

# CHRISTIAN *School* COMMENT

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## PURSUING AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION

As the parent of a school-age child, what should you look for in a school? In this conclusion of a two-part series on world-class Christian education, Dr. Barrett Mosbacker, head of Briarwood Christian School (Birmingham, Alabama), presents some excellent ideas on what to expect from a quality Christian education.

—Dan Egeler

In seeking a more biblical definition of excellence for our children's schools, I use the term *kingdom-class*: a school that is among the best in the world because of the quality and impact of its programs. Why should you search for a kingdom-class education for your child? There are several reasons.

First, the apostle Paul tells us to glorify God in everything we do—even things as mundane as eating and drinking (1 Corinthians 10:31). We are also admonished to work at everything as if we were working for the Lord himself (Colossians 3:23). Excellent Christian education glorifies God, but a halfhearted, “good enough” approach to the spiritual and intellectual development of our children does not.

Second, as parents, we have been entrusted with the education and discipleship of eternal souls. It is self-evident that the education of eternal souls requires nothing less than our best—all the time.

Each of our children has been called to a specific vocation. Our responsibility is to help them identify their God-given talents and passions and to equip them for their vocations. Our schools must be kingdom-class to prepare children to fulfill God's call upon their lives.

Third, Jesus said the second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:31). Regardless of the vocations our children eventually pursue, they will serve others. The preparation they receive in school will dramatically affect their ability to love and serve their neighbors through their callings. The student who has been prepared both academically and spiritually to be a kingdom-class cardiologist will more effectively heal patients—an act of love. But shoddy education leads to shoddy work, which is not loving to anyone, whether the home buyer or the heart patient.

Fourth, we are called to be the hands and feet of Christ, agents of restoration in a wounded world. A kingdom-class education prepares children to lead lives of redemption and *shalom*. In *Culture Making* (2008), Andy Crouch says each of us has an “intersection of grace and cross [that] will take us to every nook and cranny of culture.” It could be at home, creating a family culture of forgiveness, play, and prayer; or it could be in Africa, connecting American wealth with African orphans.

I cannot think of a good reason to settle for anything less than seeking a kingdom-class education for our children. Our Christian schools are not perfect—there is room for improvement. But excellence is as much a journey as a destination. I challenge you to commit to helping your school become kingdom-class for the glory of God, the development of your children, and the health of our schools.

Dr. Barrett Mosbacker  
Head of Briarwood Christian School

### Reference

Crouch, Andy. 2008. *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*. Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

