

ACCA Faculty Independent Sessions

Professional Development

Name: Barbulescu

Date: 1/16/2014

Seminar or Activity: Apple Nailing by Paul David Tripp from ACCS Classis, Autumn 2013

What you learned from this session:

We all know that the law does not change a child, and yet we can all so easily fall into the trap of using the law to expect change in our students. In our first grade math class, we learn the following steps to problem solving: understand, plan, solve, and check. Which of these are the only steps we and students tend to take? Usually only the solving, right? I am guilty of making the same type of mistake in resolving problems that arise in the classroom. If a child is playing with the eraser, take it away. If someone says something unkind, ask him or her to go make it right. Tripp reminds us that what comes out of a person is what is in a person. We mean what we say and do. What I am doing in this quick sort of problem-solving is attempting to nail good apples onto a bad tree. Bad things come out of us because of bad things in our hearts, which Tripp defines as "the causal core of your personhood." What would be wiser? Having the child examine him or herself and discover what the misbehavior reveals about our hearts. But nobody's perfect, right? Well, Jesus is perfect. If we let Him have our way in us, we will see what it looks like to have Jesus living our lives and our students' lives. This takes time, and it takes the teacher to have a vital relationship with Christ. Christian schools have a poor reputation (sometimes fair, sometimes unfair) for being schools of Pharisees. This article was a great reminder to keep focused on the hearts of our students, and to keep our eyes on Jesus as the one that they need.

Would you recommend: Yes

Where to find resource: <http://www.accsedu.org/filerequest/3754>

Name: Laura Keesee

Date: 1/16/2014

Seminar or Activity: Matt Whitling speaker, A Taste of Wormwood

What you learned from this session:

I wanted to listen to this based on what Pam wrote last month. It was excellent. I was challenged to re evaluate my motives for rules, actions, etc. using the plum line of Christ. God's law is kind and for the good of his people, considers our frame, helps us see around corners, and sacrifices. God should be the standard for all that we do as a school.

Would you recommend: Yes
Where to find resource: ACCS website

Name: Donna St.Hill **Date:** 1/16/2014
Seminar or Activity: Competing in the Real World by Tim Moon

What you learned from this session:

Tim Moon's article compares what the game of basketball use to be about to what it has become. In the 50's, basketball was more of a team sport. Today, the game of basketball is more of an individual sport that focuses on stars and their ability to "slam dunk". The rules of the game have changed to appeal to the crowds rather than those who actually follow the rules of the game. In a similar way, American education has changed. Focus is no longer placed on the rigor of reading, writing, thinking, speaking but preparing students to do a "job". The system fails to realize that when people are not writing, thinking, speaking, etc. there will be failure to do the job. This will negatively affect our nation as a whole as we seek to compete on a national level.

Would you recommend: Yes
Where to find resource: <http://www.accsedu.org/filerequest/3545.pdf>

Name: Rachael Messer **Date:** 1/16/2014
Seminar or Activity: Quality Podcast: CiRCE Audio Library, Andrew Kern on Assessing Them Like Humans.

What you learned from this session:

Do your assessments represent the classical way of teaching? How can you better assess in a classical way?

Most schools still assess based on grades even though we are teaching virtue.

Assessment leads teaching. For example if a student walks down a dirt path and then at the end you count how many stones he has picked up then the next time he walks down that path that will be his main focus. Most children see assessments as the final grade on the top of the paper. The first thing a child does when he gets his paper back is to look at his grade and then ask others, ranking people by grade.

To start moving into assessing more classically and personally one must first have knowledge of the three types of learning; skill, knowledge, and understanding. In order to assess knowledge one can assess memorization and then find based on a percentage. Some skills if simplified, such as multiplication tables, can also be presentenced. Understanding and most skills are best assessed through communication with the student. This is how we assess virtue and wisdom.

Ultimately understanding is extended to wisdom and duration of skill to virtue. This podcast suggest that the students should act as apprentices. They also suggest that the daily schedule gives students the structure of reality and that current education perceives all the subjects as not related. Suggesting moving back to horizontal integration in which all subjects are separated into an art or a science. Where art is the object of doing and science is the domain of knowledge. They also said that vertical integration is best, one teacher stays with the same students for several years, this strengthens bonds encouraging truth and allows for a true apprenticeship. This way appropriate milestones are set for each student. They also stress teaching to help students know the information for the joy of learning not just the test. For example if they need to learn the seven kings you could have the students learn the material and then have a discussion comparing the kings with a small portion of the class before each students starts writing an essay. The final goal is to teach students to be craftsmen while still being a human with morals, not a number.

Their suggestions:

Begin to move into apprenticeships verse industrial teaching. As a school once a quarter start coming up with different ways to assess that better support classical education and start implementing. If all schools are using the same test-to-test students then the test is not a proper assessment based on the classical model.

Would you recommend: Yes

Where to find resource: iTunes Store PodCast Library

Name: Lexi Keesee

Date: 1/16/2014

Seminar or Activity: The Way We Learn by Cynthia Tobias

What you learned from this session:

I read the first four chapters of this book this afternoon. Tobias begins by discussing what a learning style is and how important it is to discover and appreciate each child's learning style so that we can find positive ways of building on their natural strengths. She then moves into a chapter that helps the reader (teacher/parent) understand his personal learning style. In this chapter, she stresses the importance of reaching a "common level of communication" with other learning styles, because no matter how loudly you speak or how carefully you enunciate, Russian will still be Russian to an English speaker. (I kept thinking it sounds like The Five Love Languages of learning!) The next several chapters give information about four dominant learning styles (Concrete Sequential, Abstract Sequential, Abstract Random, and Concrete Random) that stem from the many ways we take in and use information. The last half of the book will discuss how to teach to these four learning styles (which I am looking forward to reading later).

Tobias uses a lot of scenarios between adults and children (both with similar and

differing learning styles) to help illustrate the different ways we process information and to help one understand how to relate to and teach those who learn differently. She also has a lot of useful lists such as what's most difficult for each style and what they do best, what kind of questions people of each style ask, and the "ten commandments" for getting along with a person of each style. I will definitely finish reading this book and keep it on my shelf as a resource to flip through on occasion until determining and teaching to different learning styles becomes second nature. ☺

Would you recommend: Yes

Where to find resource: handy dandy professional development shelf or borrow from me :)

Name: Pam Grote

Date: 1/16/2014

Seminar or Activity: The Classroom Management Secret by Michael Linsin

What you learned from this session:

This book is compiled from articles penned by the author, a K-8 teacher. Even though it is written from a secular perspective, and is primarily for the public classroom teacher, it has many valuable insights. (And I suspect he's a Christian, partly because his ideas ring true, and partly because I've seen him sign off on comments after e-mail articles with "soli deo gloria." Not your typical closing for someone in the public school arena! Much of his instruction syncs with "The Seven Laws of Teaching"--classroom management works when the teacher is knowledgeable, prepared, and enthusiastic.) He shares many useful ideas and thoughts to ponder, such as "Why a Simple Pause Is a Powerful Classroom Management Strategy," "8 Things Teachers Do to Cause Boredom," "A Simple Way to Improve Listening(trying this tomorrow!)," "How to Handle Friendship Drama." This one has obvious, though not stated, Biblical principles behind it--"if possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all." (Romans 12:18). His most encouraging advice is that you can always "press the restart button on classroom management." And he's a HUGE proponent of the "smooth, brisk, arrow-straight line," noting that "nothing focuses students faster or more effectively." He has a website, too, where his articles are archived and linked to each other. There are so many ideas to mull over, this is worth reading through more than once!

Would you recommend: Yes

Where to find resource: www.smartclassroommanagement.com

Name: Brett Edwards

Date: 1/16/2014

Seminar or Activity: Liturgical Classroom and Virtue Formation by Jenny Rallens

What you learned from this session:

Ms. Rallens is seeking to answer the following question; How do we develop liturgical practices in our classrooms that will form Godly virtue in our students? She argues that the classical Christian educator must remember four fundamental ideas about virtue formation;

1. If we seek to train the affections of our students hearts we must remember to teach with "experiences" in addition to explanation.
2. The way we learning something is more influential than the something we learn.
3. The form of the lesson teaches as much as the content.
4. The way to a person's heart is through the body.

She believes that too often the Christian school (and classical Christian) classroom is too focused on teaching students this idea of "Christian worldview" as a list of propositions and truth statements. In contrast she wants her students to learn that truth is poetic, it is a story and not just a list of propositions. Virtue is imitating an example (the example of Christ). We should be answering students moral questions with stories (maybe even poetry!). We should be disciplining our students with stories that can truly impact their hearts and the desires of their heart.

Rallens brings up a very helpful metaphor about how learning ought to look in the classical Christian classroom. She discusses the three stage medieval academic liturgy of lectio, meditatio, and compositi. In the lectio phase, the student will collect information and ideas. For instance they will read a book or learn a new concept. In the meditatio phase the student meditate, reflect and contemplate the information collected. In the compositi phase the student will imitate, express and live out the virtues collected and considered in the first two phases. Medieval scholars compared this to the process of making honey. First, the bees fly around gathering nectar. Second, the bees digest the honey. Third, the bees make the honey.

Rallens concludes by providing two helpful examples of how this will look in the classroom. I enjoyed this seminar as it compelled me to think critically about how I design my class to form virtue in my students. I have my concerns about some of the criticisms implied during her session but I still strongly recommend this session for our teachers (especially the older grades).

Would you recommend: Yes

Where to find resource: <http://insideclassicaled.com/>

Name: Melissa Hobson

Date: 1/16/2014

Seminar or Activity: Joyful Teaching at insideclassicaled.com by Christopher Perrin

What you learned from this session:

This talk, geared to homeschool teachers, was about truly fulfilling the calling without the burnout.

Mostly surrounding content from the popular book *Leisure: The Basis of Culture* by Josef Pieper, Perrin notes the two operations of the mind: discursive mind (active), e.g., Martha, and the receptive mind (gazing, receiving), e.g., Mary.

He notes that "school" comes from the Greek words and Latin words for leisure and play. And, 'symposia' means getting together for talking and literal refreshment (drinking). We have to work as we are still called to labor, but we are looking for times when we can gather to talk to celebrate and reflect on truth, goodness, and beauty.

He talks about the perversion of the word Amusement—used to mean to idle or bored a-MUSE (inspiration).

Meanwhile, Entertainment—means to be held or captivated, transcending space or time. Entertainment is more like what we ought be engaged in as teachers.

Part of being a teacher is having the students stare at something so long it become strange and then clear.

Some practical ways to do leisure as educators:

Feasting and Festival. All takes time and must be intentional.

Laughter. Lack of it means you're probably not trusting that God is good. Despite your challenges, do you believe God will take care of you? G. K. Chesterton: You should take your mission, not yourself, seriously.

Other Practical applications to bring to the classroom:

Nature walks

Reading just for joy and pleasure.

Reading poems to each other.

Joining the play of children.

Classical music

Great meals

Memorizing poems and scriptures

Exposure to art

Would you recommend: Yes

Where to find resource: insideclassicaled.com
