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Philosophy of Education

It is equated with power. The search for this thing has caused many wars. This thing must be cultivated through arduous and intentional dedication. Fears can be quelled or aroused by this thing. It is through this thing that men depart from evil. What is this thing that is so wide-ranging and influential? It is simply this: Knowledge. The external and internal struggle for knowledge is the fate of every human being who walks this earth. Such a thing must be dealt with carefully and passionately, and it is the job of a teacher to enrich one's life through the development of knowledge. This paper shall expound upon how a teacher should do this vocation well in relation to relationships and understanding, celebrating gifts and addressing challenges, engaging the world in curiosity and creativity, and developing vocations that include and extend beyond work.

The story of the Chinese interpretation room. A man is given a bunch of papers in Chinese that he has no idea how to read. He needs help to decode these papers and brings them to the Chinese interpretation room. He slips a paper under the door to be translated. A man inside the room takes the paper, uses a dictionary to simply translate each word, and slides the translated paper back under the door. In this illustration, the man who is doing the translating does not need to know Chinese or English; he needs only to recognize symbols, copy them, and return the paper. He understands nothing and learns nothing because these languages are foreign to him. As teachers, we must foster environments in which we skillfully identify the thinking of students, their cultural practices and understandings, and their personal knowledge and misconceptions so that we can then skillfully teach them in languages and ways in which they

can understand. And this must first begin by humbling oneself and realizing that the students is a human in the same way as the teacher is a human.

Furthermore, education is meaningless if gifts and challenges are not addressed. If you told the translator from the previous example that he translated well or made a mistake in his translation, that would not change the fact that he does not understand anything that he is translating. It also does not help him to learn anything. This is because the root problems are not addressed. In education, we must address the core challenges that students face if we want to ever find a way to bring them further along. Along with this, an expert knowledge of student gifts and strengths is necessary. There is no need to beat a dead horse, so to say. Instead of useless praise, educators must seek to be cleverly identifying the strengths of students that they probably do not even know that they have! We can then assist them in exploiting these talents and affecting a wider range of knowledge and community.

Ants Canada. This is a YouTube channel by a man who narrates about different ant species and colonies with each video being about a half hour in length. To most, this idea seems like a terrible bore. Who would waste their time on this, right? Well, this channel has gained tremendous popularity, reaching millions. Here's why: The author of this channel has a passionate curiosity and a driven creativity that is so evident and beaming that his overflowing cannot help but saturate the wonder of the viewer. His evident love for ants causes others to love ants. The comments of his videos are even riddled with things like, "I never thought I would spend hours on end watching videos about ants, but this channel has caused me to want to buy an ant farm!" This is what education is about. Educators are not people with a lot of knowledge who just transfer it to students. On the contrary, educators are "professional students" who must

always be learning and wanting to learn. It is this that will allow them to masterfully teach students.

Finally, the educator must develop more than a career; it must be a whole new way of living. These beliefs about education and the practices associated with education must manifest in the natural and constant daily activities of the educator. An understanding of students, a knack for celebrating gifts and addressing challenges, and an ardent curiosity and creativity: How can one have these qualities at work and not at home? These things do not take a certain skillset, but rather a certain type of person. One will do these as an educator because that is who one is and has become.

In conclusion, the educator must be a humble and loving life. It is only in this way that education will work. Students will be seen, strengths will grow, weaknesses will be made strong, students will learn to wonder, and the educator will live a life answerable to his call.

“For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

-2 Peter 1:5-8