

## **Bible as a Subject\***

When we consider the distinctive role of teaching Bible as a subject in the Christian school, there are three main goals:

1. It enables students to experience the Biblical narrative as God's revelation of His plan of redemption. Through hearing and retelling the Bible narratives, students begin to experience God's power, anger, and mercy. They understand the Bible as the history of salvation in Jesus Christ, a history through which God calls them to repentance, faith and discipleship.
2. Students investigate its literary forms, its cultural context, and its origins and translations. They tease out significant Biblical themes and practice techniques of Bible interpretation. In turn this helps students to understand and interpret the Bible for themselves.
3. By studying Bible as a subject it helps students to apply the Biblical message to their personal lives and to situations in our culture.

\*Taken from *Steppingstones to Curriculum* by H. Van Brummelen, 1994 p. 169)

However, as prefaced in *The Story of God and His People*, there are three contrasts which the classroom teacher needs to keep in mind when teaching Bible as a subject\*:

1. The teaching of Bible as a subject needs to be distinguished from the broad, general way in which the Bible integrates the Christian worldview and shapes the school's entire curriculum.
2. The teaching of Bible in the school needs to be distinguished from the teaching of bible in the church. The church's task is to proclaim the good news of salvation to the whole world, calling men, women and children to faith in Christ, to worship, and to service. The school's task is to impart knowledge and equip students for lives of service in the world.
3. The teaching of Bible needs to be distinguished from a devotional use of Scripture in the school. Devotions are necessary in the Christian school for the development of spirituality which includes awe and reverence before God, dependence on him, trust and respect for his Word and care for one's neighbour reflected in shared prayer before God. Teachers will also model and encourage student participation in classroom devotions, but this should not be an academic affair.

The Bible is not just a book of history or a book of literature or a book of laws. It is our story, a story which we are living now as many did before us and others will after us, because we too are God's people.

\*Excerpts taken from *The Story of God and His People*. CSI publication 1989 p.19-22