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TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHY OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION

PHILOSOPHY

- “ Definition: Philosophy is defined as the love of wisdom
- “ Wisdom is summed up in answering the question
 - “ 1. What is real?
 - “ 2. What is true?
 - “ 2. What is good?

Philosophy

- “ For the Christian, the knowledge of God is the source of such wisdom
- “ Only as one comes to know God as revealed in scripture and the testimony of His Son Jesus Christ can one achieve a meaningful sense of what is true and what is good
- “ Education in its finest form comes through an understanding of God's plan for this world and the place of human kind in it.

For the Christian, this is ultimate reality and truth.

“ Adventist education is search for a coherent philosophy is driven by a study of scripture and, especially, the life of Christ.

- . Any statement must of necessity be Christ centered
- . Practice must be consistent with the witness of His life
- . While Christians are not of this world, they do live in this world and as such, things of the world do play a large part in their lives.

Interaction with secular wisdom
must be accomplished in the Christian
school.

2. All knowledge comes from God and therefore no distinction exists between the sacred and the secular
3. Thus, every subject of study in the Christian school is taught from a God-centered perspective
4. This should be a distinctive feature of the Christian school

Basic Assumptions

- “ In their basic and fundamental beliefs, Seventh-day Adventist believe that:
- . God is the creator and Sustainer of the entire Universe-animate and inanimate.
 - . He created perfect human beings in His own image with power to think, to choose, and to do.
 - . God is the source of all that is true, good and beautiful, and has chosen to reveal Himself to human kind.

Man, by their own choice rebelled against God and fell into a state of sin that has affected the entire planet, plunging it into the cosmic conflict between good and evil. In spite of this, the world and human beings still reveal, however dimly, the goodness and beauty of their original condition

“ The Godhead met the problem of sin through the plan of redemption. This plan aims to restore human beings to God’s image and the universe back to its original state of perfection, love and harmony.

Philosophy of this Education

- “ Adventists believe that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God’s character and purpose can be understood as revealed in nature, the Bible, and Jesus Christ . To restore human beings into the image of their maker.
- “ Adventist believe that God is infinitely loving, wise, and powerful. He relates to human beings on a personal level, presenting His character as the ultimate norm for human conduct and His grace as the means of restoration.

Adventists recognize that human motives, thinking and behavior have fallen short of God's idea. Education in its broadest sense is a means of restoring human beings to their original relationship with God. Home, schools and churches cooperate in preparing learners for responsible citizenship in this world and in the world to come

Education imparts more than academic knowledge. It fosters a balanced development of the whole person . spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. It seeks to develop:

- . A life of faith in God and respect for God and respect for the dignity of all human beings
- . To build character akin to that of the creator
- . To nurture thinkers rather than mere reflectors of other's thoughts
- . To promote loving service rather than selfish ambition;
- . To ensure maximum development of each individual's potential;
- . To embrace all that is true, good and beautiful

and Mission of Adventist Education

“ Adventist education prepares students for a useful and joy-filled life, fostering friendship with God, whole person development, Bible-based values and selfless service in accordance with the Seventh-day Adventist mission of the world.

Agencies of Education

- “ Home
- “ Local church
- “ School, college and university
- “ World church

HOME

- “ The home is society’s primary and most basic educational agency
- “ Parents are the first and most influential teachers and have the responsibility to reflect God’s character to their children
- “ The whole familial setting shapes the values, attitudes, and worldview of the young
- “ It is imperative that the home, in turn, supports the education work of the school

LOCAL CHURCH

1. The local church also has a major assignment in the lifelong educational enterprise
2. The congregation as a community of faith provides an atmosphere of acceptance and love in which it disciples those within its sphere of influence in a personal faith in Jesus Christ and in a growing understanding of the World of God
3. This understanding includes both a intellectual aspect and a life of conformity to God's will.

SCHOOL, COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY

- “ All levels of Adventist schooling build on the foundation laid by the home and church
- “ The Christian teacher functions in the classroom as God’s minister in the plan of redemption.
- “ The greatest need of students is to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and to commit to a life of Christian service
- “ The formal and non-formal curricula help students reach their potential for spiritual, mental, physical, and social educational development
- “ Preparing students for a life of service to their family, church, and the larger community is a primary aim of the school

WORLD CHURCH

1. The World church at all levels has oversight responsibility for the healthy functioning of learning in all three of the above venues, including lifelong learning
2. With reference to the school as an educational agency, its functions are ideally accomplished by institutions established by the church for that purpose
3. The church at large should make every effort to ensure that all Adventist children and youth have the opportunity to attend an Adventist education institution
4. Realizing that a large percentage of the church's youth are not enrolled in Adventist schools, the world church must find ways to achieve the goals of Adventist education through alternative means (e.g. after school, church-based instruction, church-sponsored centers on non-Adventist campuses, inter-college, University clubs, etc)

Key Components of the School

- “ The student
- “ The teacher
- “ Knowledge
- “ Curriculum
- “ Instruction
- “ Discipline
- “ School life
- “ Assessment

The student

1. As a child God, the student is the primary focus of the entire educational effort and should be accepted and loved
2. The purpose of Adventist education is to help students reach their highest potential and to fulfill God's purpose for their lives
3. Student outcomes constitute a significant guiding criteria in assessing the health and effectiveness of the school

The teacher

1. The teacher holds a central place of importance
2. Ideally, the teacher should be both a committed Adventist Christian and an exemplary role model of the Christian graces and professional competences.

Knowledge

1. All learning is grounded on faith in a certain set of presuppositions or worldview. The Christian worldview recognizes a supernatural as well as natural order
2. Adventist defined knowledge more broadly than that which is merely intellectual or scientific
3. True knowledge encompasses cognitive, experiential, emotional, relational, intuitive and spiritual elements.
4. An acquisition of true knowledge leads to understanding which is manifested in wisdom
5. An acquisition of true knowledge leads to understanding which manifested in wisdom and appropriate action

CURRICULUM

1. The curriculum will promote academic excellence and will include score of general studies needed for responsible citizenship in a given culture along with spiritual insights that inform Christian living and build community
2. Such citizenship includes appreciation for the Christian heritage, concern for social justice, and stewardship of the environment
3. A balanced curriculum will address the major development needs in the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, emotional and vocational realms
4. All areas of study will be examined from the perspective of the biblical worldview, within the context of the Great controversy theme, as it promotes integration of faith and learning.

Instruction

1. The instructional program of the classroom places appropriate emphasis on all forms of true knowledge
2. Instructional methodology will actively engage the student, give opportunity to put what is learned into practice, and be appropriate to the discipline and to the culture

discipline

- “ Discipline in a Christian school is built upon the need to restore the image of God in each student and recognizes the freedom of the will and the work of the Holy Spirit
- “ Discipline . not to be confused with punishment - seeks the development of self-control
- “ In redemptive discipline, the student's will and intellectual are engaged.

School life

- “ A blended emphasis of worship, study, labor, and recreation will characterize the total learning environment, with careful attention given to balance
- “ The campus community will be pervaded by joyful spirituality, a spirit of cooperation, and respect for the diversity of individuals and cultures.

Assessment

- “ The Adventist school, college or university gives clear evidence that it subscribes to an Adventist philosophy of education
- “ Such evidence is found in the written curriculum, in the teaching and learning activity, in the campus ethos, and by the testimony of students, graduates, constituents, employees, and the community at large.

Responsibilities and outcomes

- “ The SDA church has made a commitment to provide a broad education and spiritual formation for its children, youth and young adults within the context of the Christian worldview
- “ The church extends this same opportunity to other children and youths of the community who share similar values and ideas
- “ Adventist education seeks to maintain academic excellence in all teaching and learning activities

Elementary schools

The Adventist elementary schools offers students

- “ A climate in which they can understand God’s will, commit their lives to Him, and experience the joy of helping others;
- “ An organized program leading toward spiritual, physical, mental, social and emotional development

The Adventist elementary school offers students:

- “ A basic core of skills and knowledge for everyday living appropriate to their age;
- “ A wholesome appreciation and respect for the home, the church, the school, and the community

Students completing the elementary level at an Adventist school should;

- “ Have had the opportunity to commit their lives to God through conversion, baptism, service and a desire to do God's will in every area of living.

ate competence in thinking, communication, and quantitative skills along with other academic areas foundational to schooling at the secondary level.

Students completing the elementary level at an Adventist school should

“ Manifest interpersonal skills and emotional growth necessary for healthy relationships with their peers, family and community

practice basic principles of health and balanced living, including a wise use of time and entertainment media

“ Develop an appreciation for the dignity of labor along with a general awareness of career options appropriate to their interests and God-given abilities.

Secondary school

“ The Adventist secondary school builds on the foundation, aid by the primary school with a focus on values, choices, and Christ-like character

- . A formal and non-formal curriculum in which academic study, spiritual values and daily life are integrated.
- . A broad academic and vocational program leading to productive living and satisfactory career choices

The Adventist secondary school builds on the foundation laid by the primary school with a focus on values, choices, and Christ-like character:

- . Avenues whereby Christian faith is made relevant to their emerging needs, leading to more mature relationship with others and with God;
- . An opportunity to develop a Christian lifestyle of values, service, and witness

Completing the secondary level at an Adventist school should;

- . Have had an opportunity to commit their lives to God and therefore manifest a maturing faith in Him characterized by personal devotion, public worship, and service and witness to others in fulfillment of the church's mission
- . Demonstrate competence in communication, quantitative skills, and creative thinking, along with other academic areas that are foundational to excellence in tertiary education and/or the world of work.

Students completing secondary level at an Adventist school should;

- . Demonstrate maturity and Christ-like sensitivity within the family circle, in the choice of friendship, in preparation for marriage, and in broad participation within their church and community
- . Make good decisions and wise choices in ways that demonstrate their belief in the body as a temple of God. This includes careful use of time and discriminating selection of music, media and other forms of entertainment.

Students completing secondary level at an Adventist school should;

“ Have developed a strong work ethic functioning competently in every day life as well as within entry-level work experiences appropriate to their interests and God-given abilities.

Tertiary Institutions

- “ Adventist institutions of higher education provide students a unique environment need in pursuit of learning in the arts, humanities, and religion, sciences, and various professions within the perspective of the Adventist philosophy of education and spiritual commitment
- “ Adventist Higher Education
 - . Gives preference to careers that directly support the mission of the church
 - . Recognizes the importance of the quest for truth in all its dimension, as it affects the total development of the individual in relation both to God and to fellow human beings.

Higher Education:

- . Utilizes available resources such as revelation, reason, reflection and research to discover truth and its implications inherent in all human endeavors.
- . Leads students to develop lives of integrity based upon principles compatible with the religions, ethical, social and service values essential to the Adventist worldview
- . Fosters particularly at the graduate level- mastery, critical evaluation, discovery and dissemination of knowledge, and the nurture of wisdom in a community of Christian scholars.

Students completing the tertiary level at an Adventist institution should:

- . Exhibit proficiency in critical thinking, stewardship, creativity, appreciation of beauty and the natural environment, communication, and other forms of academic scholarship toward fulfillment of their vocations and life-long learning
- . Have had the opportunity to commit themselves to God and therefore live a principled life in accordance with His will with a desire to experience and support the message and mission of the SDA church.

Students completing the tertiary level at an Adventist institution should:

- Manifest social sensitivity and loving concern for the well-being of others in preparation for marriage and family life, citizenship within a diverse community, and fellowship within the community of God
- Maintain a consistent lifestyle that demonstrates a commitment to optional health practices essential to effective adult living. This includes careful use of time and discrimination selection of music, media, and other forms of entertainment
- Answer God's call in the selection and pursuit of their chosen careers, in selfless service to the mission of the church and in building a free, just and productive society and world community

LIFE . LONG LEARNING

- “ Education goes beyond formal schooling. Life-long learning should meet the needs of both professionals and non-professionals.
- Among professional responsibilities are opportunities for continuing education for certificate and career enrichment for educators, clergy, business and health care personal and others.
 - In the non-professional realm, opportunity exists for programs in such areas as local church leadership, family life, personal development, spirituality, Christian growth and service to the church and the community