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A Manifesto for

Christian Schools

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A MANIFESTO FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

My colleague, Dr Ted Boyce, Principal of Pacific Hills Christian School, argues that the essence of Christian education is found in Matthew 22: 36-40:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.

This is both a simple and a profound remark; simple in its helpful encapsulation of Christian Education into a well-known Biblical injunction, profound in its clear incision through educational philosophies and debate to a sustaining Biblical foundation. In this chapter I argue that in Christian schooling, whether we speak of the efforts of Christian teachers in state schools, Christian schools or other private institutions, there is a critical and urgent need to capture the hearts and minds of Christian educators, if they are to be in harmony with this central focus and engage their students in education which is comprehensively Christian.

This paper presents some proposals which, if implemented in schools, would require some radical adjustments. It argues for an approach by all of us which is comprehensively Christian. It struggles around the fringes of an issue identified by Laurie Davies, until recently Director of Education for the Anglican Education Commission of Sydney Diocese: the lack of a thorough Christian philosophy of education in this country. Do staff and parents really want to embrace a thorough-going vision? Often not. Parents, Christian and not, want their Children educated on a secular model to get ahead in a secular world. They'd like some values taught along the way, but not ones which might interfere with the success paradigm. Staff, including many in my own school, often do not want to be troubled by difficult teasing out of Christian world view implications, they want to be left alone to teach their subjects. They believe that simply the presence of Christian teachers will generate useful spiritual activity, even though unplanned, by a form of osmosis. They believe that trying to model Christ (often reduced to being nice to the kids) and a little occasional witnessing ("nothing planned") is sufficient for their calling. How do we move teachers beyond this?

Currently, this task is constrained by a number of problems. The first is dualism or compartmentalism. Hill (1982) argued that Christian teachers are often ineffective in their calling because they have compartmentalized their minds; they have separated work and the practice of faith in such a way that the latter does not effectively influence the former. In over 30 years in schools, both state and Christian, I have found Brian Hill's analysis unfortunately correct in both sectors:

Sherman and Hendricks (1987) also point out the reductionist capacity of some Christian people to view work and God as mutually exclusive. The tendency of Christians to retreat into pietism, embracing a world of inner spiritual life which is disconnected from the real world, is unfortunately sub-Biblical. Ralph Martin (1994), in making the point, argues that the diligence and conscientiousness of the Christian in the tasks of daily work is as inherent to the practice of faith as the worship focus of Church services.

Some staff who manifest dualistic thinking choose to devote their real energies to church, ignoring the ministry field of schools and establishing a false dichotomy between the mission of Church and their employment. However, they are a very small minority. The greater problem, in my view, is Christian staff who have never grappled with the rigorous demands of being Christian in an educational context. Intellectual laziness also leads to laziness of the heart in not grasping the ministry opportunities afforded in schools. In short, many teachers, in the typology of Matthew 22 above, have worried more about their souls than their hearts and minds!

AN INTEGRATED CHRISTIAN APPROACH

This observation leads to the next issue. Romans 12:2 commands us

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

There is a call here to Christian educators in terms of their own thinking and the thinking they seek to engender in their students. Some schools use a world view primer with senior students, such as James Sire's (1997), *The Universe Next Door*. The secular knowledge bases and humanistic assumptions of the cognate areas Christians teach need to be critiqued in the light of God's creative and redemptive work. This is particularly an issue in Christian schools. Such schools often marginalise their Christian education elements to Chapel, Devotions and Christian Studies classes. Beyond this, they teach a secular curriculum which undermines the world view propagated in the "religious" elements of school life. They aid and abet the dualisms of life referred to above and augment students' natural ability to compartmentalise knowledge, "switching off" the minor religious incursions of the school into their thought life. The integrative nature of our theology, particularly the permeating of Christ through all things, needs to be reflected in the organic unity of our school practices.

Colossians 1:15-17 tells us:

> *He* is *the image* of *the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him* all *things were created: things in heaven and on earth.... He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

The proposition that schools need to present a curriculum informed by Christian faith is not an argument for teachers harassing reluctant students by introducing God into every sentence they utter, nor for contrived or tokenistic responses such as using Biblical examples in student exercises. It is an argument for a comprehensive Christian world view underpinning the teaching of each subject, a reflection on what it teaches of God's sovereignty. The school I lead has sought to equip teachers to deal effectively with these issues by obtaining licence to operate as a campus of Macquarie University in Sydney. Here in our own premises, lecturers from Macquarie Christian Studies Institute present rigorous tertiary courses in areas such as world view formation. As well as the inherent and instrumental benefit of such courses, they have the additional attraction of articulating towards a Certificate, Diploma or Master's Degree.

Influenced by the critique of Christian schools offered by Thompson (2003), the school has sought to interleaf strong theological teaching into its staff (pupil-free) day and retreat programs. Thompson argues that many Christian schools are unable to deliver on their Christian mission because so many of their staff are, although Christian, almost theologically and Biblically illiterate. He maintains that too many schools operate within the self-handicap of are restricted Biblical canon, comprising exclusive concentration on a few favourite books of Scripture, and a limited Creation-Fall-Redemption schema.

For the Christian teacher in a state school or university, these issues need to be dealt with very tactfully. In a pluralistic society, Christian voices are but one amongst many, and often not very welcome.

STUDENT MATURATION AND QUESTIONING OF FAITH

Twenty years ago, Bruce Wilson (1983), identified the link between scientific and technological expansion and the retraction of faith (a kind of diminishing "God of the gaps" theology). Pluralism and post-modernism are additional but complementary challenges to faith in age of advanced technology.

Trevor Cooling, in his fine work *A Christian Vision for State Education* (1994), acknowledges that education may inherently have a role in raising doubt with respect to the claims of religion. He identifies as a major issue that the enculturation into faith by home and church may directly clash with the school taught approach of critical and rational analysis, thereby forcing students to make a difficult choice between the two.

He goes on to say certain doctrines are considered to be no longer true because they are seen as inappropriate in a pluralist context, suggesting an overarching instrumentalist approach to the discernment of truth.

To make these points is not to try to retreat from or evade pluralism, nor to retreat into dogmatism. Amongst Cooling's most incisive contributions is his discussion of "bafflement". He argues that teachers and parents need to assist students through the normal processes of doubting of religious certainties,

rather than close down discussion with authoritarian responses of certitude. He argues that students cope with bafflement by a process he terms 'cognitive bargaining', by which they adjust their beliefs in response to new ideas.

Cooling says, if being challenged by new and uncomfortable ideas that are not neatly accommodated within our belief system is to retract into an orthodoxy that shuts out rather than engages these ideas, religious beliefs cease to provide a credible explanation of our existence. Instead, religion has been relegated to a childhood fantasy remnant. Cooling argues that if children and teenagers are not helped to think through their bafflement with the interface of faith and an emerging understanding of the world, the options are retreat into ideologically maintained orthodoxy, or adult disillusionment with faith.

There is a message here for educators in institutions from all sectors. My goal as a Principal of a Christian school is to have staff handle these discussions so well that students who remain unconverted at their end of Year 12 are still open to the Gospel in later life, and have not closed down on the matter. This requires teachers to be sensitive to a certain dialectic in discussion, patient with student struggles and not remotely and austerely repeating formulaic answers. My school has sought training for staff from those who are theologically apt but also acute in dealing with evangelism of the young.

EVANGELICALS, INTELLECTUAL RIGOUR AND DUALISM

To make these points about the need for faith development to engage the real world takes us to another dilemma. If, to use Niebuhr's famous categorisation, education in the hands of Christians aims to be transformational, as Romans 12:2 would appear to require, it must have a cognitive mind renewing capacity. It must reflect Christianly on knowledge bases. It must have a Christian consciousness. This is where the problem lies. Harry Blamires, as long ago as 1963, bemoaned the dearth of Christian thinking, asserting the lack of cogent Christian analysis in areas such as politics, social and cultural life. Blamires maintained the lack of thorough Christian thinking was reflected in a lack of adequate resultant Christian action.

Mark Noll (1994), takes up this theme, indicating the extent to which evangelicals have deserted a rich heritage of their forebears in engagement with and critique of culture, politics and the world of ideas, retreating instead into pietism, a focus on one's personal holiness, sometimes defined in withdrawal from the world into amore 'spiritual' introspective practice of worship and the life of obedience. Hence, the scandal of the evangelical mind is that, essentially, there isn't one. Evangelical Christianity is populist and pragmatic in a manner that is antithetical to deep intellectual effort. He argues that evangelicals have inadvertently damaged their mission by ceding the intellectual tasks of the age entirely to secular universities.

These propositions are a challenge for academics in the first instance, but also for primary and secondary educators, as we seek with integrity to be faithful to our calling.

A similar mantra is taken up by Walsh and Middleton (1984) issued by my school to all newly appointed teaching staff: that Christians in general fail to perceive the comprehensiveness of a Biblical worldview. In so far as they confine their Christian understanding to limited 'religious' aspects of life, they allow competing, non-Biblical worldviews to shape those aspects of their thinking. In short, dualism is rampant. They point out that Christians generally emphasise the doctrine of salvation to the almost exclusion of the doctrine of creation. So much of our world view should flow from the latter.

Walsh and Middleton argue that from the doctrine of creation come doctrines of the kingdom of God and stewardship within creation, both fertile areas for Christian education. They argue for a unity of Christian life which breaks down unbiblical sacred/secular dichotomies and sees all of life as religion.

Fowler (1996) takes this argument further. He disputes the notion that we can Christianise curriculum and teaching practice by grafting a Biblical perspective or a few Christian goals on top of secular practice. Rather, we need to critique the whole structure.

At the most foundational level, therefore, Christians must develop an integrative perspective in their studies. Jesus is Lord of all. The Christian academic calling is then to 'take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ' (2 Corinthians 10:5). As most schools staff vacancies by employing teachers who have been trained in secular institutions, commencing staff characteristically need assistance in developing this area of their thinking and teaching. My school has developed a weekly induction program, based around prior reading and discussion of carefully selected readings in Christian education.

'WHATEVER IS GOOD'

How then, in the light of this imperative, might the Christian teacher interrogate curriculum content, in deciding what is worthwhile to teach:

The templet may well be found in Philippians 4:8:

> *Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.*

There is a charter here for the Christian teacher, of whatever sector, to teach those things which are wholesome and aesthetic, which are part of God's bounteous creation. But on several levels, it is not that simple, Life is not all beautiful and innocent. How will the Christian teacher deal with those aspects of life and culture which are unseemly and sordid? In my visits as Principal to Saturday sport, I am sometimes ambushed by parents clutching a copy of their child's current novel, with a rude word underlined, wanting the novel banned because of this word. Many parents, understandably wishing to protect their child, want to deal with ugliness and nastiness by hiding it away. Ultimately, with the incursions of television, pop lyrics on radio and CD, and cyberspace into our homes, this is impossible. This issue has been thoroughly explored by Dr Bill Andersen in terms of the nurture versus exposure argument, within the pages of the *Journal of Christian Education*. I do not intend to repeat the arguments here. Suffice to say that my view is that Christian schools do a disservice if they attempt to cocoon students. A tough minded consideration of the real issues of life, with a view to the readiness and maturity of the child, in a supporting environment, has great merit. Cultural texts should not be interrogated only or mainly in terms of offensive language - which misses the main point - but in terms of their world views, which can be very insidious for the young. Often "squeaky clean" texts are dangerous in this respect; not that they need censoring so much as Christian critiquing.

There are, however, other issues. What does the School, what does the teacher, actually teach in its formal and hidden curriculum? This is at least as much an issue for independent schools, which number largely amongst their clientele the rich and powerful, as for government and small Christian schools. Does the hidden curriculum teach the pleasures of consumerism, acquisitiveness, hedonistic lifestyle, materialism and getting ahead in the rat race through fierce competition? Is it an apologist for the excesses of capitalism? Tom Sine (1997) maintains that western Christianity has propounded a message of the lordship of Christ while in practice accommodating the primacy of material gain. Is there a disjuncture between what the school says it stands for in terms of espoused philosophy and what it actually stands for in terms of its real curriculum? These are difficult issues, as any school which does not offer its students the prospect of real advancement in the world will be quickly deserted by parents, including Christian parents. Often schools try to offset this individualistic and somewhat self-serving student focus on academic results with community, compassionate programs. Dr Grant Maple (1997) argues that young people need clear teaching on the relationship of Christian faith to contemporary culture (p30), that concern for the poor and disadvantaged should lead schools to establish appropriate programs to reflect a Christian view on distributive justice.

At St Paul's Grammar School, values education has consciously been written into all courses, after faculty discussion on which values can be dealt with naturally and authentically within the subject mailer dictated by the syllabus. Sitting atop this structure is a whole school identification of key Biblical values which arise from our mission statement.

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS

Harro van Brummelen (1988) argues that schools can easily equate traditional educational methodologies and social mores with Christian education, thereby unintentionally constituting themselves as shelters for the middle class. As an antidote, he recommends that schools structure into their curriculum some social action options which assist students to relate to, and show compassion for, the poor and underprivileged.

John Stott, (1984), has chronicled the disastrous effects on the credibility and connectedness of Christian faith in the twentieth century withdrawal of Christians from social engagement into private spirituality.

Walsh and Middleton have identified the structural problem: a disjunction between modern western notions of individualism and Biblical imperatives of community and service.

One can only endorse these perceptions, while surmising that schools' performance in these areas is, at best, mixed. My school, as part of its senior International Baccalaureate program (an alternative secondary exit credential to the NSW Higher School Certificate), teaches a Creativity *I* Action *I* Service program that requires students to make a positive contribution to society. This is good for Christian students in terms of Ephesians 2: 10 *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* It is good in terms of modelling the kingdom through Matthew 5 values "blessed *are the meek,* blessed *are the poor,* "etc. Happily, these structures have enabled us to integrate service aspects, such as assisting World Vision, into our actual curriculum. A Cadet Unit of the Rural Fire Service established on campus is a further opportunity for service.

Christian parents and students are as much culturally imprisoned at this point as everyone else. There is, however, a strong biblical mandate and early church precedent to seek ministry opportunities as part of our educational framework. Bruce Winter (1994) has argued powerfully that it was normative in first century culture for Christians to play the role of benefactor towards their cities and communities. There was no dichotomy of church and state; rather, the early church taught a civic consciousness and an engagement with culture consistent with a Christian ethic. He argues his thesis by a close analysis of Pauline and Petrine texts. His analysis is provocative; arguing that conspicuous Christian service to communities was part of the attractiveness of their evangelical message.

VALUES EDUCATION - REAL OR NOMINAL?

And what of spirituality education? Grant Maple (1993), argues for the need for multi-faceted approaches which are not just cognitive but sensory and experiential as well. He points out that liturgical forms, archane language and big metanarratives will not resonate with many (p. 85). He is critical of church schools which make such demands on student time as to mitigate against involvement in local parishes, developing an unbalanced faith which may not be sustained except in connection with the school. Michael Frost (1998) argues for the need to see God in the ordinary, not just the sacred and overtly religious.

Dr Tim Macnaught, 1995 Churchill Fellow and Head of Religious Studies, Melbourne Grammar School, in his report on his Fellowship endorsed study tour reports that in Britain, Scandinavia and continental Europe he found that traditional spirituality had been supplanted amongst youth by adherence to materialism and individualism. Furthermore, the values of the market were dominating not just political ideology but educational thinking. Any attempt in such a society by teachers to inculcate moral teaching fell on deaf ears amongst students. This study, based on the United Kingdom and Europe/Scandinavia, one expects would produce similar results in Australia. It serves to show how difficult the ground of spirituality is to traverse for teachers. Mere intellectual assent does not necessarily transfer to actual behaviour.

Macnaught's report highlights the need for a specialised curriculum in ethical thinking with reflective, self-involving aspects that do not easily fit into an outcomes framework. Amongst the difficulties are the different mind-set of the young and their rejection of old modes: Macnaught identifies the irony that, while postmodern youth resist transmission models of values education, they are very open to spiritual

issues. Regular values inculcation fails due to the inability of teachers to engage students empathetically, cognitively or affectively with a vision for a better future. Youth prefer immediacy to critical analysis. There is a general rejection of religious foundations as irrelevant. The yearning for happiness amongst the young, he found, was pervasive but lacked ethical dimensions.

Macnaught warns of the ease with which values education and spirituality are hijacked by other agendas. He found even Australian schools of Christian foundation to be dominated by commercial and instrumental values, with the spiritual relegated to the periphery and valued for its tokenist addition of a touch of class. He warns of the British reductionism where spiritual dimensions are "reduced to the conventional sentiments of civic religion promoting only values such as self-control and respect for property - the values that might domesticate the feral young and persuade them to submit to the invisible hand of the rational economic order" (p. 9). Too often, he says, private schooling in Australia limits values education to good grooming and uniform, courtesy and manners. Too often the school develops prospectus statements of values and mission while the school proceeds with its real values unchallenged (p.13).

Macnaught refers approvingly to the mandatory nature of values curriculum in Britain, Europe and Scandinavia, all well ahead of Australia in this area. He cites curricula which aim to encounter a variety of world views, to encourage open reflection and the search for meaning in partnership with teachers, whose pedagogy is non-manipulative. This is far superior to a transmission model which fails to engage the hearts and minds of the young. He supports British critics of thematic religious studies that create a smorgasbord of religious options amidst a relativistic, even agnostic, stance. (p. 21), insisting that the truth claims of various religions be presented with integrity. Newbigin, (1989), points out the contemporary opinion· widely held - that doubt is somehow more honest than faith, is a form of destructive dogmatism, maintaining that the quest for certainty through universal doubt is a blind alley.

Despite the potentially diverse territory of pluralism, Macnaught's study (and a Western Australian project by Tom Wallace and Brian Hill, amongst others), have shown that there can be consensus on basic values which underpin a curriculum. There is, ironically in one sense, concern that governments are showing increasing interest in the spiritual realm. The Common and Agreed Goals protocol issued for consultation in April 1998 by MCEETYA (Commonwealth and State Education Ministers) referred to education providing a foundation for, amongst other domains, spiritual and moral development. In England, this has been defined to mean a search for personal identify, transcending religious belief, and directed mainly inwards. Christians need to take care that the spiritual agenda is not hijacked in ways antithetical to faith.

I am not assuming that values education equals Christian instruction; rather, that the former is a sub-set of the latter and can provide a base for exploration of issues of spirituality within a Christian framework. At St. Paul's Grammar School, all subjects in the secondary school and all Year groups in the Junior School have been required to identify which values they actively teach and which are subsumed, less intentionally perhaps, in their programs. We are also teaching an Il1ternational Baccalaureate subject Theory of Knowledge, which is introductory epistemology, with strong units on ethics and ways of knowledge. It's a start! Even here, staff sometimes have to be counselled into a pedagogy that smacks less of zealotry and allows studel1ts room to thil1k for themselves. Trite answers convince few young people in this culture.

DISCIPLINE

How then should Christian schools, and Christian teachers in state schools, deal with children, particularly in the troubled area of discipline, where, in a society bombarded by humanistic media messages, discipline is increasingly confused with abuse? Some of my colleagues in Christian schools who allow a reduction of this issue to attempted reassertion of the right to inflict corporal punishment, do a disservice to both the appearances and complexity of the area.
In the first place, we must get our Christian anthropology right. Children, like adults, are given to sin and in need of correction, rebuke and guidance. Students need nurture as well as discipline. I urge my staff to deal with children as those made in the image of God, and therefore, in their dealings with them to preserve their dignity as God's creatures, and to allow for rehabilitation. Van Brummelen, (1988), reminds

us that to reprimand children in a manner which is sarcastic, demeaning or belittling, has the potential to erode the self-worth they should feel as those made in the image of God.

Teachers who will never forgive children, never allow rapprochement or re-entry in to the learning community, are dangerous. Harro van Brummelen argues that discipline is a higher form than punishment in that the former addresses the future, while the latter only looks back. Structures should aim in the first instance for preventive rather than corrective discipline. Discipline of children should not constitute harsh retribution. It should set up boundaries, which are appropriate to the maturation stage of the child, breaches of which lead to consistently enforced consequences. The aim should be to move the child towards responsible self discipline where extrinsic reinforcement is no longer required. Fennema, (1997), argues that imposing punishment automatically on Christian students who have repented of their errant action may be unbiblical.

He takes up the troubled issue of self-esteem, pointing out that Christians are inclined to range from what he calls 'worm' theology of self-deprecation to equally inappropriate self-adoring postures. It might be added that the foundation of the self-esteem movement, particularly noticeable in government schools in the last decade, is very challengeable. Is it right to tell a child who is unrepentant, in open rebellion and often locked in self and socially destructive behaviour that s(he) should feel good about himself or herself? Surely this is empty pop-psychology/psychobabble. Any argument that students should feel good about themselves needs to be based on their creation in the image of God and redemption through a loving Saviour. The self-esteem issue has been well explored through the *Journal of Christian Education* in recent years.

LOVE OR LEGALISM?

If student welfare issues form a large part of the culture and ethos of a school, another important part is concerned with the manner in which staff conduct themselves. Do staff model Christ in their dealings with one another and with students? Are they relational as he was/is, or bureaucratic, officious and remote? Do they generate a culture which is oppressively Christian, emphasising mechanical rule keeping and compulsory or pressured faith responses, or are their dealings characterised by love, nurturing and support for individuals and sub-communities within and beyond the school?:

Edlin (1999), maintains that teachers' lives should be winsome in advocating a Christian perspective, but teachers must refrain from attempting to coerce a personal commitment to Christianity from their students. Van Brummelen stresses that the development of Christian community is an important hallmark of the Christian school, where students are valued for their individual gifts and are encouraged to develop them. To him, it is important that classrooms be Christian communities where teachers are servant leaders, and learning programs allow students scope for their special giftedness and where all children feel accepted.

ASSESSMENT

Assignments will be differentiated to allow for differing abilities and not exasperate the child. Pedagogy will not be captive of Dewey-driven discovery learning methodology (not that it will eschew such techniques) or of behaviourist psychology, but will give due attention to fact as well as enquiry, to content as well as process (discussed exhaustively in Weeks (1988).) Van Brummelen argues for the importance of teaching that creates "transcendence", that teaches students personally, takes them beyond themselves and sensitises them to the Kingdom of God. He argues that catering for optimal individual development, rather than emphasising sorting and labelling students, mitigates against streaming.

Assessing student work is a potentially troubled area for the Christian teacher, particularly in view of the individualistic and highly competitive model in which student assessment has traditionally operated. The Christian teacher may well favour grading students against themselves and previous performance rather than against their peers and externally determined criteria.

Edlin (1999) argues that society's competitive model is an inadequate basis for a Christian school. Instead of achievement only occurring at the expense of others, Edlin believes that Christian schools should foster sharing and promote community. In assessment, he says the Christian school should reward effort as well as achievement.

My own school gives more awards for effort than achievement in academic domains. Perhaps not surprisingly, valuing effort in any case seems to enhance achievement. There is a complementary recognition suite of awards for students who demonstrate a compassionate, servant heart.

STAFFING

For a Christian school to be truly Christian, all staff engaged need to be Christian. If this is not the case, the central mission of the school will be undermined or relegated to the periphery by the "fellow travellers" on staff.

The oft-quoted response from schools that staff, while not actually Christian, are supportive of the Christian ethos of the school, suggests a category unrecognised by our Lord.

> *He that* is *not with* me *is against me, and he who* does *not gather with me scatters.*
> (Matthew 12:20)

It represents an over-confidence often on the part of representatives of churches and denominations associated with schools that small parts of the curriculum, such as Chapel and Biblical Studies, or small proportions of staff, will prevail over the hearts and minds of students, against the tide of other tokenistic or privately opposed staff, secular curriculum, peer group, media and non-believing parents, the latter often quite dismissive of the Christian anchors of the school.

Without a policy of employing only Christian staff, a Christian school will at best only add a Christian veneer to secular education and confine Gospel values to the margins of the school. (Ireland 1996).

LEADERSHIP

And what of leadership? I believe this is a very troubled area. There is such respect in our culture for aggression and power, which can often be seen as the hallmarks of the good leader, the 'can do' person who triumphs in task completion by sheer assertion. Is this a Biblical model? Often in private schools there can be a tendency to advocate the "Fuhrer principle" of the strong, authoritative leader as Principal or Head.

Yet in strange counterpoise to all this is an anti-authority streak running through our culture which affects churches and schools. We all know that Romans 13 enjoins us to respect and obey the authorities, yet Australian Christians tend to ignore this message. Teachers and Heads find it hard to have followers by virtue of their legal authority alone. There is also a democratising force in contemporary theories of the importance of 'ownership' amongst the led, and the tendency in our political leaders, which can manifest itself elsewhere in society, of 'followership', based on what is popular, rather than leadership by belief. The latter is the antithesis of leadership.

Against all this, the Biblical model is one of servant leadership:

> *He did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant ... He humbled Himself.* (Philippians 2: 6-8).

Do those of us in leadership positions care enough for our flock, do we shepherd them sufficiently, do we "wash their feet'? All aspirants for the position of Prefect at St Paul's Grammar School are required to indicate, in writing, what instances of service they have provided to the school and broader community.

The Biblical model of leadership does not give allegiance to the notion of dominant and domineering personalities or one-dimensional models of engagement with people. It can certainly be authoritative but finds it more difficult to justify being authoritarian. Rather than encouraging in schools the combination of an Olympian and messianic leader, I believe we should pay more attention to leadership density, the process of cultivating and empowering a significant number of leaders within the school, and to the body image of I Corinthians 12:4-7:

> *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.*

As a leader, I believe (am responsible for identifying and utilising, indeed, unleashing, the gifts of others, rather than seeking to dominate personally and exercise all functions myself. What are the qualities of leaders? Essentially they are the same as for deacons *"above reproach... temperate... self-controlled...not quarrelsome... worthy of respect:"* (I Timothy 3:2-3). In this context, we'd also like them to know something about education!

What do I model for my staff? Overwork, over-employment, lack of family or recreational time, or time for church activities, high stress due to overload of tasks. There are some issues there, personal and systemic, in terms of the corporate style CEO expectations of educational leaders in this society.

This, indeed, is one of the challenges facing Christian Schools. We depend on the Lord to equip us all to do His work. In the last analysis, the work is the Lord's, and we wait on Him to create workers for the harvest.

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