



Kindergarten Graduation 2011

Preparing for the Challenge

By Robert White

The Apostle Paul stated in 2 Timothy 2:3-4, "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier." There are many times in life when we submit ourselves to suffering in order to physically and mentally prepare ourselves for a challenge. A great example of this would be football; and Texans love football! Here in Houston, football players often endure strenuous practices during the hottest part of the year – with two practices per day during August! Another example of suffering in preparation would be our military boot camp and training. Military personnel endure an intense period of conditioning during boot camp, followed by living a scheduled, disciplined life which helps to develop physical and mental strength and endurance.

Why all the drills, sprints, push-ups, sit-ups, chin-ups, and other strenuous exercises? Why the disciplined schedules and consistent routines? All of these activities are designed to prepare the athlete or the soldier for the challenges they will face on the playing field or on the battlefield. Our elementary students are also in a time of critical training as we prepare them to face the challenges in life. Scripture indicates that we are in a spiritual battle, and our young people will have a greater chance of success when given daily opportunities to learn, practice, and master the skills needed to reach their God-given potential. These formative years should not be taken lightly. As parents and educators, we must strive to be intentional and strategic in our efforts to equip our students with the tools needed for godly success.

In order to follow God, we must know Him; therefore, our elementary students

memorize hundreds of Bible verses throughout their elementary experience at Cypress Christian. These truths provide the moral compass to help students successfully navigate through difficult decisions and circumstances. Our school permeates with examples of students being prepared for life. Upon entering the lunchroom, our young people are taught gratefulness by saying "thank you" to those who prepare and serve the food. Students are taught respect for authority as they learn to respond with "yes ma'am" and "yes sir," thus preparing them to respond to the authority they will face in life in their perspective places of work. On the playground, you will find our teachers guiding students in biblical "conflict resolution;" training them to deal with the conflicts they will encounter in their life-relationships. Students are encouraged to include others in their activities, and to treat everyone with kindness and courtesy. Follow a group of our elementary students into the building and you will likely have a door held open for you as you enter the building. These are just a few examples of our efforts to equip our students for the challenges they will come upon in their future.

This past year, we added an athletic program to our elementary school. Students played soccer in the fall and baseball in the spring. Over 100 students participated each season! This is a fantastic venue for character instruction. What a wonderful experience for our students to be coached by adults who love the Lord and serve as positive role models. The athletic field is a great opportunity for students to learn critical virtues of sportsmanship, hard work, cooperation, and much more. Our coaches develop these qualities in our students during practice and on the competition field. It is quite a testimony to see



a team of young students execute outstanding technical skills on the field and then end their game in a circle of prayer, surrounded by coaches and parents.

Visit a classroom and you will be delighted to see the subject matter presented from a Christian perspective. During science, the children are challenged to develop a greater appreciation for the Designer who created such complexity and order. In history, our students observe the providential hand of God in past events. In art and music, the students observe the beauty of the Creator. How thrilling to integrate God's Word into every facet of education.

As a school, we are involved in equipping students with a biblical framework of thinking and living. By going to the heart and impacting students' thinking, we are able to impact their lives, thus impacting the culture. As a principal, my greatest desire is to instill in students the understanding that we should live to please God because we love Him with all of our being. This approach helps students to regulate their learning and behavior based upon their love for the Lord, not merely upon grades or fear of punishment. At Cypress Christian, we joyfully and wholeheartedly embrace the opportunity to prepare our students for the challenges of the future. We have the honor and privilege of impacting students for eight hours per day, five days a week. Praise God for His promise that if we "train up a child in the way he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

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