

FOUNTAINGATE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT

This policy statement is designed to answer some of the most common questions and areas of concern for Christian Education teachers. All of the guidelines listed below are required to be followed in a pleasant attitude. These expectations are for your benefit as well as your students. Along with the privilege of serving God, we must always seek to fulfill certain responsibilities. Please read (and re-read) with prayerful consideration the following guidelines and then set your standards accordingly.

- 1. ATTENDANCE:** Perfect attendance is required of every teacher wherever possible. Sickness or pre-scheduled holidays are, of course, acceptable reasons. Any teacher(s) who is consistently absent will be approached and possibly graciously dismissed from this area of service if the necessary changes cannot be made.
- 2. ABSENTEEISM:** In the event of absenteeism, the teacher must notify the Director of Christian Education (and/or Co-ordinator). A completely prepared lesson needs to be given to the replacement teacher.
- 3. ASSISTANT & SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS:** All teachers, before being asked to serve in this capacity of ministry, must be approved by the Church Elders. These teachers will be expected to follow the process of screening as listed in the *“Policy to Protect.”* It is also best for these teachers to attend any planning/training conferences as well as seminars that are conducted by the Christian Education Department.
- 4. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PLANNING/TRAINING CONFERENCES & SEMINARS:** These meetings are vital for the smooth operation of the Christian Education ministry. During these meetings we will discuss necessary changes, solve problems, communicate ideas, train, evaluate, offer helpful information and grow in unity.
- 5. TEACHER TRAINING:** We are encouraged throughout Scripture to grow in our knowledge and understanding of God’s Word and how to apply it’s truth to our life (Colossians 1:6). It is important to attend a weekly service/teaching time so that you can also be taught the Word of God. Jesus grew to become ultimate example – the Master Teacher and His Word is necessary for Christian maturity. Our endeavor is to consistently offer training which will equip every teacher to successfully fulfill their ministry. Conferences and Training Seminars will be used to fulfill this ongoing task.

6. **TRAINING MANUAL:** All teachers will be required to maintain and consistently study their manuals. This manual should be brought to every conference. A half-hour will be devoted for an on-going training time.
7. **CURRICULUM USAGE:** To maximize a proper unity and organization throughout the year, we will only allow the use of approved curriculum. All electives and new curriculum must be approved by the Church Eldership.
8. **CLASS DISCIPLINE AND CONTROL:** If a problem arises in this area, you are requested to carefully, prayerfully and lovingly attempt to solve it. If further help is required, contact the Christian Education Director. If parents need to be informed, the Christian Education Director will do so. You may be asked to attend the meeting to clarify what the problem was.
9. **DRESS:** Every teacher is to be a model before his/her pupils. Appropriate attire is an indication of a teacher's attitude toward the ministry they are serving in. Therefore, the only modest clothing is requested to be worn (I Corinthians 12:23).
10. **TIME OF ARRIVAL:** In order to insure that your classroom is completely organized and ready for your students, you are requested to be in your classroom at least 15 minutes before the service begins. In certain cases, pre-lesson activities should be considered for early comers.
11. **RECORDS AND FOLLOW-UP:** Every teacher should aim for accurate, clean records. Do not assign this task to your students (adult classes exempt). Proper records of attendance, visitors, and absentees are necessary for proper follow up. Every teacher is expected to do their own follow up. Please do not neglect this important area. A suggested procedure for absentees would be:
 - 1st Time – Phone call
 - 2nd Time – Letter or card
 - 3rd Time – Home Visit
12. **SPECIAL OUTINGS AND EVENTS:** Teachers who wish to conduct a special outing (i.e. - birthday or farewell party; camp out, etc.) are requested to inform the Christian Education Director. A signed Waiver and Medical Release Form will be required on each and every event. An information sheet needs to be given to every student well in advance so parents/guardians have questions answered. The Guidelines for Outings and Check Off List for Outings as well as the Emergency Accident Procedure should be carefully followed.

Church picnics, Christmas and Easter programs may be held with your co-operation much appreciated.

Thank you for taking the time to study this policy statement. A consistent following of these guidelines will greatly enhance the valuable teaching process which you are responsible for. May God richly bless you as you continue to mature as a Bible teacher.

Christian Education Director

Senior Pastor

I have read and agree to follow the above policies, recognizing that they will definitely enhance the Christian Education ministry at Fountaingate Christian Assembly.

Christian Education Teacher

September 2005

**FOUNTAINGATE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY
STATEMENT OF COMMON BELIEFS**

We Believe:

The Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God. (John 16:13; II Timothy 3:15-17; II Peter 1:21; I Thessalonians 2:13)

That there is one God, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22; John 14:6)

In the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 1:1,14; 20:28,29; Philippians 2:6-11; Isaiah 9:6; Colossians 2:9)

His virgin birth, (Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:34-35; Isaiah 7:14)

His sinless life, (II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26-27; I John 3:5; I Peter 2:22)

His miracles, (Matthew 4:23; Luke 6:17-19; John 3:2)

His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, (Colossians 1:14, 20; Romans 5:8,9; Ephesians 1:7.

His bodily resurrection, (I Corinthians 15:3,4; Luke 24:4-7, 36-48; Revelation 1:17,18)

His ascension to the right hand of the Father, (Acts 2:23; 5:30,31; I Peter 3:22)

His personal return in power and in glory. (Acts 1:11; Philippians 2:9-11; I Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; John 14:1-3)

That the justification by faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential for the salvation of lost and sinful man. (Romans 3:24,25; John 3:3-7; Ephesians 2:1-16; Revelation 5:9; Acts 4:12; I Corinthians 6:11; I John 5:11-13)

The prime agency for the work of God's Kingdom is the Christian local church functioning under the sovereignty of our Lord Jesus Christ. To the church have been entrusted the ordinances of Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper. (Acts 2:41-47; 16:4,5; Matthew 16:18; 28:18-20; Ephesians 1:22-23; I Corinthians 12; II Corinthians 11:23-26)

In the present ministry of the Holy Spirit which includes: the baptism in the Holy Spirit as a distinct experience from regeneration; His indwelling whereby the Christian is enabled to live a godly life; His supernatural gifting and empowering of the church for its work, life and worship. (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4; 10:44-46; I Corinthians 12,14).

In the return of Jesus Christ, to consummate His Kingdom in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; those who are saved unto the resurrection of life, and those who are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:28,29; Mark 14:62; II Thessalonians 1:2-10; Revelation 1:5-7; 20:4-5, 11-12)

In the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 17:11, 21-23; Romans 12:4,5; Ephesians 4:11-16)

OUR BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Many of the problems now existing in church educational programs stem from the lack of clearly defined explanations of what we are attempting to do (our objectives). The other great problem is that we have failed to explain how we will meet those objectives. The majority of successful churches are developing a philosophy of Church Education.

1. **Our Education Must be God-Centered**

We will not attempt to prove the existence of God – we simply accept His existence by faith. The Bible assumes His existence without room for doubt. We will not stifle honest investigation, but rather lead all inquirers to his Word.

The triune God (God the Father, God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit) will be consistently acknowledged. Any form of man-centered (secular humanism) education will be avoided at all times.

2. **Our Education Must be Bible-Centered**

We will make a conscious effort to communicate the Bible as our source book of truth. We will strive to develop skills which will enhance its truth. We will strive to exceed the transfer of knowledge and guide our students into making life applications.

3. **Our Education Must be Interaction-Centered**

We will consistently avoid using methodology that is teacher-centered and not student-centered. The importance of interaction in the learning experience is Biblically portrayed by Jesus, the Master Teacher (Nicodemus, woman of Samaria). We will place an emphasis on:

- Relevance
- Activity and participation
- Problem-solving techniques
- Interest and dialogue
- Concern for students needs
- Creativity

4. **Our Education Must be Love-Centered in Discipline**

Discipline will not be equated with punishment. We will strive to narrow that path thereby guiding our student in the right way. We recognize that properly enforced guidelines are an expression of love (Hebrews 12:6). An occasional stern rebuke may be in order, but never the teachers loss of control in word or deed. A Love-Centered Discipline will tend to eliminate the in-effectiveness found in certain teaching environments.

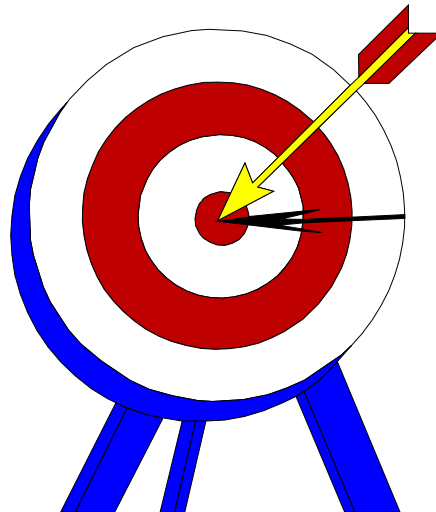
5. **Our Education Must be Growth-Centered**

The final objective of our Christian Education programs will be evident in the student's maturity in Christ (II Peter 3:18). We can evaluate the growth response of our students by asking the following questions.

1. Do my students *know* the truth?
2. Do my student *understand* the truth?
3. Do my student *practice* the truth?
4. Do my student *perceive* truth in themselves?
5. Do my students *relate* this truth to others?

“Effective Christian Education should teach the soul to love God and man while it encourages the Spirit to grow close to the very heart of El Shaddai where it is nourished and tended by Him.”

Our Christian education program(s) will therefore follow the above guidelines to set our objectives for the purpose of raising our students to their highest level of spiritual maturity. Their Christian walk will only then strive for maturity in all other areas (emotional, social, physical, etc.).



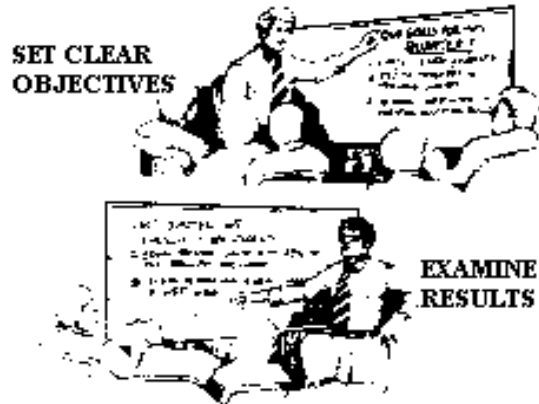
OBJECTIVES OF OUR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

There is an old expression that says, "If you aim for nothing, you are sure to hit it." Another expression says, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there." We feel that certain objectives are required to guide us in fulfilling our reasons for having a Christian Education department. The following list indicates our main objectives.

1. To understand and experience biblical truth.
2. To train and equip believers to become ministers for God and His church (Ephesians 4:11-16).
3. To encourage commitment to the Lord, the Church, and the world.
4. To encourage the development of participatory roles to ensure a unity of purpose throughout our various ministries (Eph. 4:3).
5. To teach and encourage the use of spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12).
6. To ensure that no ministry begins unless the following areas be included:

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. | Worship | Ephesians 1:11-14 |
| B. | Prayer | Ephesians 1:15-21; 3:14-19 |
| C. | Evangelism | Acts 4:33; 10:42 |
| D. | Discipleship | Matthew 28:18-20 |
| E. | Fellowship | I John 1:3,6,7 |

"The overwhelming and all-encompassing objective of the church is total Christian maturity for all its members."



BALANCING OUR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

Now that we have established our objectives we all need to understand how these objectives will be met. One of the most important concerns in a successful Christian education ministry is to maintain a balance in every ministry. A process of organization will enhance the principles of unification and correlation.

This cycle begins with two unchangeable “*support systems.*” Our ***Biblical Imperative*** can be summed up in the Great commission (Matt. 28:18-20) given by Jesus Christ. Our ***Biblical Objectives*** have already been highlighted in our “*Philosophy of Christian Education.*” Once these two are established there is no need to change them.

Next, we must evaluate our “***Current Needs***” and set our “***Current Objectives***” in relation to these needs. Then we need to select the proper ***Curriculum.*** Curriculum is constantly improving and therefore has to be consistently evaluated. We then develop an adequate “***Organization and Administration***” based upon present as well as future needs. Our teachers will be informed of our resources of ***Methods and Materials.*** These will be consistently updated and expanded. One of our reasons for having a Christian Education Director was to constantly ***Evaluate*** our programs and propose ***Revisions*** as necessary. This is where constructive feedback from those involved is of utmost importance. This is where the Christian Education cycle continues to “fine-tune” its balance.

THE EDUCATIONAL AIM – ASPECTS – AGENCIES

The foundation of any building must be laid before the structure is raised above it. The foundation which we have chosen to build upon is to fit each **“living stone”** (I Peter 2:5) into their place of ministry in order that our entire church body may reach total **Christian maturity**. This will take place as we continually **“equip”** God’s people for works of service (Eph. 4:11-16). This will continue to be our main *AIM*.

This aim will be realized through various *ASPECTS* of our varied ministries. These include **worship, fellowship, instruction and service**. No ministry will begin unless it meets with the four aspects just mentioned. Several *AGENCIES* will be used to balance our Christian Education programs. These are by no means close-ended (cf. General Organization Structure).

Each of these agencies will be expected to work in harmony with each other. To do so, we will endeavor to correlate a spirit of unification. Unification will be the hub which will hold the wheel (agencies) together.

EVALUATING OUR EDUCATION PROGRAM

The continual process of evaluation needs to include feedback from every Christian worker in the church. To aid this program the following questions need to be asked. Honest evaluation can often open the door for the Holy Spirit to offer us a new direction.

A. Evaluation of the Organization Structure

1. Is our education program properly united?
Is the Christian Education ministry functioning properly?
Is there an up to date Organization Chart written and available for all workers?
Is there provision for a correlated yearly church calendar of events?
Is there a "Scope of Ministry" available for all teachers and leaders?
Is there an effective relationship between all ministries of Christian Education?
Is there a distinctive objective for each Christian Education ministry?
Are the various ministries or will they be properly departmentalized and/or graded?
Are class and department enrollments properly limited?

B. Evaluation of the Curriculum and Instruction Procedure

- Are the teachers using a variety of methodology in the classroom?
- Are audio-visual aids being used effectively in the classroom?
- Are teachers being trained to communicate effectively in the classroom?
- Are students participating in the classroom?
- Are Bibles being used consistently and effectively by teachers and student?
- Are teachers demonstrating Christian love and enthusiasm in the classroom?
- Are curriculum materials theologically accurate, educationally adequate, and adaptable to our local needs?
- Are curriculum materials being properly used by teachers and students?
- Are worship times being used effectively?

C. Evaluation of Records, Evangelism and Outreach

- Are permanent records being kept on every student?
- Are the weekly records used to improve and enlarge the Christian education program?
- Are people confessing faith in Christ as a result of the church's Christian education ministries?
- Is the church paying at least as much attention to retention as it is to expansion?
- Are missions promoted through the educational ministries?

D. Evaluation of Personal Recruitment and Training

Are written standards available and are they followed in the procurement and utilization of teachers?

Are teachers properly screened as indicated in the “**Policy to Protect?**”

Are there proper functioning monthly workers conferences?

Are there regular programs of adult leadership training?

E. Evaluation of Church-Home Relationships

Are teachers effectively securing parental support of their ministries?

Are teachers visiting a large percentage of their enrolled students during each year?

Is there an endeavor made to encourage church-home co-operation?

F. Evaluation of Facilities and Equipment

1. Are classrooms adequate in size?
2. Are departments and classrooms using their allotted space?
3. Is there sufficient equipment for adequate teaching?
4. Are teachers trained to use the equipment?
5. Is the equipment being stored properly and easily assessable for teachers?
6. Is long-range planning taking additional building and facilities into consideration?



INFLUENCING BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM

I. Preventing Problems

It has been said that “*an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.*” Yet we all realize that problems can and will occur despite the preventive measures we often take. It is important to understand WHAT to do during these times.

Experts in the field of behavioral management agree that certain basic principles apply for all age groups. **First**, it is a fact that the physical condition of the classroom will effect the behavior of students. The temperature; lighting; room arrangement; meaningful displays; sounds; colors (pastel or bold); condition/size/adequate quantity of equipment; the teacher’s preparedness and example all have an effect upon the behavior of students.

II. Friendly, Firm & Fair

The word “*discipline*” should always be linked with its root word “*disciple*.” The dictionary defines it not only as punishment, but also as training which corrects, molds and perfects. Without proper discipline in the classroom, God’s Word will never be properly communicated. Good behavior is a pre-requisite for good teaching.

A. Friendly - Friendliness is something that every teacher needs to cultivate in their classroom. Educators have found that extra-curricular activities build friendly relationships much quicker and more solid than what can be accomplished in majority of classroom settings.

B. Firm - Everyone learns and matures better in an orderly situation. Leniency will never produce godly character. Everyone needs certain fences or boundaries in order to be protected.

C. Fair - It is also well-known that children, teenagers and adults resent unfair judgments, accusations and criticisms. Those students who have a poor reputation can be accused of something they didn’t do while the guilty one is praised.



III. Procedure of Correction for Younger Children

Behavior management is recognized as an important step in the teaching process. Children must be taught early to be responsible for their actions. Any type of verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated by them or by the church teachers. The **“Plan to Protect”** policy was adopted in 1998 to give detailed information and procedures to offer a safe environment for all staff and students. Several disciplinary measures will be endorsed by the church.

- A. **Negative Reinforcement** - Ignoring the behavior that is striving for attention. The *“time out chair”* may be used at this time for younger children.
- B. **Positive Reinforcement** - Praising of good behavior.
- C. **Consistency** - Consistency among the teachers regarding the monitoring and discipline of any behavior.
- D. **Clear communication** - A verbal communication that clearly explains what behavior needs to change and that it is expected immediately.

IV. Procedure of Correction for Older Children and Youth

Once a teacher is assured that they and their classroom are properly prepared for their students, we trust most discipline problems will be avoided. But what do we do if we have a student that chooses to disregard the accepted behavior standards as set forth to them?

A. Gentle Reminder - Anyone can forget certain things they are told. We will begin by privately reminding the student of the accepted behavior patterns that have been adopted. Require that these be followed immediately. There may be times when certain eye contact can portray a wealth of information about what the teacher expects.

B. Firm Reminder - If a student is clearly showing signs of disregard/disrespect there will need to be a clear consequence for the improper action/attitude. The incorrect behavior will need to stop immediately. The parent/guardian will be notified of the incident and the consequence will be clearly explained requesting cooperation in the matter.

Warnings from the Christian Education workers could include:

- Removal of any or all of the normal privileges
- Removal from program activities for a specified period
- Separation from the other students and teachers for a “cooling out” period.
- An explanation of expected behaviour from our Christian Education Director
- Restitution where appropriate and deemed by the C. E. Director

IV. Procedure of Correction for Older Children and Youth (Contd.)

C. Elders Involvement - If after the above steps have been followed the child continues acting in an inappropriate manner, the pastor/elders (who would have already been involved) will be asked to handle the problem. There may be a need for the teacher to once again meet with the student and parent but this time with the pastor/elder overseeing the meeting.

V. Prohibited Disciplinary Practices

- A.** No form of corporal punishment, locked confinement or excessive force is to be used in the disciplining of any student.
- B.** No teacher will use humiliation or verbal abuse (including vulgar language) in the disciplining of any student.
- C.** The removal of personal property or clothing (other than contraband) is not permitted as a disciplinary measure. **NOTE:** Belongings such as radios/walkmans, etc. may be temporarily removed since their use would be causing a disruption to the orderly operation of the teaching environment.

The use of physical restraints is generally prohibited except where its use is, in the opinion of a teacher, necessary to stop a student from causing physical harm to himself or some other person. In such a case, the restraint is to be used with the least amount of force necessary to safely control the student. The restraint is to be discontinued as soon as the threat of physical harm is no longer perceived. This type of restraint will need to be reported immediately to the Director of Christian Education.

VI. Consequences of Physical Restraint

Teachers need to understand that this type of action can (and often will) bring about an inquiry by the Children's Aid Society. Improper use of restraints or physical force by a teacher will result in an investigation and if necessary the initiation of disciplinary measures, dismissal and/or civil liability. Teachers are therefore advised to exercise extreme caution in the use of any physical restraint. Use only as a last resort when all other avenues of intervention are exhausted and there is evident danger of safety to yourself, the student, or another person. In all cases where physical intervention is required, teachers are to get help from the Christian Education Director as soon as possible.

In order to provide the students with a stable and structured program, it is necessary for the church teaching staff to take control of the child and his/her behaviour. This is best done by providing very real consequences for unacceptable behaviour and rewards for positive achievements and attitude. The child/youth then has the opportunity to choose to act responsibly and enjoy the fruit of his labour, or to act irresponsibly and face the consequences of his actions.

At all times the child/youth bears the responsibility for his own actions and is not permitted to transfer it to the teaching staff.

VI. Consequences of Physical Restraint (Contd.)

When implementing consequences, teachers are to note the behaviour in a precise (yet short) manner along with the sanctions levied and the duration of the consequence. This information is then to be put in the Church's master file of the student.

Each C. E. teacher will be asked to respect the decision of the director/elders who imposed a consequence and make sure the student adheres to the sanctions levied. The only exception to this will be where the Director has reviewed the case and discovered new information that would rule the consequence as inappropriate.

May we all work together to plant good seeds that will produce a harvest of righteousness in the lives of those whom God has intrusted into our care.

