

Christian Education from a Student's Perspective

By Mason Thomas
Submitted by Stephen Goar



A Christian education is invaluable. A school in which students not only excel in academics but are encouraged to grow closer to the Lord nurtures the Church and empowers her to minister to and impact the world for Christ. Such a school is Liberty Christian School of Anderson, Indiana. Students are taught according to core values of biblical truth, relationships, integrity, servanthood, and excellence. In addition to these core values, Liberty provides a wider worldview and greater analytical tools.

Public schools often have the capacity of providing more educational or extracurricular opportunities for their students because of greater funding. For example, Liberty only offers one chemistry class, and the lab portion of that course is limited. This is a setback for people wishing to pursue a career heavy in chemistry. Nevertheless, Liberty does not let up in any area of academics. In fact, curriculum is designed not only to meet certain standards but to exceed them. This speaks to Liberty's value of excellence in an effort to honor Christ.

A Christian school science department holds an additional distinction over its public school counterpart. In a secular school setting, only evolutionary concepts are

taught. Liberty holds a unique advantage as a private Christian school and presents both creationism and evolution as modern theories of origin. The distinction here is that faculty encourage students to analyze all theories from the source of truth, God's Word the Bible. Biblical truth extends to all departments of instruction. In math, students see the brilliance of the Creator; in choir and band, His creativity; in history, His supremacy and sovereignty.

Liberty instills in students the importance of servanthood. Every grade level from sixth to twelfth participates in mission trips. The durations of these mission trips range in length from a few hours to a week. While many public schools encourage and provide for community service, it is not intended to follow the example of Christ. Liberty is committed to instilling in every student a heart to minister to others. In this way, Christ is modeled. Relationships in a Christian school are unique, and they are inspired by the reconciled relationship that we have with God as Christians. We are called to love one another as God first loved us. These relationships are student-to-student, teacher-to-teacher, and student-to-teacher. Several of my friends who have attended public school report that Christian school teachers are significantly more

invested than their public school counterparts. Teachers in a Christian school recognize that their students are a part of the Body of Christ and respect and care for them as brothers and sisters in the Lord. They have the ability to pray with, mentor, and counsel students spiritually. The teachers at Liberty are encouraged to participate in Christian fellowship with one another and with students.

Liberty adheres to a strong moral code, a reflection of God's moral code. We are to be holy because God is holy (Leviticus 20:26 and 1 Peter 1:16, NIV). Christian education embraces and teaches righteousness according to the Word of God. From the dress code to issues of academic integrity, Liberty is based on a very high standard.

The small size of many Christian schools provides a host of benefits to students. A small class size produces familiarity, fraternity, and intimacy. It also provides for individual education. Small classes allow teachers to gauge student learning styles and patterns more easily. They adapt and work alongside the students to help them achieve. Frequently, I have received help in math or science courses from dedicated teachers who are willing to take the time to talk through the material with me and help me understand.

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The Liberty High School family gathers for chapel every Thursday morning (Friday morning for the elementary) to worship together and hear powerful biblical messages. Chapel personifies the Liberty community. It aligns teachers and students as family in Christ, and it provides opportunity for prayer and petition before God on behalf of any and all members of the community.

What is special and important about Christian education is simply this: it provides a vital opportunity to provide impressive education while teaching biblical truth and the importance of integrity and relationships. A student learns to read and write but also learns the significance of reading the Bible. A student learns to multiply, but he or she also learns the necessity of forgiving seventy times seven times. Students in Christian education learn to work hard but also do their best to honor Christ. Attending a Christian school remains the greatest development in my education, and nothing has positioned me better for success.

Mason Thomas is a senior at Liberty Christian School in Anderson, Indiana. He has attended a Christian school since kindergarten, and while he has never attended a public school, he is positive that the Christian program that is offered in schools like Liberty has benefited him greatly. He plans on pursuing a career in pharmacy, but for now, he studies and works hard on the many things senior year throws his way.

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