

TO FOLLOW CHRIST

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR A SCHOOL TO BE CHRIST-CENTERED?

Absolute commitment to the person and work of Jesus determines a school's values and priorities.

Steven Brubaker is an instructor and administrator at Faith Builders. This role includes teaching *Principles of Science, Reading the Bible, and Anabaptism as a World View*. In this article, Steven reflects on one of the core values of Faith Builders: the centrality of Christ.

The Faith Builders board, administration, and staff of periodically reflect on our beliefs and values. What is important to us? What is non-negotiable? What is at the core of our beliefs and values? We summarize these reflections and write them down. The following statement comes first on our list.

We see Jesus as the central figure of the unfolding plan of God and the Scriptures as the inspired and authoritative record of that plan. Jesus is the life and message of the church. To know Him is to come into the grace of God that delivers us from sin and imparts to us eternal life. To know Jesus is to yield our hearts and lives to the authority of God—to what He has said to us in Jesus and the Scripture.

Jesus and the Scriptures

Phrases like “Thus saith the Lord” or “and God said” punctuate the Scriptures. Among many things, the Bible is the written record of God’s speech. When God speaks, we learn about Him. We learn about His claims, purposes, and ideas about the world. God wants to be known. The writer of Hebrews makes the incredible claim that Jesus, a man who came walking, talking, listening, and healing on the dusty roads of the Roman Empire, is the pinnacle of

God’s self-revelation. Jesus is “the exact representation of God (Heb. 1:3).” Paul writes that “from him and through him and for him are all things (Rom. 11:36).” He is the central figure in the story of the universe. We too, followers of God in the 21st century, are to be centered in Christ. Faith Builders intends to be Christ-centered as a school.

What does it mean for a school to be Christ-centered?

Since the church is the body of Christ, to be Christ-centered means that we embrace participation in the church. It means we see the church as the focal point of what God is doing in the world. The church is the divinely-designed entity where the people of God enjoy the benefits of knowing God. Further, this entity is anchored in 2,000 years of God’s bestowing of these benefits. The church receives with gratitude the wisdom that precedes it, building on its grace not only to withstand, but also turn back the shadow of evil and injustice. The church, through Christ, is equipped to prevail against the gates of hell. We are committed to the tenets and practice of historic Christianity in a conservative Anabaptist context.

A Christ-centered school will enthusiastically

receive and submit to the Scriptures. We affirm the reliability of the Scriptures because they are from Him, and He is a completely competent and trustworthy communicator. Further, Anabaptists are people of the book. Our commitment to follow Christ through the Bible has anchored the Anabaptist story for 500 years. We quickly become concerned (and rightly so) when someone questions the authority of the Bible.

So what does it mean to have a high view of Scripture? What does it mean for a school to have a high view?

For a school, a high view of Scripture means:

- Our default response to questions and issues will be “What does the Bible say?”
- We will spend significant time studying, praying, and responding to Christ in the Bible. We will encourage and expect daily reading of the Bible.
- Our preaching, teaching, and decision-making will be anchored in the Bible.
- We will make a concerted effort to understand, articulate, and live a biblically congruent worldview.
- We will read the Bible within the community of believers. Our reading will be guided by the understanding of

**HUMILITY, SERVICE,
AND LOVE
DEMONSTRATE
TRULY KNOWING
JESUS**

17 New two-year students admitted

4 Remaining spaces for August 2018

Applications at www.fbep.org/academics

VOLUNTEER AT FB

Volunteers assist in the kitchen, housekeeping, bookstore, and maintenance departments. FB provides room & board but does not provide wages or allowance. Volunteers participate in the mentoring program and take some classes. Volunteer positions begin June 21, 2018. Positions include:

Maintenance | Building upkeep, janitorial, grounds, handyman work

Kitchen | Food preparation and service

Housekeeping | Cleaning, decorating, and hospitality

Bookstore | Customer care, shelf-stocking, and shipping

APPLICATION AVAILABLE

If you are interested (or know someone who may be), please contact our office at fbep@fbep.org.

RENOVATION UPDATE

We plan to convert two large apartments in the center section into a new reception desk area, offices, and a meeting room.

If you are skilled in a building trade and would like to help with the project, please contact us at fbep@fbep.org.

PROMOTIONAL BANQUET

APRIL 9, 2018, 6:00 PM

You are invited to a banquet at the Shady Maple Smorgasboard (East Earl, PA). The evening will give guests a picture of Faith Builders, and give opportunity to interact with staff and students.

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faithful followers of Christ over the last 2,000 years. Private interpretations will be submitted to the readings of the local church and the church over the ages.

- We will trust that God is a completely competent communicator. We will be cautious about our ability to hear, especially as lone listeners. Our confidence is anchored in the ability of Christ to not only record truth in human language, but also in His ability to guide the translation of His word into other languages and teach us what He means. Proper confidence does not bypass our ability to read, think, or understand, neither is it dependant on these abilities.

- We will approach the Bible as humble seekers (Prov. 2). We should read the Bible being aware that we bring grids and lenses to the text, but we should hold our ideas loosely enough to allow God to challenge and strengthen us through His word.

Answering Ultimate Questions

Christ-centeredness also means that Christ forms the core of every answer to every question. All of our actions spring out of the answers we give to certain basic questions. What is real? Jesus is the source of all academic disciplines. How can I know what is true? The ability of Jesus as a communicator is the proper basis for confidence. What is really good? Jesus is the summon bonum, the ultimate good from whom all that is true, beautiful, and good comes.

Every person has functional answers to these questions even if they cannot say what those answers are. Every teacher and school influences his or her students to live from one answer or another. To be Christ-centered in this way has at least three implications for schools.

First, we must cultivate answers to fundamental questions that focus on and align with Christ and His word. How does Christ change the way we answer questions about knowing? How does Christ impact the way we understand what is ultimately good? If Christ is the center and the source of everything, then every question must be framed in this way. Every academic discipline looks at some facet of what Jesus has made: the natural sciences (physics, chemistry,

TEACHING THE BIBLE

God's people are blessed beyond all telling to have the record of His works and His words preserved through the centuries. Most of us have multiple copies of the Scriptures and multiple translations.

At Faith Builders, we work hard at training our students to handle the Scriptures responsibly. We offer a course in "Reading the Bible," focusing on faithfulness to the text, avoiding the all-too-common tendency to grab verses or words out of context to bless our personal plans or bolster our ideas.

We also offer a course entitled "Teaching the Bible," carrying forward Bible study into Bible teaching. We then assign students to teach Sunday school classes, present Bible stories in local children's ministries, and assist in Bible studies in jail ministries. In these teaching opportunities, we coach them and offer feedback about their use of Scripture, their methods of interpretation, and their application of the text.

We also believe that an attitude of humility about our own limitations is a necessary posture in approaching the text. There is a healthy certainty inherent in biblical faith, but we must not assume that our understanding is complete or infallible. We come as learners, and we test our personal thoughts with the Christian community and against the long line of faithful orthodoxy through the centuries.



Above all, we want students to see the Scriptures as a revelation of God, to approach the Bible as a means of learning to know Him. We believe that relationship with the triune God characterized by a deep and abiding love for Him is crucial for understanding the written Word.

John Coblentz
Campus Pastor and Instructor

and biology), the social sciences (anthropology and sociology), the humanities (history, literature, music, and the arts). Study in these disciplines can be, for those who develop eyes to see it, a way to pay attention to the creator.

Second, as school staff, we must live out of Christ-aligned answers. Ideas about Christ are no substitute for following Christ. The songwriter captures this when he wrote, "I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name." A frame, as used here, is a comprehensive way of thinking about something. It is easy for teachers and schools to assume that sweetly compelling, Christ-focused answers to academic questions are equivalent to knowing and trusting Christ. True knowing includes transformation of heart and obedience. Humility, servanthood, and love demonstrate truly knowing Jesus.

Third, the Christ-centered school must have a formational effect that guides students to embrace and live Christ-aligned answers. James K.A. Smith asks, "Could we offer a Christian education that is loaded with all sorts of Christian ideas and information – and yet be offering a formation that runs counter to that vision?" The answer, unfortunately, is yes. Therefore, schools do well to constantly evaluate the effect of their work and seek to change as necessary.

What then should be the formational impact of a Christ-centered school? Christ-centered schools nurture students who love, worship, obey, abide in, and follow Jesus. God has created humans with many capacities, including but not limited to thinking, creating, relating, and doing.

**OPEN HOUSE
APRIL 6-7**

Be an FB student for a day! This two-day open house is for prospective students, their parents, and pastors wishing to sample student life. The open house includes a facility tour, a selection of classes, program overview, and all meals and lodging.

NO COST TO ATTEND

Register at www.fbep.org/open-house.

Our ability to love is at the heart of these capacities. Jesus says that the most important responsibility we have is to direct our ability to love toward God (Matt 22:37, Luke 10:27). Christ-centered schools make this their highest priority. Worship, biblical integration, a God-conscious culture, corporate prayer, life-on-life interaction, transparency, and the bearing of each other's burdens are all part of the love-forming fabric at a Christ-centered school.

Do our graduates acknowledge Jesus as the authority that anchors all true authority? Do our graduates live as if Jesus is completely trustworthy? Are our graduates about what He is about: the church (local and historic), the home, the poor and disadvantaged, and the making of disciples of all nations? The ultimate evaluation of a school's effectiveness is whether students graduate in greater alignment with Jesus.

It is our intention and prayer to be Christ-centered and Word-dependent.

Steven Brubaker



COLLEGE STUDENT WEEKEND

JULY 6-8

The College Student Weekend offers students a break from the pressures of college. The academic environment can challenge Anabaptist students' faith.

Speakers and mentors provide guidance, prayer, and a supportive presence in presentations and small groups. This weekend is a great way to offer support to those who want to navigate college with prudence.



APPLY ONLINE

Apply online at www.fbep.org/cssr.

SUMMER TERM

JUNE 26 - JULY 28

Summer Term serves teachers by offering a structured academic experience, practical training, and opportunities for personal growth.



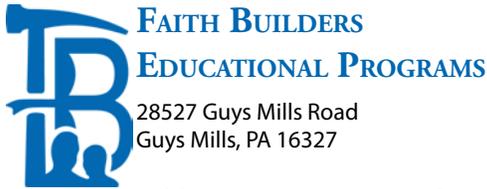
APPLICATION AVAILABLE

For more information and to apply, visit www.fbep.org/st. A paper copy of the application is also available.

CLASSES OFFERED IN 2018

Foundations of Education	Steven Brubaker
Principles of Teaching I	Patrick Heatwole
Research Skills for Teachers	John Mark Kuhns
Teaching Science	John Mark Kuhns
Teaching Secondary Math	John Mark Kuhns
Beginning Choral Conducting	Brandon Mullet
Choir	Brandon Mullet
Class Voice	Brandon Mullet
Music Fundamentals	Brandon Mullet
Growing Into a Godly Woman	Marie Mullet
Anabaptist History.....	Stephen Russell
Plato's <i>Republic</i>	Stephen Russell
Art Appreciation	Jonas Sauder
Child Development.....	Jonas Sauder
The Life of the Teacher.....	Jonas Sauder
Teaching Language Arts.....	Sharon Yoder

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FAITH BUILDERS NEWSLETTER The Faith Builders newsletter is published quarterly and serves to inform, inspire, and equip its readers. Subscription is free upon request.



FB has taught me the value of identifying and setting achievable goals. Semester intentions gave me a prime opportunity to look at habits I want to develop, and to become accountable for them. This is applicable to all of life and I am grateful for this gift of time and space to foster life habits. | Rosemary Stutzman, Christian Ministries student

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