (28 min)

1:50 PM to 2:00 PM – Break

2:00 PM to 2:20 PM – Session 8 (20 min)

2:20 PM to 2:50 PM – Session 9 (27 min)

2:50 PM to 3:00 PM – Break

3:00 PM to 3:30 PM – Session 10 (28 min)

3:30 PM to 4:00 PM – Discussion Time (with the leader selecting questions/activities provided for Sessions 6-10)

Sample schedule to do all the material over 2 In-Service days

Total Time= 6 HOURS/Day

Breaks could be provided between any/and all sessions if you have more than 6 hours to work with.

Day 1

HOUR 1 – Session 1 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

HOUR 2 – Session 2 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

HOUR 3 – Session 3 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

Lunch-- (1 HOUR)

HOUR 4 – Session 4 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

HOUR 5+ – Session 5 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

Day 2

HOUR 1 – Session 6 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

HOUR 2 – Session 7 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

HOUR 3 – Session 8 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

Lunch-- (1 HOUR)

HOUR 4 – Session 9 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)

HOUR 5+ – Session 10 (DVD + Discussion/Activity)