

# FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**THE AIM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:**

**TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST**

**Christian education is the discipling of the young and is part of the great commission Jesus gave to us.**

*Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20*

**Generational transfer:**

This discipleship involves a relational process of **generational transfer** in order to pass on our values, faith, and knowledge of God. In this way **WISDOM** is acquired.

*Wisdom is supreme; therefore, get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. Prov 4:7*

**WHAT IS WISDOM?**

**WISDOM is the PERSON of God himself and it is revealed in JESUS CHRIST by the agent of the Holy Spirit.**

*Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgements, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen. Rom. 11:33-36.*

*But to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

*It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption. 1 Cor 1:24, 30*

*In whom (Jesus Christ) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

Col 2:3

**Jesus is the TRUTH in education for our children to learn – and to walk in.**

**WISDOM is revealed through the Bible as God's written revelation because Jesus is the Word of God.**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*

*The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:1, 2, 14.*

**WISDOM is also revealed through the Spirit of God who is frequently called the Spirit of Wisdom in the scriptures.**

*The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Isa 11:2*

*I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. Eph 1:17*

**The Holy Spirit communicates God's wisdom to us through our daily relationship with Jesus.**

*.. we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.*

*But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. 1 Cor 2:7, 10-12*

## FOUNDATION 1: THE WORD OF GOD

**Jesus is the Word of God, therefore love and respect for, and study and memorisation of the word of God is a foundation for our children's lives.**

*My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He holds victory in store for the upright; he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. Then you will understand what is right and just and fair - every good path. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.* Prov 2:1-11

*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.* Matt. 24:35

## FOUNDATION 2: SALVATION THROUGH GRACE

**Children must be born again of the Spirit of God into faith in Jesus Christ before they can receive of the Spirit of God and grow in the Kingdom of God.**

*Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'"* John 3:5-7

*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."* Rom. 8:15.

This salvation is a gift of faith through the grace of God.

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no-one can boast.* Eph.2:8

It is important that children (and teachers) understand the grace of God as kindness to the undeserving. We are saved and kept by the grace of God, not by our performance. Many of our children have not grasped that they were chosen by God's grace, rather than choosing God. (John 15:6) Nor do many understand that his covenant of grace also keeps us through life.

Salvation is not only a one-off experience but an ongoing process. There will be several stages during their growing years when children will respond to the cross in deeper ways.

The cross is central in ongoing education - it reminds us of our need for God's forgiveness and offers hope for change. It also unites us in one spirit with one Father breaking down ethnic or tribal hostilities.

*For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility ... and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. Eph. 2:14, 16.*

### FOUNDATION 3: THE SPIRIT OF GOD

**Our children need to experience the Spirit of God in worship and dependence on him as their helper whilst they walk in a daily relationship with Jesus, learning of him. The Holy Spirit is our teacher and helper.**

*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And to him we cry, "Abba, Father." Rom. 8:15.*

*Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matt. 11:29*

*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. John 16:13.*

### FOUNDATION 4: THE FEAR OF THE LORD

**The fear of the Lord is a key to wisdom.**

*The Lord is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness. He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure. Isa 33:5-6*

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. Prov 9:10.*

The fear of the Lord is a heart attitude of submission to God out of respect for him; it means we line up with God, hating evil.

*To fear the Lord is to hate evil: I hate pride and arrogance, evil behaviour, and perverse speech. Prov 8:13.*

In practical terms this means we pray and submit our minds to God whenever facing a new challenge of learning.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. Prov 3:5-7.*

Children must have this attitude to their teachers also as this prepares them to obey God.

## **FOUNDATION 5: LOVING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE**

**Children need to be taught love for God for it is the greatest commandment.**

*Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Matt 22:37.*

They need to be trained to put Jesus Christ first in all their affections. Love is active not passive. Obedience is the outworking of love for God.

*Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. John 14:23.*

Wisdom increases by obedience as a loving response to God-given instruction as it comes through parents, teachers, the Word, or the Spirit of God. This obedience needs to be outworked in a spirit of humility.

*Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. James 3:13.*

It also needs to be outworked in a spirit of grace and not legalism.

*For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*  
Rom 6 14

## **FOUNDATION 6: LOVING RELATIONSHIPS**

**Relationships in the school should demonstrate the love of God because we are all members of the one Body of Christ.**

The school must be regarded not as an institution but as an extended spiritual family. The Principal and staff are parental figures whose primary duty is to love the students in their care.

*Show proper respect to everyone; love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honour the king. 1 Peter 2:17*

We all have a responsibility to care for others before self, having an attitude of humility towards them. Love for others is part of loving God.

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Phil 2:3*

*If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. 1 John 4:20*

*Love your neighbour as yourself. Matt 22:39.*

## FOUNDATION 7: GOOD TEACHER-PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS

**A good relationship with the teacher is essential for learning and growth because education is a relational process.**

The teachers themselves must be born again and seeking after the Kingdom of God and aiming to live in obedience to the Lord themselves.

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matt 6:33.*

It is a fact that teachers will only impart their character and who they are not what they say.

Note: The Kingdom of God is found "in the Spirit".

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rom 14:17.*

Teachers must, therefore, be men or women of the Spirit.

Teachers must find grace from God to love their students and thus build a good relationship.

*God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 2Cor 9:8*

## FOUNDATION 8: KNOWLEDGE AS KNOWING GOD

**We acquire knowledge through knowing God for all knowledge is in him.**

*In him (Jesus Christ) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. 2:3.*

All our knowledge must begin with God and end with him. Every subject or theme is to be approached through a Godly perspective using the Word and principles of God. This means that our pupils will learn to discern the spirit of the age which is humanistic.

*But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Heb 5:14.*

They need to be like the men of the tribe of Issachar who understood the times.

Note: there are only two spirit sources - the spirit of the world, which is Satanic and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God.

*We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. 1Cor 2:12.*

## FOUNDATION 9: DISCIPLINE

**Loving correction is vital to healthy growth in the wisdom and knowledge of God. Discipline is part of loving: not to discipline is not to truly love.**

*He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he trims clean so that it will be even more fruitful.*

John 15:2

*“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.” Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us, and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Heb 12:6-11.*

The aim of discipline is to increase in maturity emulating the character of Jesus Christ.

*Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. Heb. 12:10.*

Discipline may involve punishment, but its aim is always to be redemptive.

## FOUNDATION 10: EDUCATION OF THE WHOLE CHILD

**Education must involve the whole child, body, soul, mind, and spirit.**

*Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Matt 22:37*

Education must involve discovery and experience as well as cognitive learning because children learn affectively (by experiencing and doing) as well as cognitively. Their knowledge must be outworked in their lives.

*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in the knowledge of God. Col 1:9-10*

*Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. John 13:17.*

## FOUNDATION 11: SERVANTHOOD

**Education must involve owning and applying our knowledge and putting it into action; for without this there is no real learning. Children need to embrace servanthood both in learning and in serving others with the knowledge gained.**

*Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. Matt 7:24.*

**Children need to know that all knowledge is to be used in service to God. Servanthood will be a priority in the school for teachers and pupils alike, for this is the character of Jesus Christ which we emulate. This is to be a heart attitude.**

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ: who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross! Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil 2:5-8*

*When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord, and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." John 13:12-17.*

## FOUNDATION 12: GOD'S HEART FOR NATIONS

**Father God loves the world, and we are to be like him. We must acquire a heart and understanding for nations, recognising our responsibility towards them and their part in God's great plan for this earth.**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16*

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8*

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