

On the Front Lines

I am writing this edition of *Christian School Comment* as I return on a flight from Newark, New Jersey, to Colorado Springs. Two weeks ago, the Northeast was hammered by Hurricane Sandy, which caused tens of billions of dollars of destruction. As I drove from my hotel to a funeral in Belle Mead, New Jersey, I saw firsthand some of the destruction. Trees were uprooted, power lines were down, and after two weeks many neighborhoods were still without power.

The Sunday, November 11, edition of the *Star-Ledger* told the story of those on the front lines who worked for the past two weeks from 6:00 AM to 8:00 or 9:00 PM every day to restore power. In a story entitled “From Near to Far,” the newspaper told about thousands of workers from states across the nation who drove with fleets of utility trucks and worked on the front lines in response to the crisis. Virtually all the hotel rooms and rental cars in the area were being used in response to the emergency. In fact, as I poured a cup of coffee in the hotel lobby at 6:00 this morning, I saw scores of workers getting ready for another day of hard work in meeting urgent needs of others.

As I witnessed firsthand the destruction caused by Sandy, the thought occurred to me that we have a similar storm raging around the world today. This storm is a battle raging for the hearts and minds of our youth! All around we see the destruction of lives stemming from decisions made in ignorance of or defiance to the principles of God’s Word, the Holy Bible.

I returned last week from a trip to Australia, where I met for four days with leaders of Christian schools there. One of the leaders I met, Bob Frisken, is the founder of Christian Schools Australia. During the course of our conversation, I asked Bob, “What is the greatest threat facing Christian schools (and youth) in your country today?” He responded, “Complacency and secularization.” I responded that in my opinion this is the same urgent threat we are facing in America.

We have a growing urgent need around the world today ... Our youth are being marinated in a secular worldview. Yet, we seem to be complacent about the battle that is raging all around us. It has been said, “Sow a thought, reap an attitude. Sow an attitude, reap an action. Sow an action, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a lifestyle.” Is it any wonder, then, that children and students who are taught in schools that leave out God and His Word (the definition of “secular”) ultimately embrace and live out a secular worldview that often is in direct conflict with the desires of God and the principles of a Christian worldview?

What the world needs today are students who have been academically prepared at the highest levels and who choose to

be devoted followers of Jesus Christ. In other words, the answer to the secularization and complacency so prevalent around the world is young people who embrace and live out a biblical worldview. This is the mission of ACSI as we serve member schools all over the planet.

And who has God charged with the responsibility to be on the front lines of this battle? Parents! All of the world’s children ultimately are God’s children (Psalm 24:1), and God’s desire for His children is that they are all taught and choose to live out His truth. God, the owner, has entrusted parents as stewards of His most precious possession—His children. Parents, then, are responsible to fulfill God’s desires for His children.

Millions of Christian parents around the world choose Christian schools for support and assistance in fulfilling their God-given responsibility for the education of the children entrusted to their care. These schools hire Christian teachers who act as understewards of the children entrusted to their care by Christian parents. These teachers are right on the front lines along with Christian parents! Some schools of education mistakenly teach a principle called *in loco parentis*—in place of parents. Christian teachers do not act in place of parents. Instead, they act in support of parents, and parents, in turn, are to act in support of God and the pursuit of His desires for His children.

Parents who understand this principle and the battle that is raging for the hearts and minds of their children know of the urgent need to raise up a generation of academically prepared followers of Jesus Christ. Many of these faithful steward parents have turned to ACSI Christian schools for support as they fight every day on the front lines of this battle for their precious children. The stakes are high, and the battle rages.

As a father just completing the investment of nearly 136 semesters of tuition and related expenses for Christian school education—kindergarten through college—for each of my four children, I would say to you it is worth it. I have learned through the years that children have the potential to be sources of great joy, and I concur with the apostle John: “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth” (3 John 1:4, NIV). Ultimately, I believe that children living out God’s truth not only brings great joy to those of us fighting on the front lines but also brings great joy to our Heavenly Father.

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