



Kevin DeKam

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WHY DO YOU FEEL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT?

I had the privilege of growing up within Christian Education from Preschool through my undergraduate studies. Tina and I have also been able to share the gift of Christian Education with our own children and one of the greatest blessings of our lives was to play a small part in establishing a Christian School in Zambia which today brings excellent, Christ-centered education to hundreds of children in a remote rural village in that part of the world.

Our family has been impacted significantly by each of these commitments and we are humbled and grateful. In an increasingly secularized world and culture, we value more than ever the need to raise our children with a thorough understanding and appreciation for the way God has designed each of us to serve Him and his Kingdom. I believe that Christian Education offers the greatest opportunity to do that outside of the home.

EDUCATION AT SOUTH CHRISTIAN IS BASED ON A REFORMED UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE AND THE WORLD. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO YOU, AND HOW DOES THIS MAKE SOUTH CHRISTIAN DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PRIVATE OR PAROCHIAL HIGH SCHOOLS?

While I respect other traditions of faith and faith-based education, as well as the decision of families to choose other forms of education for different reasons, my hope is that as an SCHS community, we can maintain that respect while preserving and celebrating our own tradition of Reformed faith without apology. The Reformed theological position helps us understand a complex world and our place in it and it gives us hope.

My own hope is that SCHS is always seen above all else as an institution that disciples young people in following the Way of Jesus, studying His Word and bringing the Good News to a broken world. Any academic, athletic, artistic or other material success should be seen as secondary to our quest to be disciples and servant leaders. My hope is that self-sacrifice over success will always be evident as the distinguishing feature of any member of the South Christian community.

HOW IS YOUR LIFE CHRIST-CENTERED?

Christ is not only my personal Savior, but the Lord of my life. Like all broken and sinful humans, I struggle to keep Christ in the position he deserves in my life and to resist the universal human urge to take control and pursue my own desires. My faith, the practices of my faith, redemptive relationships, and my responsibilities help remind me of the proper design for which my life was determined.

My calling and work as a Licensed Professional Counselor also requires me to contend with human brokenness and suffering, including my own. It also affords me the sacred privilege of engaging in redemptive conversations and relationships and to witness God's plan of healing and grace in real time.

Finally, my roles as a husband and father humble me as I carry the awesome responsibility of loving and leading those he has entrusted to my care. This too reminds me to keep Christ at the center of my own life and to guide my family to do the same. My desire is to bring Him glory in all that I do.

WHAT SPECIFIC SKILLS OR ABILITIES DO YOU SEE YOURSELF BRINGING TO THE BOARD? (Examples might include education, legal, finance/budgeting/planning, building facilities, fundraising, promotion or marketing, strategic planning, interpersonal skills.) ALSO, IDENTIFY ANY LEADERSHIP OR VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN.

As a person, God has created me to be quite high in trait openness, so that I tend to be a very curious person - especially when it comes to other people. With this, he has also granted me a unique ability to recognize themes and correlating data points and to synthesize them into ideas and cohesive storylines.

As a creative thinker, I tend to be much more visionary than pragmatic and oriented to big questions and ideas than details. I am fairly risk-tolerant and can be passionate - especially when it comes to matters of principle or on behalf of others.

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As a therapist, I hope that I can offer a unique capacity to listen, be present, and assist people in articulating their thoughts and ideas and then also merging them across differences. I tend to be fairly empathic, compassionate, and objective.

As a small business owner, I have experience with finance, operations and market engagement and I have been managing people for over 25 years. I worked in non-profit and ministry for much of my career, including cross-culturally in overseas missions where we helped plant a Christian School. I have also served on consistory and several boards and have volunteered and worked in various leadership capacities.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU SEE FACING CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN GENERAL (AND SOUTH CHRISTIAN SPECIFICALLY) IN THE COMING YEARS? FEEL FREE TO SHARE IDEAS YOU MAY HAVE FOR FACING THESE CHALLENGES.

I actually think the future of Christian education is very bright right now. At a time when so much uncertainty, division and chaos dominates our culture, we know that Christ is the answer. As His followers, we have an immense opportunity to point people towards God as the source of our confidence, unity and peace. Christian Education offers a comprehensive way to do this, is well positioned to be a light to a world in need, and I am hopeful about that opportunity.

That said, I believe we face several challenges right now. We face the challenge of a secular culture that seems to be growing less, not more, receptive - and sometimes even hostile - to the message of Christ. Many of the systems and institutions within our society appear to be optimized towards an increasing polarization and a spirit of distrust and disunity pervades. This threat has long since breached the walls of the church and its subsidiary organizations like Christian schools and we are increasingly isolated and divided even as those who share in professing Christ. In the area of technology alone, our systems of communication are evolving more rapidly than we can even understand, much less respond to the impact these advances are having on us as humans - a challenge in itself. All of these cultural realities pose a threat to Christian Education and our school is not immune.

But, again, I don't fear that any of these challenges are insurmountable. In fact, I believe that we have a unique opportunity to share the message of truth and hope. If anything, the greatest challenges we face may come from within. I believe we risk tipping the balance in either direction and losing our precious position to be a light in this community. If we close ourselves too far off from the world, we risk becoming isolated from it, missing the chance to be salt and light as well as the chance to welcome those who may wish to join us. (I also worry that increasing costs threaten to exclude some families who see Christian Education as an unattainable option.) However, if we become too indistinct from the rest of our community, we risk diluting our unique message of hope and being no different from those who succumb to the pleasures and priorities of the world. The key to me seems to be relentless pursuit of Christ as our top priority, and the blessings of a beautiful facility, strong academics, successful athletics and more as secondary to following Him.