



"Study to shew thyself approved unto God." 2Tim 2:15

27 July 2019

Dear Parents

This term, the staff and I will be reflecting on the third part of our school's mission statement, i.e. "academic excellence ... to the glory of God". So, what might this look like from a Biblical perspective? We came up with the following reflection during our most recent Inservice / Teacher Only day.

Academic

The dictionary says that, used as an adjective (as it is in our mission statement), **academic** is "relating to education and scholarship, relating to an educational or scholarly institution or environment, (of an institution or a course of study) placing a greater emphasis on reading and study than on technical or practical work, (of a person) interested in or excelling at scholarly pursuits and activities" - loosely paraphrased "learning by reading and study".

So, what does the Bible tell us about reading and study? Here are some examples (please note that the verses below are not meant to be exhaustive):

*And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: **And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.** And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.* (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)

*Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that **he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.*** (Deuteronomy 17:15, 18-20)

*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.** Amen.* (Matthew 28:18-20)

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is **profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

What do these verses suggest about the meaning of the word “academic” in the Christian education we offer at TPCS? Not only is our school’s academic programme built on the foundation of God’s Word, but it also seeks to develop a scholarly understanding of it by encouraging the memorisation, reading and diligent study of Scripture as well as the learning areas that enable us to understand it better – such as English, the arts, health and physical education, foreign languages, mathematics and statistics, science, social science and technology. Academics prepare us for the good works “which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10), enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Excellence

The dictionary definition for excellence is “the quality of being outstanding or extremely good”. From a Biblical perspective, being outstanding or extremely good seem most applicable when it is seen as the pursuit of, or abounding in, Christ-like virtue, i.e. “behaviour showing high moral standards”. I am reminded of Jesus’ words, “*And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God*” (Mark 10:17-18). So, if excellence is the quality of being extremely good and God is the only One that is good, I believe the Bible suggests true excellence is characteristic of people who understand that they have been made in God’s image, that they have been “saved” by what Jesus Christ has done on the cross, and they are striving to live in a lifegiving relationship with their Heavenly Father, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

In my opinion, one of the best passages commenting on this aspect of our relationship with God is 2 Peter 1:5-8, “*And beside this, giving all diligence, **add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ***”.

Biblical excellence is therefore rooted in *character* that is built on **faith** in the Creator of the heavens and the earth, whose love towards us is expressed by the salvation He has made freely available to everyone who believes that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). It is important to note that this is not “blind” faith but an informed faith. One of our aims at TPCS is to show students that there is good evidence behind the faith we have in the God of the Bible.

Once someone has faith, we aim to create an environment that will encourage our students to add **virtue** to their faith. Virtue, intrinsic or attributed excellence, can only come if they have extensive **knowledge** of the Word. Knowledge without **temperance**, i.e. self-control, leads to pride. Temperance is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:23) which becomes visible through the **patience** we exercise, another fruit of the Holy Spirit. Having the fruit of the Holy Spirit implies someone understands the importance of pursuing **godliness**, i.e. gratefully living in accordance with the principles of salvation and life outlined in God’s Word. However, Biblical godliness is fully expressed when we exhibit brotherly kindness, or as John puts it, “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (1 John 4:20)

So how then can we describe “academic excellence” from a Biblical perspective? Academic excellence becomes possible when we strive to live a godly life, as it is described in the Scriptures. True “academic excellence” glorifies God and is never about being better than others. This means that it is achievable for every student because Biblical academic excellence has nothing to do with how I compare to others, but it has everything to do with my attitude towards my work as something that glorifies God, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

It is also important for students to understand that their “job” right now is to be in school! Not only do they get the opportunity to study and learn more about the Bible, but they also get an opportunity to start applying it to their lives daily since its message and principles are eternally relevant: “Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart” (Psalm 37:4).

We look forward to working with you this term! Please contact your child(ren)’s teacher if you have any concerns about their progress towards academic excellence.

Blessings,



Barend Blom - Principal

Notices

1. **Parents-in-Prayer** needs to start up again! You are welcome to join our intercessory group at 2.30 pm, on Thursdays, just before you pick up your children from school.
2. Please read, sign and return the **Term 2 Reports** to the office as soon as possible. If you have returned it already, thank you very much! If you would like to speak with your child’s teacher, please contact the office to arrange a convenient time.
3. You would have received the invoice for Term 3’s fees with your child(ren)’s report. **School Fees** should be paid direct to the school’s bank account: **ASB Bank, Manukau City Branch, Account 12 3083 0175239 00**. Alternatively, they may be paid in person at the school office by cash or by cheque made out to Tyndale Park Christian School. If you are paying in instalments, please ensure that tuition payments are kept current. If your financial situation changes and you are unable to keep up your agreed payment of instalments, please come and see Mr. Blom immediately so that we can work out a payment plan for you.
4. **Special Character Donation:** This is \$65 per term for Year 1 to 8 students and \$80 per term for Year 9 to 13 students. The specified amounts are eligible for a 33% tax refund – please ask the office for details if you are not familiar with this process. Donations will be acknowledged on receipt with the donation receipt sent home with your child. Your support of the Special Character Donation enables us to keep tuition fee increases to a minimum.
5. **Science Fair:** our **School Science Fair is scheduled for Saturday morning, 3 August, at 10.00 am** in the school hall. We want to make it a true community event and celebration of the children’s learning. **All students will be asked to attend from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm.** Room 8, Room 7 and Room 3 will also have displays at the science fair and students will take turns to explain their class’s project. The students and teachers are working hard to get their board ready. Boards will be put up Thursday 1 August in the afternoon so that the judges have time to mark the boards before the science fair.
6. TPCS has an opportunity to be one of the first 20 schools to participate in the Howick Local Board **Waste Reduction Project**. We are looking for a parent volunteer who is willing to take responsibility for the project. If this is something you are passionate about, please contact Mr Blom, principal@tyndalepark.school.nz or call 09 274 9771 during office hours.
7. Do you want to be involved in the **development of our school and its facilities**? One of our families has come forward to coordinate fundraising efforts for our school towards projects such as the renovation of our school library, the development of our sports’ facilities, the improvement of our primary playground and the development of walkways and outdoor classroom areas in our bush. If

God has gifted you with skills in development, fundraising and marketing, please contact Mr Blom, principal@tyndalepark.school.nz or call him at 09 274 9771 during office hours, so that he can put you in touch with the families who want to work with us on the improvement of our school.

8. TPCS has access to two affordable electronic tools to assist students in their literacy. **Sunshine Online** is a free reading tool for all primary students and it can be accessed by going to <https://www.sunshineonline.co.nz> and using the username "tpcs1" and the password "206murphysroad" to access the online reading resources. Contact your child(ren)'s teacher if you need assistance. We also want to remind parents that you can get an account for your child(ren) with **Mathletics** through the school, a useful tool for the drill and practice of students' basic mathematics knowledge. There is an *additional* cost for this service (about \$30 per year) and you can contact Mrs van der Linde, admin@tyndalepark.school.nz or 09 274 9771 during office hours, if you need more information.
9. A group of ten **international students** from China will be visiting us for the first few weeks of Term 3. Their families and the organisers want them to experience New Zealand and what it is like to attend a Christian school. We may need some adult volunteers to assist us during their visit. Please let us know if that is something you think you can help with.
10. **Music in Schools:** Would your child like to learn the piano or keyboard? Music In Schools teaches keyboard and piano lessons here at TPCS during lunchtime on Thursdays. We now have four spaces available for any interested students. For more information contact Music in Schools Ph 273 3411 or musicianschools@xtra.co.nz.
11. **Enrolments for next term or next year:** Please continue to make our school known to family, friends and neighbours. Please use the flyer your child brought home. If you have a pre-schooler nearing 5, please complete an application form now so we can reserve a place for them.
12. **Main calendar events for the remainder of 2019**

Term 3

First Day: Monday, 22 July

School Science Fair: Saturday, 3 August, 10.00 am

ACS Soccer Tournament: Wednesday, 14 August

A.C.E. Information Evening and Open House: Monday, 19 August, 7.00 pm

TPCS Mid-Term Break: No school on Monday, 26 August

TPCS Father's Day Breakfast: Saturday, 31 August, 8.00 am

Marimba Festival: Saturday, 31 August, 10.00 am

Māori Language Week: 9 to 15 September

Indigitous Ed Hackathon 2: Thursday, 12 September

ACS Cross Country Day: Wednesday, 18 September

Last Day: Friday, 27 September, 2.00 pm

Term 4

First Day: Monday, 14 October

End of Year Exams: Year 8 up, 18 to 21 November

Parakai Springs School Trip: Friday 22 November

Thanksgiving Assembly: Friday, 6 December, 7.00 pm

Wheels Day: Years 1 to 7: Monday, 9 December

Senior Activity Day: Years 8 to 13: Tuesday, 10 December

School Year Ends: Friday, 13 December, 1.00 pm