

An Analysis of Accelerated Christian Curriculum in Biblical Christian Worldview

Linda Liana

A Level Education Center, Indonesia

Correspondence email: lindaliana.go@gmail.com

Received: 17/11/2019

Accepted: 11/03/2020

Published: 31/05/2020

Abstract

God gave man his commission (Gen. 1:26-30), called the Cultural Mandate. In this mandate mankind is to steward the created order, in accordance with God's law-Word, for God's glory. Shortly before the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, he issued the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). The Great Commission command to disciple all the nations into obedience to the comprehensive and absolute lordship of Jesus Christ. There is no area of thought, life, or culture outside the scope of the Creation/ Dominion Mandate or the Great Commission. Thus, the extent of the Creation Mandate and the extent of the Great Commission necessitate Christian Education. Accelerated Christian Curriculum is a curriculum that has been helping pastors and parents by developing and publishing quality, character building Christian educational materials for Grade Levels K3-12. By integrating character building principles and scripture memory into the academics, the program helps children master each concept before moving to the next concept. In this essay I analyze the Accelerated Christian Education curriculum from a Biblical Christian Worldview.

Keywords: *Accelerated Christian Education, Biblical Christian Worldview, Integrated Christian Education, Mandate*

Introduction

Immediately after God created man, He gave man his commission (Gen. 1:26-30), called the creation/ dominion/ cultural mandate. In this mandate mankind is to steward the created order, in accordance with God's law-Word, for God's glory. Shortly before the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, he issued the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20). The Great commission is a command to disciple all the nations into obedience to the comprehensive and absolute lordship of Jesus Christ. There is no area of thought, life, or culture outside the scope of the Creation/Dominion Mandate or the Great Commission. Thus, the extent of the creation mandate and the extent of the Great Commission necessitate Christian education.¹ A Christian curriculum orientation fosters knowledge that, by God's grace, leads students to active service. Students relate to others. They develop a Christian lifestyle. They serve society without compromising their commitment. They develop their abilities and insights in order to become vibrant Christians as family members, friends, consumers, workers, citizens, and church members. They learn and experience the rightful place of science and technology, leisure and labor, communications and aesthetics,

¹ Robert E. Fugate, *God's Mandate for Biblical Education* (Omaha, NE: Lord of the Nation, LLC, 2015), 74.

and justice and love. Throughout, they learn from teachers who model that submission to the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.² One of Christian curriculum that is used around the world is Accelerated Christian Education. A.C.E. was founded in 1970 and now A.C.E. has 6000 schools and thousands of homeschool in over 140 countries around the world³ and this number is still growing. With this large number of students using this curriculum, we must be certain that the philosophy and the worldview of A.C.E. coherences with the Biblical Christian Worldview.

In this essay, I will analyze the Accelerated Christian Curriculum and see it from the Biblical perspective. The purpose of this essay is to find out if the A.C.E. curriculum suited the Biblical Christian Worldview in giving the right Christian education as a cultural mandate from God.

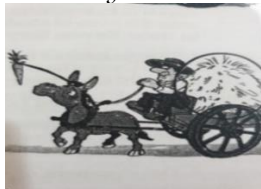
Presuppositions Analysis

For over four decades, Accelerated Christian Education has provided a proven Christian academic curriculum and individualized system to disciple and lead your young people to glorify God in their lives! It is intended to instruct each student with God's word. Biblical principles, and character traits that will teach them to love, follow, and serve the God who loved them enough to send His Son to save them.⁴ Christian education is not an alternative. It is not a luxury. It is not even just a good idea. It is the law of God. It is the law that He gave to our forefather, and it is the same law that He now gives to us. It is the great commandment.⁵

Foundational Concepts of A.C.E. (Accelerated Christian Education).

The "philosophy of teaching" is the premise for conventional education. In contrast, the "philosophy of learning" is the core objective of the A.C.E. program, producing the best academic results by implementing the best techniques and procedures for the individual learner. While the development and evaluation of A.C.E. program has been in the making for over four decades, the academic philosophy of A.C.E. has been and is still summed up in the following "Five Laws of Learning" and is illustrated by the donkey and the cart.⁶

1. *How heavy is the load? (assigning the level)*



The pupil is placed on a level of curriculum where he can best perform. Level acknowledges that all students are different.

² Harro Van Brummelen, *Walking with God in the Classroom Christian Approaches to Teaching and Learning* (Colorado, CO: Purposeful Design Publications, 2009), 74–77.

³ *About A.C.E.*, n.d., <https://www.acemimistries.com>.

⁴ Accelerated Christian Education, 1.

⁵ Accelerated Christian Education, 7.

⁶ Inc Accelerated Christian Education, *Getting Your School Off to A Great Start*, 2010, 17.

2. *How long is the stick? (setting the goal)*



The pupil sets reasonable and appropriate goals to be achieved in a reasonable period of time. goals reflect good judgment.

3. *How effective are the controls? (providing motivation and controls)*



The pupils receive motivation through encouragement and support and achieves control through guidance and discipline in order to assimilate, use and experience the educational material. motivation is that inner desire prompted by the concerned supervisor/tutor. control acknowledges the necessity for discipline, guidance, and responsible leadership.

4. *How hungry is the donkey? (determining measurement)*



The pupil's learning must be measured, which relates to accountability.

5. *How big is the carrot? (ascribing rewards)*



The pupil's learning receives recognition and rewards for its effort and significance.

The Accelerated Christian Education curriculum has been tried and proven to be very effective in teaching all the basic academic disciplines as well as instilling Godly character into the lives of students. The reason why the A.C.E. program works can be summarized in seven key foundational concepts.

Seven Key Foundational Concepts of A.C.E.:

1. *Integration of Biblical Principles*

Accelerated Christian Education's curriculum, with its clearly identifiable Biblical goals, is its major strength. A God centered, theistic philosophy is built into every PACE (Packet of Accelerated Christian Education; a bit sized booklet of curriculum), were principles of Godly character and illustration of desired character traits are sequenced in character strips and motivational forms. Students need to memorize a Bible verse that illustrate the corresponding

desired character trait. The Bible verse is found on the first page of each PACE. Several different activities used throughout the PACE to help the student learn the verse. Students must be able to quote the verse and its reference from memory before proceeding to the PACE test. Memorizing the verse is an important part of a PACE. In order to pass the test, one must be able to recite the verse from his/her memory. For teens, the PACE includes Wisdom Insert containing Biblical Principles that help students to see life from God's perspective.⁷

2. *Godly Character Training.*

Biblical principles, Godly character traits, character strips, and activities help students learn to interact productively in society. Within the A.C.E. curriculum, these things focus attention on responsibility, character and self-discipline. From the character strips, Biblical principles of life are built into the lives of the students, who relate to the various characters and want to emulate their good character qualities. The stories illustrate the Biblical principles emphasized in the PACEs. The cast of character is constant, but they grow in age and ability as student progress through the PACEs. Students identify with the A.C.E. characters, learn from the examples they set, and internalize the Godly character traits. This unique feature enhances traditional family values, moral principles, and adds a more personal, human touch. In the PACEs there are 60 character traits included. The 60 character traits as demonstrated in Jesus Christ. These character traits, with definition and Scripture, are used throughout each level of the curriculum. They are presented in poems, songs, role-modeling character strips, inspirational nuggets, and activities. In each PACE, the student is required to memorize a Bible verse that teaches the corresponding character quality.⁸

3. *Mastery Based Learning.*

A student's academic problems generally occur in this order: reading, mathematics, and the language. When a phonetic base is laid and reading mastery is achieved, most language problems are easily resolved. The same principle used to achieve reading mastery can be applied to the problems in mathematics, solid foundations must be established. If the students build a good base in reading, language, and mathematics skills, he can usually achieve independently in later years. Each student is required to master each fundamental tool before proceeding to new material. A conventional classroom must of necessity address the average student. However, a much broader approach is necessary if the above or below average student is to learn effectively. The A.C.E. curriculum focuses on meeting the precise needs of all students: those of the slow student (around 60 IQ), the average student (around 100 IQ), and the brilliant student (around 140 IQ). In the A.C.E. program, each student is met at his individual performance level, then advanced through the curriculum at his optimum rate of achievement.⁹

⁷ Accelerated Christian Education, 18-19.

⁸ Accelerated Christian Education, 24. The characters are: Appreciative, Attentive, Available, Committed, Compassionate, Concerned, Confident, Considerate, Consistent, Content, Cooperative, Courageous, Creative, Decisive, Deferent, Dependable, Determined, Diligent, Discerning, Discreet, Efficient, Equitable, Fair, Faithful, Fearless, Flexible, Forgiving, Friendly, Generous, Gentle, Honest, Humble, Joyful, Kind, Loyal, Meek, Merciful, Observant, Optimistic, Patient, Peaceful, Perseverant, Persuasive, Prudent, Punctual, Purposeful, Resourceful, Respectful, Responsible, Secure, Self-controlled, Sincere, Submissive, Tactful, Temperate, Thorough, Thrifty, Tolerant, Truthful, Virtuous.

⁹ Accelerated Christian Education, 24-25.

4. *Built-In Reinforced System of Learning.*

Student's learning is reinforced by the unique computer-controlled vocabulary of the A.C.E. curriculum. Great care is taken to ensure that no student is exposed to a word that might hinder his grasp of academic mastery. When an academic concept calls for a new term, that word is introduced, color-coded in the text, used in an activity, reviewed, and repeated often to facilitate mastery. The core curriculum is replete with full-color drawings, photographs, and illustrations that add interest and reinforce the text. Maps, charts, and time lines are included to facilitate mastery learning. These visuals are carefully selected to provide spatial and chronological orientation for students. Moreover, motivational aspects have been added. To reinforce and ensure learning, PACEs include activity question covering the material presented. Students read a portion of text, complete activities, then are tested over that portion. At appropriate level, cognitive (thought) questions are presented to stimulate the child's mind. The child is guided into right thinking, including logic and Biblical principles. Periodically throughout a PACE, Checkups are presented to reinforce and help the student recall what has just been studied. At the end of a PACE, a Self-Test is presented, providing the student an opportunity to measure what he has learned. When the student has successfully completed the Self-Test, he is allowed to take the PACE Test under the supervision the following school day. This system of reinforcement through questioning, Checkups, Self-Test, and final PACE Test has proven to be a sound and effective means ensuring mastery of academic material.¹⁰

5. *Individualized Learning.*

Perhaps the greatest academic feature of the A.C.E. core curriculum is that students may progress through the PACEs at their own rates. Because the curriculum is truly individualized, students learn the best way-individually. They learn essential academics and explore truths about God and His world without being pressured to keep up with a group.¹¹

6. *Development of Critical Thinking Skills.*

The A.C.E. programs includes specific forms of material and format that aid the student as he develops his capacity for critical thinking throughout his school years. He is encouraged in his ability to think creatively and independently within a Biblical framework. The program is designed to progress students thorough all six phases in the development of critical thinking skills: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.¹²

7. *Socialization*

A common misconception about the A.C.E. program is that students have little or no opportunity for socialization in the educational setting. In reality, the A.C.E. program provides ample opportunity for students to socialize, both with other students and staff and with parents and family at all school events. A weekly average of three hours per school day is devoted to socialization activities, including devotions, physical education, privilege breaks, music classes, and field trips. Not only is there time for socialization during the school day, but sports and other activities also provide interaction between schools using the A.C.E. curriculum. Excellent opportunities for socializing and enjoying new experiences come at the Regional Student Conventions and at the annual A.C.E. International Student Convention.¹³

¹⁰ Accelerated Christian Education, 25.

¹¹ Accelerated Christian Education, 25.

¹² Accelerated Christian Education, 26.

¹³ Accelerated Christian Education, 26.

Laying the Foundation of A.C.E

A Christian school is based on the foundational principle that God is creator, Lord and Master, and the basic philosophy that He has given mankind His Book, the Bible, to live by, all of life is to be governed by His Book. Notice this truth:

I am much afraid that schools will prove to be great gates of hell unless they diligently labor in explaining the Holy Scriptures, engraving them in the heart s of youth. I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do no reign paramount. Every institution in which men are not increasingly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt. (Martin Luther)¹⁴

The Scripture, God's Word, must be taught to children as shown in Deu. 6:4-12, the Great Commandment. The Bible is the guide for one's faith and practice, instilling the principles of God's Word into hearts and minds. All academic subject are taught from Biblical perspective, from a Christian worldview.¹⁵ For the Christian school, the basic philosophy must be Bible-based throughout every subject. God created history, science, math, language, and all other academic subjects, and therefore, these subjects must be taught from a Biblical perspective, from a Biblical worldview. When the Bible as the textbook and Biblical principles as the basic guide, a truly Christian school emerges.¹⁶

The following message on the Great Commandment will encourage you with the mandate for Christian education. In the book of Matt., the Bible records that a lawyer came to see Jesus. When this attorney came and presented himself to the Savior, the Son of God, he asked Him one of the most important questions in all the world. Although not in the same word, he inquired, "Master, in the Bible there are many commandments. "The Jews had categorized the laws of God and found 613 different commands in the Old Testament. He continued, "I understand that we are supposed to obey these commands, but I have one question. Of the 613, which is the most important? What is the one commandment that, among all the others, the Son of God would say is to get the most attention? Which one is to get the greatest height of obedience in our lives?" Jesus responded to the lawyer by saying, in Matt. 22:37-38, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.* Out of all the commandment that God had issued to mankind in His Word, Jesus clearly stated that this was the most important. He said that, above all else, we are to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, all our souls, and all our minds. Jesus further emphasized the importance of this commandment He said that all of the law and all of the words of the prophets hang on the commandments given in Matt. 22:37-40.¹⁷ From the above analysis of A.C.E. we can extract two premises, which are A.C.E is a Bible based education as it integrates the Biblical principle to its curriculum and A.C.E is an individualize education since it sees human as a unique human being created by God as *Imago Dei*.

¹⁴Accelerated Christian Education, *Getting Your School Off to A Great Start* (Accelerated Christian Education, 2013), 26.

¹⁵ Accelerated Christian Education, 26.

¹⁶ Accelerated Christian Education, 27.

¹⁷ "Getting Your School Off to A Great Star" (Accelerated Christian Education, 2012), 7-8.

Theological Review

It's very essential for Christian educators to understand about the process of sanctification and our uniqueness as God's creation based on Biblical perspective before we can decide if A.C.E. is a true integrated Christian Curriculum.

The issue of theological education cannot be ignored in this context. The doctrines of the Christian faith have been studied in the past as a means of illuminating the mind and transforming the self. The early church adopted Greek models of paideia to shape the lives of those who offered themselves for study through immersion in the texts, traditions, and practices of the faith. The tendency to allow models of research excellence and professional training to dominate our curricula militates against the possibility that the study of theology might actually contribute to our sanctification.¹⁸

Sanctification is God-likeness, or being renewed after His image. Holiness is conformity to the law of God, in heart and life. Sanctification is a freedom from the tyranny of sin, into the liberty of righteousness. Sanctification is that work of the Spirit whereby we are fitted to be worshippers of God. Holiness is a process of cleansing from the pollution of sin. It is a moral renovation of our natures whereby they are made more and more like Christ. Sanctification is the total eradication of the carnal nature, so that sinless perfection is attained in this life.¹⁹

To understand fully God's intentions for Christian in this world, we need to grasp what it means that we are made in the image of God. For us, it means that our primary identity as human being is that we are God's stewards over the world He has made. In a broad sense, it also includes the gifts and abilities God has placed in us that enable us to carry out this work, including gender and marriage, spirituality and physicality, creativity, rationality, freedom and morality.²⁰

Our call as stewards is to continue the work that God began. He started with a world "without form and void" and set in proper order; we are to "tend the garden," including both the cultivation of beauty through the arts and the production of food and other necessities. We are also to engage in the process of learning and discovery through coming to understand the natural world. And we are to do all of this in obedience to God, recognizing His authority over the world so that we cultivate it as stewards, not owners, and do not abuse His property.²¹

Education is serious ministry for Christian educators. Christian education forms an environment wherein believers are instructed, equipped, and nurtured for a life of faith in the real world.²²

Education, like every profession, must have an underlying philosophical foundation to provide the theory of knowledge (epistemology), an understanding of the nature of reality (metaphysics), and ethics. In other words, a philosophy of education cannot stand alone. It is part of a worldview.²³

¹⁸ David Fergusson, "Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology," *SAGE Journals* 53, no. 4 (1999): 12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002096439905300406>

¹⁹ Pink. W. Arthur, *Doctrine of Sanctification* (Lulu.com, 2013), 18.

²⁰ Glenn Sunshine, *The Image of God* (United States, WA: Every Square Inch Publishing, 2013), 14.

²¹ Sunshine, 14.

²² Mark A. Maddix and James Riley Jr. Estep, "Practicing Christian Education" (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2017), 20.

²³ Robert. E. Fugate, *God's Mandate for Biblical Education* (Lord of the Nation, LLC, Omaha, NE, 2015), 15.

Everyone has a philosophy of life. That is not optional. What is optional and, thus, of extreme importance is the adequacy of one's philosophy of life. Are one's views rational or irrational, true or false, carefully formed and precise or conveniently formed and fuzzy? Are they conducive to human flourishing or do they cater to one's fallen nature? Are they honoring or dishonoring to the triune God? The discipline of philosophy can be of great help in aiding someone in the search for an increasingly rich and robust philosophy of life.²⁴

Philosophy is the attempt to think hard about life, the world as a whole and the things that matter most in order to secure knowledge and wisdom about these matters. Accordingly, philosophy may be defined as the attempt to think rationally and critically about life's most important questions in order to obtain knowledge and wisdom about them. Philosophy can help someone form a rationally justified, true worldview, that is, an ordered set of propositions that one believes, especially propositions about life's most important questions.²⁵

If education is to be *Christian*, it must be theologically informed on a variety of levels. Theology is more than the content of Christian education; it is a process of instruction and discernment by which persons are educated in their identity, interpret the realities of their lives, and are sent into the world. For education to be *Christian*, the presence of theology beyond the basic level of content is essential.²⁶ Education should also understand that the nature of the student is both developmental in nature and is innately the *imago dei*, the image of God.

What makes education Christian?

1. Education should have a theologically informed and constructive use of social science theories. Education should understand that the nature of the student is both developmental in nature and is innately the *imago dei*, the image of God.
2. Education has a theologically informed purpose. This means that education is for the glory of God, maturity in the Christian faith, and the advancement of the kingdom.
3. Education features a theologically informed selection of content. This means that education starts with Scripture but includes theological tradition, church history, Christian living, and ministry preparation.
4. Education evidences a theologically informed design. This means that education develops relevant theological assumptions for educational theory, such as teacher student roles and relationships, educational environment, and instructional methods.

Education can be Christian, suitable for the Christian community of faith, if the educational theory and methodologies of instruction directly reflect a theologically informed worldview. As illustrated by the levels of integration paradigm, the more significant the level of integration (that is, the paradigm), the more it is distinctively Christian.²⁷

²⁴ J.P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, "Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview" (Illinois, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 42.

²⁵ Moreland and Craig, 44–46.

²⁶ R. James Estep, Michael Anthony, and Greg Allison, "A Theology for Christian Education" (Nashville, TN :BH Publishing Group, 2008), 26.

²⁷ Estep, Anthony, and Allison, 38.

The Bible is Foundational to Education

The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4: 12). In addition to the striking, radical ability of Scripture to cut penetratingly both ways, in salvation and judgment (thus, never failing to accomplish the purpose for which God designed it; Isa. 55: 11), the Word of God's effective power is profitable in many other ways. Indeed, in the same context that he discussed its inspiration, the apostle Paul affirmed four benefits of inspired Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16- 17):

1. *teaching*, which is the communication of sound biblical and theological truth;
2. *reproof*, meaning that Scripture exposes sin and convicts of that which is wrong;
3. *correction*, which provides direction about the right way to talk;
4. and *training in righteousness*, the preparation of a "mature", Christ like character.

As Christians pay attention to the inspired and profitable Word of God, they are adequately equipped or readily prepared for any good work that God requires them to do, such as trusting him in difficult, trying circumstances; finding comfort and peace in the midst of pain and turmoil; obeying him even when the cost of obedience is high; thanking him despite great loss; engaging in ministry in unreceptive contexts, and so forth. The implication couldn't be clearer: by focusing its attention on and using the Bible as its core curriculum, Christian education profits its participants by teaching, reproofing, correcting, and training them in righteousness.²⁸

The epistemological foundation of the Christian worldview is that the Bible, being God's own Word, is truth, and as such, it is the ultimate standard by which all other truth claims are to be judged (Jn 17:17; Psa. 111:7; 119:89, 151, 160; Mt 24:35; Nu 23:19). Furthermore, the only coherent worldview is the Biblical worldview, which begins with the infinite mind of the triune God who created all things and who knows all things. All non-Christian worldviews are limited by their finite starting point.²⁹

Biblical Rev. epistemology teaches that God, speaking through the Bible, is the only existing, adequate epistemological foundation to justify any human knowledge. Furthermore, the Bible (which is the criterion of truth) teaches the basic axioms needed to make intelligible every area of life and thought. To be rationally consistent, education must be founded upon the Bible. Thus, the epistemological necessity of the Bible necessitates Christian education.³⁰

As educators we must reflect a lifestyle of submission to the Lordship of Christ and leading of the Holy Spirit. We must share the good news of the gospel with our students and align our behaviours with the Word. Our minds cannot be filled with this world's philosophies. In order to teach biblically integrated lessons and make connections between biblical truth and daily learning experiences, we must have renewed minds. We must be lifelong learners and prayerfully seek ongoing training opportunities. A primary challenge is applying biblical principles in resolving conflict. It is important that we, the living curriculum, demonstrate biblical conflict resolution in our daily lives. We must be intentional about the development of faith in the lives of our students. We have a mandate to make the most of

²⁸ Estep, Anthony, and Allison, 97.

²⁹ Fugate, *God's Mandate for Biblical Education*, 43.

³⁰ Fugate, 49.

every opportunity (classroom routines, environment, transitions) by communicating God's love, incorporating prayer and worship throughout the day.³¹

How the Bible informs a Christian approach to curriculum

In a unit in trees, students first explore and learn to appreciate trees as an essential part of the whole of God's plan in creation. They observe the functions of trees in their own lives, as well as in the life of their communities. They investigate what products we obtain from trees and the role of trees in soil enrichment and conservation, water control, and oxygen replenishment. They also investigate how forest provide a home for wildlife and for other plants. They learn about ecosystems with different trees, tree classification, parts of trees and their function, the growth and reproduction of trees, and tree diseases. The students then use this background knowledge to investigate how humans have used trees and forests. The teacher guides students in asking, how did God intend human to use trees? What has gone wrong in many places in the world? What are our human and our personal responsibilities as stewards of tree in God's creation? What is our hope for the future? Using the norms found in texts such as Deu. 20:19-20, the students seek Christian answer to social issues involving trees. They discuss how they can apply biblical values such as justice gratitude, and responsible stewardship as they consider the preservation and use of trees in society. They write to some local politicians about the results of their investigation and reflection. The foregoing unit illustrates how we can gainfully use the Bible to shape curriculum in several ways. By asking questions relating to the biblical metanarrative the unit tells a "story" that reflects a biblical worldview. The unit also incorporates several general biblical principles that provide a basis for education. First, it reflects what the Bible says about knowledge. Second, it upholds some important values that God ordained in His Word and encourages students to adopt them.³²

A Biblical View of Knowledge and Its Implications

The Bible makes clear that God is the origin, sustainer, and redeemer of all human knowledge. God reaches out with His Word and reveals Himself to us. He does so through His created physical world (Psa. 19:1-4), through His written word (2 Tim. 3:15-17), through His Son (John 1), through special Rev. (Acts 9), and through the mediation of other people (2 Tim. 3:14). Full understanding comes about not just through reason and empirical evidence (although these have important roles). We also need God's revealed truth in the Bible in order to have knowledge of God and the greatness of His power (Eph. 1:17-19) and to interpret our world and our place in it. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," says Psa. 111:10. The book of proverbs tells us that knowledge, discernment, and wisdom are closely intertwined (Prov. 1:7, 14:6, 24:3-4). God's Rev. in the Bible makes clear to us who He is and His calling to us to use our thoughts, words, deeds, and affections to serve Him and our neighbour obediently and responsively.

Knowledge in the biblical sense reveals the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord as well as God's way of righteousness. That is why, as Sam. was teaching the Israelites "the way that is good and right," he directed them to consider the great things God had done for them (1 Sam. 12:23-24). Our science, art, and history lessons must proclaim God's marvelous handiwork.

³¹ Althea Penn, *The Christian Education Mandate: Equipping Kingdom Kids to Impact the World for Christ* (South Caroline, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013), 24.

³² Brummelen, *Walking with God in the Classroom Christian Approaches to Teaching and Learning*, 72-73.

At the same time, they must help and encourage children “to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).³³

Scripture also makes clear that knowledge involves our whole being, not just our intellect. Knowledge is more than absorbing facts and concepts. In Hosea 4:6, for instance, God accuses His people of being destroyed from a lack of knowledge. That does not mean that they didn’t know their Bible lessons or were school dropouts. Rather, they had rejected what they had learned. They ignored God’s law of life. They were unfaithful to God and to one another. They failed to integrate their “mind knowledge” into their everyday life. Lack of knowledge in Scripture means a lack of commitment, a failure to put learning into practice.³⁴

Knowledge that does not include committed service is no more true knowledge than faith without works is true faith. God searches hearts and minds. He evaluates how we act on what we know (Jer. 17:10, Rev. 2:23). In the last five chapters of Job, God teaches Job that his knowledge was too cognitive, too intellectual. Job needed to transcend his conceptual learning, see the greatness of God, and respond with his heart. In school, the content we choose, how we think about situations and issues, and the attitudes and dispositions we engender through what and how we teach—all these must reflect our dedication to hearing and doing the Word of the Lord.³⁵

After the fall into sin, humans could no longer fulfil the Creation Mandate. Still, it remains God’s mandate. But now God needs to remind us that love for Him and for our neighbour are the keys to being transformed and no longer conforming to sinful patterns.³⁶

The Great Commandment suggests that students should not just learn about a Christian vision of life, but they should also experience it in the way teachers plan and implement learning activities. That is why biblical love must also characterize the classroom itself. Teachers are attentive to the needs of their students. They are charitable person who gives students meaningful responsibilities in a setting where they nurture respect and support. The curriculum helps students unfold their gifts to serve one another, to share their joys, and to bear one another’s burdens. Teachers foster Christlike learning communities.³⁷

Jesus came to earth to restore the kingdom of God. While sin still wields great power, God now allows us to be His ambassadors and coworkers. So, after His resurrection, Jesus added the Great Commission to the Creation Mandate and the Great Commandment. The Great Commissions demands that we hold before students the importance and consequences of committing their lives to Jesus Christ. Together with our students, we explore what Jesus commanded us. That means we investigate a Christian vision of life as it relates to both personal and societal issue and phenomena.³⁸

So, we do not choose learning experiences just for the sake of attaining cognitive and ability outcomes. Our aim is to develop tendencies and dispositions that encourage students to believe, value, and act on the basis of the biblical principles that Christ taught us. In the Gospel of Matt., for instance, Jesus promoted humility, mercy, peace, forgiveness, generosity to the needy, justice for the oppressed in society, and faithfulness to one’s marriage partner.

³³ Brummelen, 73.

³⁴ Brummelen, 73.

³⁵ Brummelen, 73–74.

³⁶ Brummelen, 75.

³⁷ Brummelen, 76.

³⁸ Brummelen, 76.

Such dispositions, in turn foster a commitment which, if the Holy Spirit grants conversion and regeneration, enables students to take on their God-given calling as responsive disciples.³⁹

The implication of all three mandate is that Christian school curricula facilitate and call students to be faithful in doing the truth, in reconciling and healing what sin has distorted and ruined, and in promoting integrity and justice in their communities. Programs help students acquire the discernment and abilities necessary for standing in the world as dissenters and reformers. Graduates should be able to offer fundamental critiques of secular society, its institutions, and its values.⁴⁰

Moreover, a Christian curriculum orientation fosters knowledge that, by God's grace, leads students to active service. Students relate to others. They develop a Christian lifestyle. They serve society without compromising their commitment. They develop their abilities and insights in order to become vibrant Christians as family members, friends, consumers, workers, citizens, and church members. They learn and experience the rightful place of science and technology, leisure and labor, communications and aesthetics, and justice and love. Throughout, they learn from teachers who model that submission to the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.⁴¹

Embedding Biblical Values in the Curriculum

God implanted values in His creation, values by which life can flourish. A good place to begin is to take the biblical principal that Paul calls the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). However, throughout the Bible we find other values that God wants us to espouse and practice: holiness, integrity, responsibility, marital faithfulness, authentic communication, beauty, respect for life, compassion for the poor and exploited, and so on. We also nurture values such as accuracy in mathematics, creativity in art, and trustworthiness in interpersonal relationships. In literature we choose selections that promote respect and compassion. In social studies we discuss questions of social justice, as well as values dilemmas faced by historical figures. In science we promote precise and truthful reporting of data. In mathematics we have students and plot morally significant social trends.⁴²

Throughout the curriculum, we can explicitly plan to develop students' sense of responsibility, combining high expectations with love, encouragement, and support. For every topic, we ask which value outcomes can be a natural part of the learning. We give reasons for endorsing certain values. We introduce cases that lead student to consider how such values apply in specific circumstances. In these ways as well as through our modeling, we help students replace selfishness and faith in the autonomy of the individual with self-sacrifice, humility, and servanthood.⁴³

Every child learns differently

One of the greatest Rev.s a teacher or parent can have is that children are unique, just like snowflakes. They are created with different personality styles, learning preferences, interests, and develop at different rates. Teachers need to reach all students, including the

³⁹ Brummelen, 76.

⁴⁰ Brummelen, 76.

⁴¹ Brummelen, 76–77.

⁴² Brummelen, 77.

⁴³ Brummelen, 77–78.

gifted, mid-level, and struggling learners. Tomlinson & Allan says that differentiated instruction integrates what we know about constructivist learning theory, learning styles, and brain development with empirical research on influencing factors of learner readiness, interest, and intelligence preferences toward students' motivation, engagement, and academic growth within schools.⁴⁴ Jesus used a variety of teaching styles and methods to engage learners. He often lectured with concrete examples and parables; He read passages or asked questions about material others had read; He used demonstrations, group discussions, practical application (learning by doing), and kept His students actively involved by retelling others.⁴⁵

Critical thinking

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deu. 6:4-5). Christ calls this profound proclamation made through Moses the greatest commandment of them all. But interestingly, when Jesus cites this Scripture, he adds to it another way of loving God:

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'" —Mark 12:28-30 Jesus adds to the list, "with all your mind."⁴⁶

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sister, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God-this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will (Rom. 12:1-2). Paul commanded Christian to engage in critical thinking, these two verses are full of meaning and application. And on verse 2 it emphasizes on the purpose of the critical thinking and the goal we should pursue.

Teachers

Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. Jam. 3:1. For Christians, Jesus alone stands as the Master Teacher, as the exemplar or model for teaching whose life and ministry are worthy of passionate consideration and emulation.⁴⁷ The principle for teaching that we derive is clear: our aim is to help people walk in the Way of the Lord.⁴⁸

Furthermore, it is not only that teachers are to aim at this when working with learners using biblical texts. It is also that teachers' very lives must direct disciples in the Way of the Lord.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Penn, *The Christian Education Mandate: Equipping Kingdom Kids to Impact the World for Christ*, 88.

⁴⁵ Penn, 89.

⁴⁶ Gene Edward Jr Veith, *Loving God with All Your Mind: Thinking as A Christian in the Postmodern World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003), 188.

⁴⁷ Robert.W Pazmino, *God Our Teacher: Theological Basics in Christian Education*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2001), 68.

⁴⁸ Gary A Parrett and S. Steve Kang, *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter- Varsity Press, 2009), 211-212.

⁴⁹ Parrett and Kang, 212.

A teacher of the Faith then can be said to be a sort of living Torah. This reminds us of Paul's words to the Corinthians: "You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (2 Cor. 3:2-3). Paul's words here were a sort of appeal to the believers in Corinth to live up to such a call. All of us who are called to be teachers in faith should share similar aspirations. This is not to suggest that the passing on of knowledge in more familiar, didactic ways is unimportant. Indeed, such work is critical. But the passing on of truth, tradition, instruction, commandment, story and so on is the penultimate, not the ultimate, concern of the teacher. The ultimate concern is obedience. Said otherwise, while information is a vital component of good teaching, it is not an end itself. Information is vital, when properly ingested for the glory of God, because of the role it plays in the formation of believers individually and corporately in Christlikeness.⁵⁰

What is a rock-solid teacher? A rock-solid teacher follows the Master Teacher's example. Of course, the Master Teacher is Jesus! He defined rock-solid teaching. Who had more compassion and better wisdom about people? "He knew all men," reported the apostle John (John 2:24). He had a grasp of God's Word, for He was and is the Word (see John 1:1). And as for changing people's lives, the heart of every believer is the result of Jesus' teaching. Jesus epitomizes the definition of Bible teaching: one hand on the student, the other on the Word of God, bringing them together for life change. When we teach, we must have a grasp of the needs of our students. And certainly, we want to grasp the meaning of the Scriptures. But the real skill and art of teaching is leading our students to life change!⁵¹

Analysis

Many different proposals have been made about how to build schools and universities that are distinctively Christian. The best of those proposals are the ones that recognize that the Christian worldview not only motivates us to teach and learn, but also shapes the way we teach and learn.⁵² From the above explanation we learned that Christian education is a must since God gave man his commission, called the Creation mandate. There is no area of thought, life, or culture outside the scope of Creation Mandate. Thus, the extent of the Creation Mandate necessitates Christian education. Since God has given us the mandate, Christian education is a must.

For believers, sanctification process happens every day. It means that there are times when believers fall but they will rise again in a better understanding of God. God also wants to save us from the power of sin; this is sanctification. Sanctification is not a one-time event. It is something that takes place over the rest of a Christian's life. Even though God cleanses us of our sin and takes away our "wrong" label, this does not mean that we are perfect. Sin is still present, and we still sometimes listen to it and make wrong choices. God wants us to stop listening to sin and doing what it wants us to do. God wants us to do what He tells us to do through the Bible and through His Spirit. He wants to save us from the power of sin, so that sin no longer has control over us. Sanctification is the call to put off the old self, one wrought with sin, and put on the new self, one filled by the Spirit. It is the process of our hearts, minds, and desires being brought into greater conformity with God's. Sanctification is the Christian's

⁵⁰ Parrett and Kang, 212–213.

⁵¹ Gregory C Carlson, *Rock-Solid Teacher* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2006), 11.

⁵² Bruce Riley Ashford, "Every Square Inch" (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 144.

growth in grace. Sanctification means to become more Christlike, an aspiration that seems all but impossible to reach but the Lord calls all Christians to holiness and Christlikeness. To help our children in this process, the right education is needed for them in order to be Christlike. Accelerated Christian Education has been able to answer this need in Christian education. A.C.E. has a God centered, theistic philosophy, and its basic philosophy is Bible-based throughout every subject. A.C.E is a Bible based education and it embedded the Biblical principle to its curriculum. By using the right curriculum in educating your child, we can help the process of sanctification in our children's life. Along with the seven key foundational concepts of A.C.E the students will be able to undergo the sanctification process through their learning. With this Bible embedded curriculum, we hope that the students will have the right worldview throughout their lives, so they can unfold their gifts to serve one another, to share their joy, and to bear one another's burden. And graduates' minds develop best in a God-centered environment of absolutes and love. They emerge with sweet attitude and with a greater, richer concept of God and how He want them to live.⁵³

From the moment a child is born, certain forces are at work influencing his development. Human growth, however, does not end with physical maturity. Some faculties of the personality are capable of expansion and refinement into old age. Education, whether of child or adult, is the directing of this total ongoing process of development toward specific objective, which is Christlikeness. The greatest academic feature of the A.C.E. core curriculum is that students may progress through the PACEs at their own rates. Because the curriculum is truly individualized, students learn the best way individually. They learn essential academics and explore truths about God and His world without being pressured to keep up with a group. Every child will learn the same subjects but with different level of speed and different level of difficulties. A.C.E is an individualize education since it sees human as a unique human being created by God as Imago Dei.⁵⁴

A.C.E programs also includes specific forms of material and format that aid the students as they develop their capacity for critical thinking throughout their school years. They are encouraged in their ability to think creatively and independently within a Biblical framework. In Rom. 12:1-2, Paul commanded Christian to engage in critical thinking, these two verses are full of meaning and application. And on verse 2 it emphasizes on the purpose of the critical thinking and the goal we should pursue.⁵⁵

But we must also remember that teacher is a very essential part of a learning process, since the real skill and art of teaching is leading our students to life change. The teachers must be compassionate about what they are doing, and their own lives must also direct the students in the way of the Lord. The teachers should be able to foster Christlike learning communities. The teachers must help the students to develop their ability to think creatively and critically. When we teach, we must have a grasp of the needs of our students. And certainly, we want to grasp the meaning of the Scriptures. But the real skill and art of teaching is leading our students to life change. In conclusion no matter how excellent is the curriculum, the teacher is indeed a very significant part of the learning process.⁵⁶

⁵³ Accelerated Christian Education, "Learning Center Essentials, Five Laws of Learning," *Accelerated Christian Education Inc*, 2010, 26.

⁵⁴ Accelerated Christian Education, 25.

⁵⁵ Accelerated Christian Education, 26.

⁵⁶ Carlson, *Rock-Solid Teacher*, 11.

From the above analysis, we can deduce that Accelerated Christian Curriculum is able to answer the needs of the right curriculum for Christian education as a cultural mandate from God, since its foundational philosophy and its worldview matches the Biblical Christian worldview.

References

- Accelerated Christian Education, Inc., *Learning Center Essentials, Five Laws of Learning*, <https://www.aceministries.com>, 2010
- Accelerated Christian Education, Inc. *Getting Your School Off to A Great Start*, <https://www.aceministries.com>, 2012.
- Ashford, Bruce Riley. *Every Square Inch*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015.
- Brummelen, Harro Van. *Walking with God in the Classroom Christian: Approaches to Teaching and Learning*. Colorado, CO: Purposeful Design Publications, 2009.
- Carlson, Gregory C. *Rock-Solid Teacher*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2006.
- Estep, R. James, Michael Anthony, and Greg Allison. *A Theology for Christian Education*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2008.
- Fergusson, David. "Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology." *SAGE Journals* 53, no. 4 (1999). <https://doi.org/10.1177/002096439905300406>
- Fugate, Robert. E. *God's Mandate for Biblical Education*. Omaha, NE: Lord of the Nation, LLC, 2015.
- Maddix, Mark. A, and R. James Jr Estep. *Practicing Christian Education*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2017.
- Moreland, J.P., and William Lane Craig. *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009.
- Parrett, Gary A, and S. Steve Kang. *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2009.
- Pazmino, Robert. W. *God Our Teacher: Theological Basics in Christian Education*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2001.
- Penn, Althea. *The Christian Education Mandate: Equipping Kingdom Kids to Impact the World for Christ*. South Caroline, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013.
- Pink. W. Arthur, *Doctrine of Sanctification*. Kindle edition, 2013.
- Sunshine, Glenn. *The Image of God*. United States, WA: Every Square Inch Publishing, 2013.
- Veith, Gene Edward Jr. *Loving God with All Your Mind: Thinking as A Christian in the Postmodern World*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003.