



Preserving a Culture of Christian Character

October, 2015

Dear Parents:

Attempting an article on a topic as complex as Christian character may be presumptuous. Libraries have been filled on this one topic alone, but its interwoven presence in our school's culture serves as a critical binding agent whose importance warrants examination. Prince's Christian culture places your student in a larger body of believers in a distinctly Christian school that is deliberate in its planning and teaching of biblical principles, morals, and ethics. Through repetitious reinforcement, the faculty remains acutely attuned that the critical component of teaching moral character to our students is ensuring that Christ, not relative norms, remains at the center of all we do. This often places students in a conundrum as they navigate the moral absolutes based upon God's unchanging word taught through our family-school partnership with the often treacherous and deceit filled waters of today's post-modern world fueled by the powerful, ever present media. Additionally, because of the emphasis placed on scholastic and co-curricular achievement during this phase of their journey, students can sometimes become confused with the priorities that God has for their lives.

A quick examination of the education community's emphasis on teaching moral character starts in 350 B.C. when Aristotle emphasized the teaching of morality, intellectual acumen, and physical development of the body to the Greeks. During the American colonial period, character development was built upon Judeo-Christian principles that emphasized the importance of a student's development spiritually, intellectually (placing the highest degree on reading so one



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could meditate on God's word), and physically. Since these early times, America has come full circle to the extent that schools and colleges focus almost exclusively on the cognitive domain with little time or emphasis on the development of moral principles (in particular Christian character traits) like integrity, moral reasoning, and ethical decision-making to name just a few.

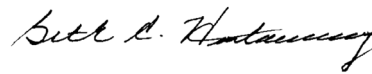
Recently, we recognized the members of the 2015 Homecoming Court; however, unlike most schools, our representatives were elected by their peers based upon their display of the “Fruit of the Spirit” as defined in Galatians 5:22- 23 (love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control). While the students on the court were truly an impressive group of young people, equally impressive was the school's Christian culture that led the members of

the high student body to make their selections based upon biblical principles rather than the traditional popularity contest. This impressive display of Christian character is counterculture to the materialistic and values neutral society in which our young people live. As I witnessed the recognition of Mr. and Miss PACS during the football game's half-time presentation, I could not help but be as impressed with the selectees as those that had selected them.

Today, much is made about grades, curriculum, course rigor, standardized testing, and perfection in athletics and the arts; however, the knowledge students acquire in school is only the means to an end; the end itself is a personal relationship with Christ. In Matthew 6:33 God reminds us, "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you every thing you need."

The leadership required to preserve and foster a distinctly Christian school cultural must be more deliberate than ever in the wake of rapidly changing standards of relative morality aided, in part, by our nation's law-makers. At Prince, we are thoroughly committed to developing Christian character in our students by hiring highly qualified teachers, staff, and administrators with similar values who are dedicated to pursuing scholastic achievement and excellence in co-curricular programs to aid in the development of your child to his or her full potential. Thank you for your partnership; with God's blessing we will succeed in our critical mission of preparing students for college and His kingdom.

In His Service,



Col Seth Hathaway
Head of School