



## But, These Kids!

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In the two and a half years of this blog, no post has received a response like [last week's post](#). Special thanks to everyone who liked, shared, and commented on it. Apparently, I am not the only person who has noticed an increase in unruly student behavior and a need for better classroom management technique. The technique, or *approach*, I suggest is that we, the educators, ensure that our behavior and attitude is aligned with the Fruit of the Spirit. **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."** (Galatians 5:22-23)

Educators choose their profession for many different reasons - I admit it was not my first major - but our work is necessary and it is an art. We must craft lessons that not only present the basics, but engage and inspire students to intrinsically desire more. As educators, we frequently study our data and seek to improve. We learn new content, strategies, complete book studies, and purchase new programs all with the internal cry of, "But, these kids!" We have to teach 25-30 students at once who all have different social, emotional, spiritual, and educational needs. But, these kids! And forget the bad apple who spoils the bunch, there could be seven - bad fruit all over the room! But these kids!

How can we align our teaching to the Fruit of the Spirit that our students may see Jesus in our words and actions each day? Let's look at the words of Paul recorded in Romans 12.

**v.2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.** While you, the teacher, may be in the minority of individuals in the room who know God, you cannot allow yourself to be consumed by the darkness - the pattern of this world - we cannot allow ourselves to revert to the words and actions of the flesh. Christian teachers must stand strong on the Word of God, doing His work, in love, with the students we have been charged to teach. Understand that you are an example to your students, not just as a person who knows math or all the great classic books, but someone who knows how to show love, and talk to people in a fair and civil manner in every circumstance - that is God's will.

**v. 3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.** Something, my teachers often said was to us was, “You kids better pay attention - I’ve got mine, you need to get yours!” When I taught high school, something my principal often said was, “Kids don’t care what you know until they know you care.” In a classroom, the teacher is the most educated person in the room, but the classroom should be a cradle of knowledge. The teacher should not be the keeper of knowledge and only willing to share it with those who somehow qualify to learn it. We cannot fear the questions students may ask once they are interested in the content - when students ask questions related to the content it means they are ready to take the lead in their own education. Many classrooms are equipped with multiple computers, wifi, and strong capabilities. We must stimulate our students minds and cradle that which comes forth.

**v. 4-6 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup>We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us...** A class has many members and each student has different gifts. We like the students who come in on the first day with all of their supplies, and some extras, those students who are polite, and those whose parents are always willing to help. We must never overlook those who get into a fight on the first day, those who use occasional profanity, and those whose parents never respond to our voicemails. All have different gifts. It may not be in the standards for your course, but we are to help students to realize their God-given gifts and talents. To do this, we must engage students in conversation, view all students in a positive light, and believe in their ability to learn and encourage them frequently.

#### **Love in Action (v. 9-21)**

<sup>9</sup>Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup>Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup>Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

<sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

<sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. <sup>20</sup>On the contrary:

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

But, these kids! These kids need us! Although they seem to push us away, they need us - our expertise and our love. We must stand strong, in the Word, each day, never repaying evil with evil, blessing those who persecute us, hating that which is evil in order to cling to that which is good. Christian educators must never be overcome by evil. We must work to overcome evil with good. Amen!

Thank you for reading! Have a blessed week!

Kim