

## **Does a Quality Christian School Include A “Special Need” Student?**

**Why is it rare to find a “special needs” programs in Christian Schools? Perhaps a school cannot serve a “special needs” student because it the school does not have the personnel or curriculum that best meet’s their individual needs. Perhaps it is because monies within the system cannot accommodate the program demands. Perhaps the overall cost is too great, and the outreach is to too few.**

**God has allowed Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficits and students who struggle. He constantly moves our spirits with Biblical foundations and stories where His example reached out to those “in need, less fortunate, hurting and having difficulty”. He reminds us that within each individual, regardless of the “weakness of their flesh”, the Holy Spirit is not handicapped. He reminds us that those in need, need Jesus Christ our Lord for filling, for awareness, for identity and to be given hope. Jesus tells us of the Shepherd who looks out for that “one” who is lost. The Christian school is very aware of these “truths” yet, it comes to accept that such a program is their “Hope” and if the Lord desires such, He will provide such a program at their school.**

**“...In God’s time...”**

## **What Happens to the Student with “Special Needs” Who Is Turned Down From A Private Christian School?**

Two common scenarios occur. One, the student is home schooled. Two, the student ends up in the public schools. Both may be “calls” from the Lord for the individual family, but in the case where there is “No other choice”, which appears through testimony to be the more common case, one can only wonder where focus is being placed in the private, Christian school.

When home schooling occurs, those with learning handicaps have a greater tendency to not be as challenged. Families speak of their children manipulating any difficulty and of the emotions that tend to flare. Parents try, with all their abilities to train themselves through literature, or attending conferences, but the lack of support for the home schooling parent of a “special needs” child brings on fears which can cloud clarity for direction and boundaries.

When the family places their children in the public school system, they recognize that the Christian values they uphold will be challenged through the curriculum and a teaching staff that may not hold Christian values. Students are serviced in special education programs by meeting the requirements of a mathematical equation from psycho-educational testing. If the requirement is not met, the student falls "through the cracks" and is placed by grade regardless of the student's special needs that are recognized on a daily basis.

When students of “special needs” do not have the opportunity to have their needs recognized or have their curriculum tailored to their individual needs, the students are tempted to fulfill their weaknesses with quick remedies. They may elect to act as if they do not care, by becoming rebellious or withdrawn. They may mask their needs by becoming overly social, and chose to be in crowds where social needs are the only priority. It truly will take a “special needs” student, grounded in their identity in Jesus Christ and spiritually mature, to keep identification in Jeremiah 29:11, and believe Psalm 139.

## **How Can We Better Equip the Teachers At The Private Christian School In Teaching Student's With "Special Needs"?**

**It is a wonderful vision for each private, Christian School to provide a "special needs" program for the student's at their individual school sites. But is it a reality?**

**Perhaps, a more realistic vision would be to provide education, open networking, and awareness to our teachers within the private, Christian School. Education can be distributed by a resource booklet to all Administrators, through accountable inservicing over a period of time, and through individual case counseling.**

**Networking can be established over time, by writing or through e-mail of this web-site. How wonderful it would be for a teacher who is working with a "special need" student to have the opportunity to call a special education Christian hotline, and by appointment, by letter, or by phone a teacher's individual case need can be served and the teacher intimately supported.**

**And in time through, accountable inservicing, where the staff is educated and held accountable for what is taught over a period of time. Wouldn't it be exciting for Administrators, Teachers and families to have access to specialized professionals in the field of Special Education made available to help aware our schools?**

**It appears that "Awareness" of "special needs and disabilities" is one of the Christian School's greatest needs. Because the Christian School is left to "Do it all on their own", the teachers tire, the school may see a student as a "cost", and "stumbling blocks" occur. There are even situations when a family is directed incorrectly, and added to the difficulty and emotion is a great financial loss. (Sometimes over \$3,000)**

**What about Financing? Can private schools create or develop grants for a model for other schools endeavoring to provide for their student's with "special needs" through programs?**

## **Is There a Need for “Special Need” Programs in the Private Christian School?**

**One can readily assume that every single private, Christian school class has at least one student who learns differently from the majority on a daily basis. One can assume that this student either has “special needs” or has their learning impeded because of emotion, physical or processing means, home environment needs, attention difficulties, social pressures, etc... Regardless, the student is having difficulty in the class with their academic standing and exhibits struggling within the class with the daily class curriculum. Such struggles usually appear in the form of their grades, and academic probation occurs alerting the family of the possibility of the student being exited from the school site unless their grades improve. But how can a student improve upon their grades when they may possibly be giving everything that can at 100% all the time?**

**How can the teachers discern when to modify the curriculum for a student’s “special needs”? Who will help the teacher in knowing what to do? Will the teacher be supported for their efforts of meeting the “special needs” of a student, or will they be reprimanded for such?**

**Having qualified, educated professionals available will greatly lessen these concerns. It would provide the Christian School the expertise in an area I have found is necessary, and becoming more and more necessary because of the population God is allowing within our schools. Can childd.org begin the process by providing the Christian School with the resources it needs?**

**Special need programs will bring quality and "Christ-likeness" to our Schools. It will allow ministry where ministry could not exist before, and be an outreach to “special need” students and their families in allowing them to find their true identities in Jesus Christ our Lord.**