

Institute for Christian Teaching
Education Department of Seventh-day Adventist

**A COURSE DEVELOPMENT PLAN ON
THE INTEGRATION OF FAITH,
VALUES, AND LEARNING**

By

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Introduction

Seventh-day Adventists have intended that faith be integrated into the learning of every discipline. Unfortunately, this is not always easy, and in some instances Adventist educators say they find it very difficult to know how to integrate their faith into the teaching of their specific discipline. It seems that faith has been used as a cosmetic, patchwork, or frosting, sandwiched in the teaching-learning process. It is not enough to have prayer meetings, opening class with prayer, participation in evangelistic teams, a Bible class, distribution of tracts, a few committed teachers, and choice snippets on the bulletin boards. Because of this incomplete and superficial application of faith in education, "the school is deficient in 'moral power'" (Akers, 1977, p. 8). What is needed is a biblical dimension in all aspects of school life.

What is integration of faith, values, and learning? How can it be achieved? This paper addresses these questions through a course development plan for preservice and inservice preparation of teachers at all levels.

According to particular needs and situations of a given institution, the course can be presented in different ways: (1) as a three credit semester course, (2) as two credit semester courses, (3) as modules or seminars. All of the above having Church Doctrine and Philosophy of Education courses as prerequisites.

Rationale

Christian Education is peculiar in that the Christian faith can touch the entire range of life and learning to which a Christian school exposes students.

Knight (1985) concurs:

Why have Seventh-day Adventist schools? Why do Adventists spend millions of dollars each year to support approximately five thousand schools around the world when free public education is often available? The answers to such questions have of necessity a link to the purpose of Adventist education. If Adventist schools serve a sufficiently distinctive and important purpose, the achievement of that purpose is worth their cost. (p. 47)

The Christian perspective aims to lead the student in a saving relationship with Christ. White (1909) states: "the work of education and the work of redemption are one" (p. 30). Holmes (1975) believes that "in principle Christian perspectives are all-redeeming and all-transforming, and it is this which gives rise to the idea of integrating faith with learning" (p. 45). According to Gaebelein (1968) "integration is the brining

together of the parts into the whole". He suggests that the Bible provides unity to the curriculum. Rasi (1993) defines integration of faith and learning as:

A deliberate and systematic process of approaching the entire educational enterprise from a biblical perspective. Its aim is to ensure that students, under the influence of Christian teachers and by the time they leave school, will freely internalize biblical values and a view of knowledge, life, and destiny that is Christ-centered, service-oriented, and kingdom-directed.

In other words, integration is needed in every aspect of the school program with the biblical worldview. Rasi (1993) quotes Olthius in explaining the meaning of worldview as:

A framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view the world and our calling and future in it...It is the integrative and interpretative framework by which order and disorder are judged, the standard by which reality is managed and pursued. (p. 1)

Knight (1985) points out "the problem is not of injecting Christian elements into an existing curriculum, but rather the Christianization of the entire school program" (p. 143).

Integration must take place in different levels: teacher, subject, and beyond the classroom (Holmes, 1975; Gaebelein, 1968). The teacher is the key element in the process of integration. Values are best transmitted by the contagious example of the teacher. An educator that has a genuine Christian worldview will focus on a personal growth with Christ leading to redemption. He or she will be concerned with integrating

every subject with mission and goals of the institution, and with the biblical perspective. Akers (1978) points out,

A faculty that is consciously and deliberately involved in God's one unified reality, with no compartmental-izations who really 'has it all together' in God can effect an integration of faith and learning that is natural and believable and potently effective. (p. 9)

Integration must extend from teacher to subjects. Educational experiences offered by Adventist and non-Adventist schools are fragmented. Classes are taught without any specific and common objectives in which all collaborate. Although there may be general objectives, fragmentation occurs and students suffer. As a result they develop a fragmented view of education, knowledge and reality. Puerto Rico's public school system has sought to do something about this fragmentation, integrating in the curriculum values of dignity and solidarity, among others. The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (1987) defines these concepts as follows: (1) dignity--"nobility or elevation of character, worthiness." (2) Solidarity--"community of feeling, purpose... community of responsibilities and interests." Dignity can be clarified by the following synonyms: dedication, courage, effort, thoroughness and responsibility. Solidarity can be described by love, kindness, obedience, honesty, fulfilled promises, and service. Adventist education can also integrate these values in the curriculum

through the teacher's example and by including them in the lesson plans.

Integration of faith, values, and learning can take place beyond the classroom. According to Holmes (1975),

A community, be it family or church or college, is perhaps the single most powerful influence in shaping a person's values. It is therefore of major importance that we shape that community well. (p. 85)

The challenge of Christian education is to cooperate with God in presenting his Son as the integrating element through which man can be redeemed and restored. Thus it is imperative that every aspect of Christian education--the teacher, the subject and the experience beyond the classroom reflect Christ.

Philosophy

Christian teachers can integrate faith, values, and learning in their disciplines using as a framework the Bible. From this context seven beliefs are posited: (1) God is the ultimate reality (Genesis 1:1; Acts 17:28), (2) Truth and knowledge are revealed through nature and the Word of God (Psalms 19:1; Hebrew 4:12), (3) God created man in His image (Genesis 1:27), (4) Man sinned and God's creation was marred (Genesis 2:17; 3:8-19), (5) Through Christ there is redemption and restoration (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-10), (6) God will restore his creation creating new heavens and earth (Isaiah 65:17),

(7) We are commissioned to spread the gospel (Mark 16:15). These principles can help the teacher as a reference for planning and integrating the curriculum with the biblical perspective.

Goal

At the end of the course on Integration of Faith, Values, and Learning students will:

1. Understand the meaning and importance of integrating faith, values, and learning.
2. Implement faith and values in the teaching-learning process of their level of teaching to achieve a holistic education.

Objectives

Through the study this course students will be able to:

1. Analyze their presuppositions.
2. Outline a biblical-Christian worldview.
3. Give the biblical foundation for integrating faith and learning.
4. Illustrate how the vicarious experience can be used in different subjects to develop values and attitudes.
5. Use the Bible to identify important themes or concepts that should be taught as part of Christian education.

6. Discuss the contrast of secular humanism, and relative values with theism and absolute values.
7. Review the literature on the topic to have resources that will help the student in the process of integration.
8. Explain the meaning of the holistic education.
9. Give example of ways to achieve a holistic education.
10. Give examples on ways to integrate faith, and ethical values at different levels: teacher, students, grade, subjects, and beyond the classroom.
11. Identify points of tension between Christianity and current practices in secular schools.
12. Give examples on ways in which the school can provide opportunity to involve students in stewardship in all aspects of life.
13. Discuss the ways in which the teacher's example and method affect the integration process.
14. Develop lesson plans that indicate how concepts of faith and values will be integrated into the specific discipline.

Content

Part One: A theoretical framework

- A. Discussion of the following concepts: worldview, philosophy, holistic education, values (relative and absolute, moral and social), curriculum, and integration vs fragmentation
- B. Review of philosophies: idealism, realism, humanism (including secular humanism), existentialism, theism, and philosophy of discipline of teaching (example: philosophy of science)
- C. Study of Seventh-day Adventist vision of education
 - 1. Biblical foundation and perspective
 - a. Refer to section on philosophy
 - b. Refer to Akers, & Moon, 1980
 - (1) Application of knowledge and principles to evaluate and distinguish what is good (1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:15)
 - (2) Development of noble thoughts (Phil. 4:8)
 - (3) Development of good works habits (Eccl. 9:10)
 - (4) Understanding and maintaining principles that lead to good health (1 Cor. 6:19,20)
 - (5) Applying Christian understanding to living victoriously (Matthew 5-6; Romans 7-8, and James)

- (6) Sharing the knowledge of God with others (1 Peter 3:15)
 - (7) Demonstrating love for others, as well as for oneself based on an understanding of God's love (Matthew 25:31-46)
 - (8) Developing one's abilities to the maximum potential (Matthew 25:14-20)
2. Objectives of Christian education
- a. Refer to SDA Curriculum Framework
 - b. Refer to Knight (1985)
 - (1) Primary aim: leading to a saving relationship with God
 - (2) Secondary aims: character development, development of a Christian mind, and job preparation
 - (3) Ultimate aim: service to God and man both here and in the world to come
3. Qualifications and role of the Christian teacher
- a. Qualifications
 - (1) Spiritual: in harmony with God's will
 - (2) Mental: growing in mental development and in keeping up in his/her field

- (3) Social: companionship with students in their work and play
 - (4) Physical: good health
 - b. Role: An agent of salvation (Parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son- Luke 9; 15)
- 4. Nature of the student
 - a. Created in God's image
 - (1) Difference between man and the animal world (Man reasons from cause to effect. He has the responsibility of choice.)
 - (2) Human traits: Love and rationality
 - b. Stewards of God's creation
 - (1) What is stewardship?
 - (2) Aspects of stewardship
 - (3) How to be good stewards
 - c. Communicating ability
 - d. Marred by the fall
 - (1) Alienation and separation from
 - (a) God
 - (b) Fellowmen
 - (c) Own self

- (d) Natural world
- (2) Controversy between good and evil
- 5. Redemption and restoration of man
 - a. Redemption through Christ
 - b. Restoration process with the help of the Holy Spirit: self-examination, confession of sin, and reliance upon God's righteousness.
- 6. Man as a whole unit (Gen. 2:17)
- 7. Jesus as a model: balance between spiritual, social, physical, and mental (Luke 2:52)
- 8. Importance of individuality (I Cor. 12:12-13)
- D. Discussion of secularization of modern Christian education/points of tension between Christianity and current practices in secular schools
- E. Discussion of Valuegenesis effectiveness factors for the school and research findings on what contributes to high faith maturity
- F. Discussion of criteria of excellence for a school

Part Two: Translation theory into practice

- A. Outline a philosophy or worldview of education
- B. Give examples how worldviews affect the teacher, the student, the curriculum and instruction, and the community
- C. Review the literature on integration of faith, values, and learning to identify resources and skills that will help the student in the process of

integration (See selected bibliography, and video series on Integration of Faith and Learning-General Conference)

- D. Illustrate how the vicarious experience can be used in different subjects to develop values and attitudes
1. Principle of vicarious experience--identifying oneself with other peoples' experiences
 2. Examples (Akers, & Moon, 1980, pp. 26-28):
 - a. The teacher as a storyteller--The History teacher makes the class exciting with stories, and dramatization.
 - b. The student has an opportunity to share a witnessing experience.
 - c. The teacher uses open-ended stories so that the student can decide and write an ending
 - d. Students participate in field trips to see the results of sin and to observe the redeeming service of the mission in the lives of those who accept Christ.
- E. Demonstrate (for student growth toward holistic development) the partnership of:
1. Administration with teacher
 2. Parents with teacher
 3. Holy Spirit with teacher

- F. Discuss and apply methods of integrating faith, values, and learning for holistic development of the student at the following levels:
1. institutional and community level (administrative, extracurricular activities, parents and church)
 2. Classroom level (teacher and student)
 3. Professional level
 4. Personal level
- G. Discuss effective ways to integrate faith, learning and values at different school levels: elementary, secondary, and college
- H. Plan, practice, and give feedback of integration in different subjects (for these areas see Akers, & Moon, 1989; General Objectives for Elementary and Secondary schools; and Krawthwohl's, 1968 five levels of affective domain):
1. Mathematics--Examples of mathematical concepts leading to spiritual applications
 - a. Finite-Infinite
 - b. Absolute-Relative
 - c. The probability of evolution

2. Science--Examples of the study of science with a Christian perspective to understand God and His creation
 - a. Learn about God's creation and the laws that govern it
 - b. Students collect materials that show design and beauty to both small and large objects
 - c. Students are encouraged to spend time in nature and relate to God
 - d. Students consider ethical issues, such as, pollution, genetic engineering, population control, among others
 - e. Students study plant and animal growth. They can perform gardening experiments. These studies will be related to laws of reproduction.

3. Language Arts--Examples in which reading and communication can be related to the Christian perspective:
 - a. Reading material that highlights moral value
 - b. Criteria for selecting good reading materials (see GC's guidelines for the teaching of literature)
 - c. Selection of meaningful topics for writing assignments

4. Health and Physical Education--Examples of teaching that our bodies belong to God, and that recreation makes the student more capable of serving God and mankind
 - a. Activities that stress competition and cooperation
 - b. A physical fitness plan
 - c. The Spirit of Prophecy's support or recent research
 - d. Drugs as an escape from reality
 - e. Sex and God's plan for the family

5. History and Social Sciences--Examples in which the study of history reveals the conflict between good and evil:
 - a. The influence of Christ on human history
 - b. Historical events that fulfill Bible prophecy
 - c. Biblical criteria in assessing the motives of men and women who have influenced historical events
 - d. Geographic locations and work of mission stations
 - e. Improving man's life in different geographic locations
 - f. Conditions that affected the church at a given time

6. Art and Music--Examples of the spiritual nature of art and music:
 - a. Application of Christian criteria for critiquing arts forms and music
 - b. Psychological effects of art and music
 - c. The message of Christian songs and secular music
 - d. Historical influence of religion on art and music
- I. Evaluate student outcomes in a holistic education:
 1. readiness
 2. attitudes
 3. growth reception
 4. personal development skills
 5. others
- J. Discuss the issue of value clarification and the Bible as a criteria

Suggested activities

1. Work in cooperative learning groups
2. Visit a school and interview student, teachers, administrators on worldviews
3. Report on interviews
4. Keep a reading journal
5. Conduct service activities

6. Do research and report on outcomes of Christian education (a mini-ethnography is an option)
7. Analyze case studies

Text

Knight, G. (1989). Philosophy & Education: An introduction in Christian perspective. MI: Andrews University Press.

See also selected bibliography

EVALUATION

- A. Student's progress.
 1. Portfolio assessment on worldview
 - a. Three drafts: beginning, middle, and end of the course.
 - b. Criteria of Evaluation
 - (1) Content
 - (2) Grammar
 2. Performance Assessment
 - a. Microteaching in specialty area integrating the Christian perspective
 - b. Preparation of instructional materials
 - c. Project and presentation on how to achieve integration of faith and learning in four levels: teacher, student, specialty area (choose one subject and school level), institution, and community.

3. Reading Journal on assigned and supplementary readings
 - a. Use a notebook
 - b. Write reference on the top or first lines
 - c. Write a summary and opinion
 4. Report of research
 5. Class discussion/participation
- B. Course
1. Student's outcomes
 2. Student's feedback
 3. Teacher's feedback

A note to the teacher

The process of integration of faith, values, and learning can be initiated only through the work of the Holy Spirit working in us and through us. By using the biblical perspective in every one of our disciplines can we offer an education that will make man whole.

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