

Why CCS?

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So, what IS the role of a Christian school?

There are many ways to say it, but from our perspective, Cambridge Christian School strives to be a place, a family, an environment where God-honoring teachers, with loving, respectful attitudes, make it possible for students to learn.





Why CCS?

Ever been to a taxidermy shop? Me neither. But, I've seen plenty of artificially preserved animals and heads on the wall. And I can envision the process that produced those outcomes. Empty out the space and then fill it with stuffing. What's the result? ... something that looks sort of life-like but, of course, in reality is far less so.

This scenario should move us to ask whether that's a reasonable prototype for educating our children. Mental taxidermy? Sadly, in many classrooms of our modern world, that's what it seems to be like. And even more sadly, the result also is often the same ... artificial.

Have you noticed that some schools approach the teaching/learning process as primarily being about producing a highly knowledgeable individual? The assumption seems to be that "smarts" lead directly to achievement, advancement, and affluence. Good Grades = Good Job = Good Life. We all know, however, from experience (our own and others') that this "ain't necessarily so." This is an educational model that could be called circumstance-based, primarily focused on succeeding in a set of events.

But, what if there's more to schooling than just that?

In the 1800's a man named John Ruskin, an English artist and social thinker rose to influence in his own culture and beyond. During his early life he had embraced evangelical Christianity, only to forsake it as he grew older. So, while it's hard to hold Ruskin up as an appropriate spokesman for a Bible-based education, despite his spiritual straying, we can/should applaud one of the best ideas he ever voiced:

"The highest reward for a person's toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it." Amen!

Here at Cambridge Christian School, we are committed to the proposition that education is not solely about excellence on the report card, superiority on the field or high acclaim on the concert stage. It's about becoming a particular kind of person. And as happy as a high score on a test or a rising GPA can make a parent, we believe that those are never worth "settling for" in exchange for a noble character; one that is marked by traits such as faith, integrity, and genuine compassion for others. Naturally, every dad and mom wants both (the grades AND the character). And, as a school, so do we. But we are convinced beyond all doubt that it matters dearly which of those pursuits get's top priority. We do NOT want to be mostly known for "stuffing heads" but primarily for "igniting hearts."



Remember, it's just not possible for any institution of learning to offer an absolute guarantee of outcomes. And, as a profoundly Christian school, we are fully aware that it is never within OUR power to spiritually enliven or revive a child's soul. Spiritual birth and renewal is unquestionably the work of God's Spirit and Word.

So, what IS the role of a Christian school? There are many ways to say it, but from our perspective, CCS strives to be a place, a family, an environment where God-honoring teachers, with loving, respectful attitudes, make it possible for students to learn.

Make no mistake, as you travel about the Cambridge campus you find a whole lot of rigorous mental activity going on. There are all sorts of academic standards, curriculums and measurements at work in every level of our involvement with students, just as you would expect from a highly recognized college preparatory school.

But, our teachers are commissioned to take students on an even deeper journey of discovery. Beyond the boundaries of learning the alphabet, multiplication tables, the history of our world and nation, athletic and artistic skills, foreign languages, the advanced sciences, literature, psychology, and many other subjects, there are the biggest kinds of learning. And, to us, these matter the most!

The true heartbeat of Cambridge Christian School is all about leading boys and girls, young men and women in the adventure of becoming people of influence in the world. And to be such people they must certainly ...

... learn to think. Our goal for them is that they not merely retain facts, figures, and formulas, but be able to analyze, critique, and recognize what is really true.

... learn to value and choose. We want to offer them the solid foundation of an objective, Biblical morality that will provide an accurate framework for decision making throughout all of life.

... learn to believe. It's certainly true that what we believe when we are young shapes all of our life to come. We are dedicated to introducing every CCS student to the truth about God and what He offers to every person through faith in His Word.

... learn to relate. Since all of life takes place within the context of relationships, our intent is to help all students treasure the best kinds of those bonds and live them out in the most honorable and fulfilling ways possible.

It is our firmest conviction and experience that this catalog of learning leads to genuine success in a person's life. In notoriety and wealth? Maybe. In fulfilling personhood? Certainly!

Does this kind of nurturing and training of a child happen quickly?

Of course not. Weeds grow really fast, oak trees take much longer. One or two years in the kind of learning atmosphere we're talking about is a start ... but realizing that growing a person takes a long time, why not begin as early as possible! The words of God to the Old Testament prophet, Habakkuk, echo that very truth:

"But these things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day!" - Habakkuk 2:3 (TLB)

Does this kind of nurturing and training of a child happen in predictable uniformity?

Oh no. You can homogenize milk...but not children. Paying close attention to how students learn and making adjustments along the way, as well as leading those learners through a large variety of experiences and methods, is where deep and abiding growth takes root and blossoms.

Does this kind of nurturing and training of a child happen cheaply?

The price is steep, indeed. It involves more effort, time, dollars, and emotional investment than most people can fathom. But, to paraphrase another old saying, "If you think the meaningful training of a child is costly, try NOT doing it." The size of THAT price tag is ominous, to be



sure. But then, why would we be willing to mortgage our lives for vacations, speed boats, and jewelry, only to scrimp on the most precious treasures of all?

Obviously, we here at CCS are biased in favor of our wonderful school, its families, faculty, and atmosphere. But, we have found through many years of steady investment into the lives of so many boys and girls, from the nursery to the cap and gown, that it's not only possible to guide young lives to experience the kind of learning I'm speaking of, it's a consistent reality here on North Habana Avenue in life after life, family after family.

If you'll permit me, I'll return to our opening analogy. Taxidermy; indeed a poor replacement for genuine life! Instead, I'll suggest what may be a better image. Stoking a furnace. A strong, intricately designed vessel fueled with the right contents that when ignited exudes light, heat, energy, and power. What's the result of approaching the education of a child THIS way? By God's gracious help, the growing of a real person with real influence in the real world. And, who wouldn't greatly rejoice over that kind of outcome!

We fully know that Cambridge Christian School is what it is by God's divine grace and empowering Holy Spirit. And as we move into our second 50 years, we humbly want to see Him continue to use our dedicated efforts to bless the lives of even more students and their families, and, in so doing, glorify Himself.

So, we invite you to not wait a single moment longer. But, come along with us on the adventure of a lifetime ... your child's lifetime. Join us in experiencing the success we can have together in "stoking the furnace." Then, stand back to marvel, not at artificial trophies on the wall ... but at young men and women who have learned to understand what's truly important, found out how to see life as God sees it, and who are ready, willing and able to live fulfilling, influential lives that honor the God who makes it all possible.

In other words, get ready to watch them do what no stuffed head can do.

Watch them change the world!

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