

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, PEACE BUILDING AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

There are four variables in the title of this lecture. Nigeria. This is the easiest one. We all know what Nigeria is. It is the nation in which we all live. It is the largest country in Africa. It has many distinguishing characteristics, but since we already know all these things, we will not spend any more time here.

Catalyst. The online Dictionary.com gives four definitions of catalyst. *Chemistry:* a substance that causes or accelerates a chemical reaction without itself being affected.

Something that causes activity between two or more persons or forces without itself being affected.

A person or thing that precipitates an event or change; Example: *His imprisonment by the government served as the catalyst that helped transform social unrest into revolution.*

A person whose talk, enthusiasm, or energy causes others to be more friendly, enthusiastic, or energetic.¹

It is the second definition that is being used in this title: A catalyst is something that causes activity between two or more persons or forces without itself being affected. A simple layman's understanding of a catalyst is that it is a link. It is that which joins two things together. More specifically, it is generally thought of as a cause and effect. It is the cause of one thing having an effect on another. It is an important action that precedes a reaction. We could say: The appointment of a Hausa person to a board in Jos North that was reserved for an indigene was the catalyst that led to the 2001 Jos Crisis. It was that event that sparked the crisis.

Christian Education. This is education that is related to the Christian faith. We will define this in more detail later.

Positive Social Goals. I have lumped together the three issues related to society together and called them positive social goals. These include social justice, peace, and moral development.

Therefore, the thesis of this presentation is that Christian education should be the cause of a just, peaceful, and moral society. Thus, it is my responsibility to either prove or disprove the thesis.

I do not think that two of the variables, Nigeria and catalyst, need further explanation. Therefore, I will focus the remainder of the attention of the presentation on the other two variables, Christian Education and how that relates to developing a just, peaceful, and moral society.

Christian Education

Definitions

Education. Education is the process of learning. It is transferring information and skills from one person to another. There is some innate information within us humans, but most of the information we live by is learned. It is transferred either directly or indirectly from one person to another. Even animals are capable of learning. Thus, we have "obedience schools" for dogs.

Christian Education. We generally use that phrase three ways.

Focus on the Content. Christian education is teaching about Jesus and things related to him. The teaching about salvation, sin, sanctification, redemption, and all other spiritual aspects of our Christian faith. This is the traditional way that we use the word "Christian education."

Focus on Educators. In a pluralistic society, if a Christian is teaching anything, a non-Christian may view that as "Christian education." It is

¹. See <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/catalyst>

education that is being done by someone who is a Christian.

Focus on the Method. If a class is taught by a person who is kind and considerate and humble and gracious, we might also call that Christian education because of the way it is being taught.

Types of Christian Education (Where do we do it?)

The Pulpit

There is a small difference between a sermon and a lecture. However, every sermon should contain some instruction in it. Paul told Timothy that one of the qualifications of a pastor was that he had to have the “ability to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2). Therefore, the pulpit is the first and perhaps the most common source of Christian education. The church that does not have a strong teaching ministry from the pulpit will have weak and ignorant church members.

Church-Based Christian Education

Nearly all churches have other kinds of teaching ministries. These include the Sunday school. This is a teaching program, usually done on Sundays before, during or after the regular worship service, whereby age-specific instruction is provided to church members and their children. Most Protestant Christians since the 18th century were raised getting their first formal Christian education from their Sunday School teachers.

Church-based Christian education includes other Bible studies within the church. Many churches have additional Bible studies for their members. Sometimes these are done in the homes of members or at times when the regular church is not meeting. These are often age-specific or gender specific. There are teenage Bible studies and men's and women's Bible studies. All of these are teaching Christian education in the traditional sense of the word.

Theological Institutions

One of the most common types of Christian education is found in our pastoral training and theological institutions. In fact, it is likely that seminaries, Bible colleges and religious studies departments in universities and colleges of education teach the most Christian education. Another way of saying this is that people learn

more Christian education in these institutions than anywhere else.

Teaching Christian education is the primary responsibility of these institutions. These institutions employ professionals who have studied a specific area of Christian education at an advanced level, so they know it well. These are the people who teach Christian education in such institutions.

Christian Religious Education (CRE)

Over 50 years ago, I saw an advertisement in an educational journal from the Nigerian Ministry of Education recruiting teachers to come to Nigeria and teach. I was surprised that one of the topics that they were invited to teach and be paid to teach was Christian Religious Education. The first institution I ever visited in Nigeria was a college of education, and the first office I visited was the HOD of the Department of Christian Religious Education, whose job was to train the teachers of Christian Religious Education in the public schools of Nigeria. In my country, we do not teach any kind of religious education in the public schools. Thus, I was shocked and amazed that there would be something like Christian education being taught in the public schools. When I examined the curriculum, I was even more surprised. The Christian Education in this curriculum is solid Bible truth.

Personal Christian Education

Perhaps the most common form of Christian education is the personal reading of the Bible by individual Christians. We often refer to this as a person having “devotions” or a “quiet time.” This is a period of time in which believers read and meditate on the Bible for their own personal spiritual benefit. These are some of the types of Christian education that are practiced wherever there are Christians found.

This is not an exhaustive list. Depending upon how you define Christian education, there are many other types of Christian education that are going on in society.

Christian Philosophy of Education (the Nature of Christian Education)

I will now reflect a bit on the philosophy of Christian education. There are entire books that have been written about this subject and courses

taught. However, I will just mention two or three simple issues.

All truth belongs to God.

The first words of the Bible tell us that God created all things. If God created all things, that means he created all truth. If God created all truth, then all truth is sacred and must be studied in the same way we study theology. If all truth is sacred, all truth is Christian education. This is contrary to what we have often been taught in the past and what we have assumed. We have been taught that there is a sacred truth, like salvation, sanctification, eschatology, and other things. And then there is secular truth—everything outside of theology.

We, Christians, do not believe that. If God created the laws of chemistry, then chemistry can teach us things about God and, therefore, is sacred. If God created the human body, then the study of anatomy must be sacred because we are studying one of the things God created. This is a theological institution. It is here that we teach theology and other spiritual truths. However, those who teach English, education, history and composition are also teaching sacred things as well. We must be careful not to develop a secular view of life. I helped to create a missionary organization that helps to recruit and place Christian scholars in secular universities in all disciplines. This is something that we stress to our applicants and academics. All that they teach is sacred, and therefore, all of them teach Christian education.

Discovering truth is a part of Christian education.

Proverbs 25:2 says, “*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a thing is the glory of kings.*” This passage says we can do something God cannot do. We can learn. What does God need to learn? He knows all things. Therefore, he cannot learn anything. So, one of the things that he does to get satisfaction and fulfillment is to conceal the truth.

On the other hand, a king is a person who has reached the pinnacle of success. Once you have become a king, there is no further promotion.

However, even a king cannot do anything more glorious than to search out the truth.

What this suggests is the searching out things, which in the academic world, we call research, is one of the most rewarding and fulfilling things that we can do. Some years ago, I met the Emir of Gombe in the Amsterdam airport. He was very friendly and invited me to come and visit him. A few weeks later, I was doing a workshop in Gombe and remembered the invitation. I had one of the local teachers take me to his palace. I met his secretary and made an appointment to see him. The Emir wore his traditional clothes and entertained me in a huge room with a lion skin and a large throne. We chatted about many things during the conversation. At one point, he asked me, “Is it true that Christians only pray once a week?” I said, “No, sir. We pray many times a day. In fact, every time we eat a meal, we pray.” A little later, he asked me, “Is it true that in America, when children get to be 18 years of age, the parents send them out of the home?” I smiled and said, “No, sir. Sometimes we would like to do that, but few parents do that.” And for the next hour, the Emir asked me one question after another. This man had reached the pinnacle of success, and to be quite honest, there were some things that he could no longer do. However, perhaps the most enjoyable and fulfilling thing that he could do was to ask questions—to seek out truth.

When we think of Christian education, we normally think of the teaching side of the education. However, there cannot be any teaching unless there has been research first. Thus, studying and researching is an essential part of Christian education.

Truth must be taught using Christian principles. In other words, Christian education implies that the education is done in a Christian way. These characteristics must cover the search for and dissemination of truth. I will only mention three to illustrate the point.

Humility

Learning is the process of moving from not knowing something to knowing something; it is moving from emptiness to fullness; it is moving

from ignorance to knowledge. Therefore, a fundamental principle of education is humility. The learner must recognise that he started in this world in that position of ignorance and emptiness. People often become proud of their academic degrees. However, the proper attitude of a well-educated person is humility.

If we could draw a big circle and say that all the knowledge in the world was in that circle. What would be your portion of that knowledge? Perhaps it would be a tiny dot. As you gain more knowledge, you expand that dot. However, when you expand the dot, the boundary of that dot expands, which means it is exposed to more and more knowledge. The more you are exposed to knowledge, the more ignorant you realize you are, and that should produce greater humility.

Honesty

Education is a search for the truth. There must be no distortion of the truth. Truth must be taught truthfully. To the extent untruth is taught, or false presuppositions are tolerated, to that extent, education is perverted and is not Christian education. Research is an important part of education. However, we must always be truthful in our research and not allow our interests to distort the truth we are seeking. Some years ago, we had a senior professor who had been a dean of one of our faculties, stand up in the senate and confess that some of the research reflected in her PhD was not truthful. Christian education is always truthful education.

Compassion

Genuine teaching always has the best interests of students in mind. One should not be afraid to use the word “love” in describing the relationship between students and teachers. There is a well-known Latin phrase associated with education known as *in loco parentis*. This is the phrase used to describe the part the teacher plays in education. It means that the teacher is standing in the place of the parent. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide all the education required of students. Parents cannot provide all that is needed in our modern world. Therefore, teachers stand in the place of the parents. That is what *in loco parentis* means. There is no question that parents love their children. Therefore, if we are going to stand in the

place of parents and be good teachers, we are going to have to love them as well.

The Point: Even if you are teaching Christian content, unless the teacher is reflecting the character of Christ, it is not really Christian education. Christian content must be taught in a Christian way.

Jesus said in John 8:31-32: “*If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*” The objective of education is to discover the truth. In this passage, Jesus tells us the ultimate outcome of truth, which is the product of education. Learning produces truth, and truth produces freedom.

Jesus actually gives two criteria for discovering the truth.

Obedience to the teachings of Jesus. Jesus said, “*if you hold to my teachings.*” The four gospels are filled with the teachings of Jesus, so that is not ambiguous.

Following Jesus. Obedience leads to being a follower of Jesus. The word “disciples” means being a follower. So, if we obey the teachings and follow the example of Jesus, that will lead us to the truth, and the truth will set us free. This brings us to the moral section of the presentation.

Goal of Christian Education

Obviously, Christian education is designed to teach us about our Christian faith. However, the theme of this lecture suggests that Christian education has another important goal. It is to be a catalyst or a cause for positive social change. In other words, Christian education should not just promote the church and the individual spiritual goals of believers. Christian education should positively impact society in three specific ways. This is the philosophy behind the teaching of Christian Religious Education in the public schools of Nigeria. There are several reasons why religious education is taught in public schools. Some approach this from a *historical* point of view. People need to know what their ancestors believed.

Some approach this from an *ecumenical* point of view. It is good to know what various religions teach.

Some approach this from a *religious* point of view. In other words, religious education is taught to help students better worship their God.

However, the Nigerian ministry approaches religious education from a *moral* point of view. Here is the reasoning.

We want our society to be a moral society.

Morals come from our religions.

It is the responsibility of the various religions to teach morality.

However, morality is so important that we will assist the religions and the parents in teaching the morality that flows from their religions.

Therefore, this is a recognition on the part of the Ministry of Education in Nigeria that teaching has a direct bearing on morals.

Remember, education leads to truth, and truth always sets us free from something. There are three moral issues included in this presentation.

Each of them sets us free from something.

Social Justice

Justice means that everyone in society is treated fairly and as equally as possible. Social justice simply means justice in society. This is a truth that comes from the Scriptures. The Bible tells us that we were all made in the image of God. If all people are made in the image of God, then there must be no discrimination against any person.

Paul says in Galatians 3:28: "*There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*" This tells us that all are equal in God's sight and therefore all should be treated the same way. He says further in 2 Corinthians 8:13: "*Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality.*" There are many examples in the Bible where a king or a prophet or Jesus addressed and corrected issues of injustice.

How are we going to achieve social justice in society? The first step is that we are going to teach it. Who is going to teach it? God's people are going to teach it. I will suggest some ideas about how we are going to do this later.

Justice is truth and leads to freedom from many things.

Justice is freedom from tyranny.

Justice is freedom from mistreatment.
Justice is freedom from favoritism.
Justice is freedom from tribalism.

Therefore, justice is one of the end results of Christian education.

Peace

Peace is the absence of controversy, turmoil, and confusion. It is the presence of calmness and contentment and unity. Peace is a major issue in the Bible. There are 243 references to the word "peace" in 226 verses of the Bible. Peace may be the most comprehensive word which describes the ultimate outcome of a life of faith. The Hebrew word *shalom* describes not just the absence of conflict but a holistic and comprehensive contentment and satisfaction and relaxation. The first step in that peace is developing a relationship with God. Another step would be developing a peaceful and harmonious and loving relationship with others.

Peace is also truth and leads to freedom from many things.

Peace is freedom from conflict.

Peace is freedom from violence.

Peace is freedom from hatred.

Peace is freedom from injustice.

Peace is freedom even from suspicion and anger.

Morality

Morality is knowing right from wrong and choosing the right rather than the wrong. Morality is a general word that covers practically every decision we make when there is an issue of right and wrong. Hundreds of times a day, we make small moral decisions, hopefully always choosing to do the right thing rather than the wrong thing. The Bible contains morality on practically every page. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden was the first test of morality. God knew that if human beings could not pass the test of morality, they would not be able to fulfill his ultimate will for them.

Life is an ongoing test of morality. Every decision to do right strengthens our personal morality and boosts the morality in society. Morality is also truth and leads to freedom from many things.

Morality is freedom from evil.

Morality is freedom from deception.

Morality is freedom from stealing.

Morality is freedom from conformity to the world's way of living.

Morality is freedom from everything that is not right in this world.

Summary

If we follow the teachings of Jesus, we are going to be know the truth and the truth is going to set us free from so many things. How are we going to do this?

Specific Strategies for Achieving Justice, Peace, and Morality

Practicing those three social virtues would make a very good society, one you would want to live in. What is it that will help create such a society? I believe that a strong Christian education would be a good start. What will that look like?

We should develop a strong teaching ministry in the local church.

When Jesus left this world, he told his disciples that they were to “*go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*”

The last command Jesus gave was to teach. In describing the various church offices in Ephesians 4, Paul described the person who leads a local congregation as a “*pastor-teacher*” (4:11). Therefore, the pastor must be the first teacher of Christian education.

If the church is to be strong, we should strengthen our Sunday School teaching.

That means that we must make sure we have a strong curriculum.

That means that we must have committed teachers.

That means that we must provide good training for our teachers.

It is not likely that good teaching is going to be done accidentally so we need to work at it and make sure we are doing the teaching in our local church with excellence.

What applies to Sunday School applies to all of the other teaching responsibilities in the local church. We must also strengthen our pulpit teaching. That means that our pastors must be trained very well. They must be trained not only in hermeneutics, which is how to interpret the Bible. They must also be trained in homiletics—how to communicate the Bible. It is the responsibility of this seminary to teach its graduates to love the Bible and want to study the Bible. If they can catch that attitude from you, it will likely be with them for the rest of their lives. When I pastored a church, I used the Sunday morning service to teach with serial expository preaching. Serial expository preaching is presenting a series of sermons from a book or section of Scripture, in the order in which they appear, one verse or paragraph at a time. For example, the first sermon would start with chapter 1:1 and perhaps deal with the introduction to the book. The next sermon might come from 1:5-8, and the next one would come from 1:9-14. The preacher would then develop sermons from the book, one paragraph at a time.

I believe this is the best way to teach the Bible to your people. This is the kind of preaching I have done during most of my pastoral ministry. For example, when I served as a pastor of a church, I preached through the following books:

James; about 15 sermons

1 and 2 Thessalonians, about 25 sermons

Philippians 32 sermons

Galatians 62 sermons

Gospel of Mark 102 sermons

There are many good reasons for doing serial exposition:²

Expository preaching helps you to preach and teach the truth of the Bible.

Expository preaching helps you to give the same emphasis to the truth that the Bible gives.

Expository preaching helps you to be fresher and more creative.

². 2 These are articulate and expanded in my forthcoming book *Theology and Practice of Christian Communication*, ACTS Publications, Bukuru, pages 101-103.

Expository preaching helps you give your people a varied spiritual diet.

Expository preaching helps eliminate the problem of knowing what to preach about the following Sunday.

Expository preaching helps you to deal with difficult or sensitive subjects in a natural and inoffensive way.

Expository preaching enables you to preach with greater authority.

Expository preaching helps you to conserve and take the maximum advantage of your time and resources.

We should improve the teaching in our seminaries and other theological training institutions.

The heart of Christian education should be in institutions like this. Christian education is what institutions like the Institute of Biblical Studies do. I do not need to encourage you to teach Christian education. You already do it. If I could do anything, I would encourage you to look closely at this curriculum and your teachers and make sure you are doing several things.

You should teach your students how to learn.

Too much of our education is simply memorizing facts so we can pass an examination. You should give examination questions and assignments that force your students to think, reason, evaluate and summarize—activities that will force them to learn. Education is much more about methodology than it is about content. If you can get your students interested in learning and teach them how to learn, they will learn more outside your classroom than they will learn in your classroom.

You should teach your students how to read.

Most of the knowledge that your students will need in the future is found in a book, a journal or a magazine somewhere. Therefore, you must encourage them to read and hopefully give them a love for reading. Three men had a lot of influence on my life. The first one had a master's degree, but was a brilliant person and had probably had more influence on me than anyone else. The second one had earned a doctorate. He resigned as the president of a Bible college to go to Korea as a missionary. He probably had more

influence on me coming to Africa than anyone in the world. The third one had a very limited education. I am not sure he ever completed a Bible college education. However, he loved to read, and his vast and consistent reading meant that he was equally well educated as the other two men. He did not have the degrees that go along with education, but he did have the knowledge. With the education you give your students here, if you can send them away with a love for reading, you will almost guarantee their success in the future.

You should encourage your students to write.

We do not do enough writing in our seminaries. Writing teaches you to process information better than reading. The first tertiary class I ever taught was on the prophets. I had had very little instruction in teaching at that time. Therefore, my method of teaching was to read everything that I could find about the prophets, make brief notes and go to class and share with my students the things that I had learned a few hours before. I would even go to class with several books so that I could read appropriate passages. However, about six weeks into the course, I started trying to remember one of the things I had taught. One of the prophets beat his spear into a plowshare and another prophet beat his plowshare into a spear. I was trying to remember which one had done which. I looked at my notes, and that detail was not there. I started trying to remember other things that I had taught my students by giving them things that I had stored in my short-term memory, and unfortunately, many of those things were gone. So, I got down on my knees and repented of my foolishness. I promised the Lord if he would give me the chance of studying and learning, I would go the second mile and write those things down. That set me on a career path of writing down everything that I say publicly. Since that time, it has been my policy to:

Write out every sermon I preach.

Write out the lectures that I give.

Write out speeches and presentations.

Write out short devotionals.

Write out birthday greetings and other celebration speeches.

And I have discovered that there are many other advantages of writing as you study.

Writing helps you to concentrate as you study. Writing forces you to think. You cannot do it automatically, so your mind must be active while you are writing.

Writing forces you to see things that you would not otherwise see.

Writing helps preserve a record of the things you are learning.

Writing helps lay a foundation for future articles, books, and other writings.

Your writing can go to places that you cannot go.

Your writing will still be around when you are gone. Perhaps the most important thing about writing is that it forces you to concentrate and keep on learning and growing. I challenge you, lecturers, to give your students more writing projects. And try to help them understand the value of learning. I challenge you, graduands who will soon be leaving this institution, to develop a lifelong habit of writing.

We should patronize and seek positions in the public universities.

As a young Christian, I had a healthy skepticism about public universities and especially the religious studies programs in those universities. However, after serving in a public university for 36 years, I have changed my thinking. Public universities offer you opportunities that other places do not offer you.

You have theological neutrality.

You have credibility.

You are serving in a place that has the greatest amount of academic freedom.

You are serving in a place that is perhaps the most important institution in the world for social change.

You are paid to do one of the greatest jobs in the world.

In fact, I have been so committed to working in the public universities that I have helped to create two organizations that work exclusively with public universities.

Global Scholars is an organization that helps to recruit and place Christian academics in public universities around the world.

Society of Christian Scholars is an organization that seeks to identify, recruit, orient, equip and challenge Christian scholars who are already part of various universities and challenge them to become academic missionaries in the public universities of the world.

So, this is my challenge to you, which is another challenge related to Christian education.

Seek jobs in public universities. Most public universities have departments of religious studies so you can get a job and be paid by the government to teach Bible and theology in these public universities.

Seek jobs in other disciplines. As I said earlier, all truth belongs to God so even if you get a job teaching chemistry or history or psychology or some other discipline that is not normally considered "Christian," you can develop that discipline and teach it from a Christian perspective in the public university.

Somebody is going to get the jobs in the public universities. Why should God's people not get those jobs and make sure that Christian education is being taught in our public universities?

We should support the teaching of "Christian Religious Education" in the public schools.

One of the things that surprised me when I came to Nigeria was that the public schools taught Christian Religious Education. We do not have anything like religious education in our public schools in Nigeria, so this was a real pleasant surprise. Starting in 1994, I started working with a colleague to hold workshops and develop teaching material for the teachers of Christianity.

Religious Education in the public schools. We have done dozens of workshops and trained thousands of teachers.

I have learned two things in all those years of working with CRE teachers. First, I have been disappointed that the churches have provided so little support to the teaching of CRE in our public schools. Second, I have discovered that this is one of the most strategic opportunities that we have in Nigeria for impacting the lives of young people and teaching them social justice, peace, and morality.

The average CRE teacher in northern Nigeria teaches 249 students each week.

The curriculum that is taught is an excellent curriculum.

The teacher usually teaches these students at least three times a week.

CRE is mandatory in many places.

And the school gives the teacher a salary to do this.

Therefore, I have a challenge for you. Encourage your university-age students to seek a career in CRE. Identify those CRE teachers who are among you and encourage them and bless them. Do something special for them. Buy them a Bible dictionary. Go to your local school, meet the principal and tell him that you want to support the teaching of CRE in the school. Perhaps you can buy some resource books for the library. Perhaps you can give a gift to the CRE teacher. Perhaps you can do something else that will bless and encourage those who are teaching Christian education in the public schools of Nigeria.

We should practice personal Christian Education through Bible reading.

There is no command in the Bible that you should read the Bible every day. However, it is a tradition and a very good practice to read the Bible every day. There is no substitute for the personal reading of the Bible.

I would encourage you to develop a practice that I have used for many years. Every morning when I read my Bible, I take extensive notes. I completed my PhD in New Testament studies in 1982. However, I have not stopped learning. I am amazed at how much I have learned about the Bible by doing nothing else but reading the Bible and taking extensive notes while I am reading it. In October 1998, I decided I wanted to read through the Bible and take extensive notes while I read through it. It took me 13 years to read through the Bible, and I wrote over 700 pages of notes during that time. During the last 27 years, I have written 12398 pages as of the end of April 2025. That means that I write about 39.26 pages per month. And the good thing about this careful reading and note-taking is that I have gained hundreds of insights.

For example, I have taught the Book of Acts at a Bible college in the US and probably 20 times at the University of Jos. I have put all my notes together in a book called Notes on Acts of the Apostles and this book is being used all over the country as a text book. However, about a year ago, I read back through the Book of Acts again in my private quiet time. I started my journey of meditating through the book of Acts on 1 December 2023. I concluded it on 14 September 2024. This has involved a total 349 days. I wrote 522 pages of devotional notes during this time. I wrote 1.5 pages per day during this time period. And during this time, I made 49 specific notes that I want to include in this textbook on Acts that has been used for many years.

There are many kinds of Christian education, and all of them will help to provide social justice, peace, and morality in society. However, I am not sure that there is any more important kind of Christian education than the kind of Christian education that we provide for ourselves when we read the Bible daily.

We should teach Christian Education in our daily lives.

When Jesus sent his disciples out on a missionary project, we read, "*he sent them out to preach the kingdom of "God and to heal the sick"*" (9:2). In this ministry, they were to do two things:

Ig They were to teach the things that they had heard him teach. That was the first real example of Christian education.

They were to practice what they had seen him do. They were to "*heal the sick.*"

Thus, Christian education is not complete until it is practice. It is one thing to speak the things that Jesus taught; it is another thing to practice the things that Jesus lived and practiced.

Jesus did not just teach justice and peace and morality; he practiced it.

When two disciples wanted to occupy both sides of the throne in the kingdom, this created animosity among the group, and Jesus had to solve that problem.

When he saw the livestock sellers and money changers abusing the Temple and taking advantage of the worshippers through their

exorbitant prices and exchange rate, he did not just teach about it. He did something about it and drove them out of the temple.

Jesus practised what he preached.

I learned two education proverbs from Dr. Steven Herron, my most important mentor.

“Education is more caught than taught.” In other words, our students should be catching things from our lives in addition to hearing things from our mouths.

“We teach some by what we say, we teach more by what we do; but we teach most by what we are.”

No matter how powerful our teaching is from our mouths, our actions are going to speak louder than our words.

The disciples of Jesus not only believed his teachings but followed his actions as well.

When Peter was confronted by the Jewish leaders who demanded that he stop teaching in the name of Jesus, he publicly proclaimed, *“We must obey God rather than human beings.”* This was a matter of justice.

When Paul was told he could leave the jail in Philippi, he refused to go and demanded that the Philippian officials come and personally release him because what they had done was illegal. This was a case of social justice that could affect the peace of society.

So, the disciples of Jesus not only taught Christian education through their words but also through their lives.

Conclusion

I will conclude this presentation by telling a story. Yesterday, one of my former students came to see me. Shortly before he left, he said, “Prof., you changed my life one time.” I then waited for him to tell me some profound thing that I had taught him in class. However, he told another story. He made an A in my class and in most other classes because he was an excellent student. However, one lecturer failed him in every course he took.

This incident took place probably 25 years ago, and I can barely remember some of the details. However, my student apparently appealed these grades to the department. The department met to consider the appeal. I asked him to leave the room and then made the case that this was an injustice and we could not tolerate it. I urged the department to correct this issue, and they did. This enabled this person to graduate from the university, get a good scholarship to study in Europe and come back and be employed at the University of Jos. It was an issue of justice and morality, and it was disturbing the peace of this young man and creating problems in the department. It was Christian education that solved the problem, but not one that was taught in the classroom, but practised in real life.

God has called the School of Biblical Studies to teach Christian Education. He has called all of us as Christians to promote social justice, peace, and morality in our lives. I believe that if we all do our job in teaching and practicing Christian education in our churches and our theological institutions and in our universities and in our primary and secondary schools and in our private lives, we are going to see more justice and peace and morality in our society.

The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day
(Proverbs 4:18)