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"If we ignore the accumulated wisdom, insight, and experience of those who lived before us and look only ahead as if we could live by more innovation, we will stagnate" (Kopff, 1999, p.1). We, as a nation, will not only become stagnate, but our nation will lose the traditions and foundations it was built upon. A house or a nation cannot stand firm without a foundation. This paper will look at the "accumulated wisdom, insight, and experience of those who lived before us" (Kopff, 1999, p.1), discuss historical, philosophical, and social theories as to support the statement that we, as a nation need to "get back to the basics of life" (Carmen, 2005, pg.1).

Pre-classical Era

In the Pre-classical era the political power was concentrated in the hands of the monarchs who aimed to attain complete domination. Before the Assyrian chronicles had reached their peak the ancient Hebrews had made a lasting mark as a leadership model in history. The Hebrews religious ideas, covenant, judgment, the Promise, and the Messiah are noted in history; therefore, the pursuit of wisdom of the Hebrews made a significant contribution to religion. Perhaps the Hebrews made a major celebration because it was a long time before the promise of their release from Egypt and for their entry into the Promised Land was fulfilled; therefore, the appreciation for release from Egypt and the entrance into the Promised Land became the tradition of the people and continued as the ground for religious obedience (Butterfield, 2003, ¶466).

Their significant contribution to history was partially because they had their eyes on the God

of History rather than on the gods of nature. No country—not even England with its Magna

Carta—has ever been so obsessed with history, and it is not strange that the ancient Hebrews

showed powerful narrative gifts, and were the first to produce anything like a national

history—the first to sketch out the history of mankind from the time of the Creation.

(Butterfield, 2003, ¶466)

Thus leaving historical records of their philosophy as a group of people.

Classical Era

The Classical era gives rise to the middle class as the monarchical and aristocratic societies

break down. Significant models of the Classical era included, George Washington, Thomas

Jefferson and First Chief Justice John Jay.

Their names are synonymous with the spirit of our country, founding fathers of the U.S.A.

Over 200 years ago they shook off the chains of tyranny from Great Britain, by divine call.

Citing 27 biblical violations, they wrote the Declaration of Independence, with liberty, and

justice, for all. Of the 55 men who formed the Constitution, 52 were active members of their

church. (Carmen, 2005, pg. 1)

These men demonstrated the courage that was needed in order to cite the biblical violations.

These men demonstrated an important aspect of a true leader as they led with their hearts instead

of just using their heads. These men stood together to better the nation, and not to self-serve

their egos. These men realized that they may not see the end of their vision; therefore, they were

putting other people before themselves. A perfect educational system would be made up of

people like our founding fathers who were willing to put others before themselves. The stress of

testing in the schools of today has pressured teachers into competing with one another instead of working together and helping one another. In an ideal school the teachers would work together and help each other instead of competing with each other. In a local elementary school a teacher had a child who was an extreme behavioral problem the other teachers viewed this teacher as unlucky and the other teachers were just glad that they did not get the extreme behavior problem student in their classroom. In an ideal school teachers would come together and assist the teacher in need of extra support.

Modernism

Modernism which is dated 1890-1940 is a trend of thought which affirms the power of human beings to make and improve their surroundings with the help of scientific knowledge, technology, and practical experimentation. The rapid change of technology in the late nineteenth century spurred on the growth of Modernism.   The philosophy of Modernism embraced the arts, writers, thinkers, and creators who rebelled against the late 19th century traditions such as Freud, Marx, and Darwin. For example, Darwin gave his evidence that the Bible may not be true. This movement promoted the making of a different society that looked to fantasy and away from tradition. The modernism era helped lay the path for the Post-modernism era (Butterfield, 2003).

Post-Modernism

The Post-modernism, dated 1940 to the present, ideas also affected philosophy art, critical theory, literature, architecture, interpretation of history, and culture continuing to move away from traditional beliefs and further away from reality. Postmodernists believe that we create

our own truth, and that society creates us. Postmodernists do not believe that there is an

objective truth which is "out there" whether anyone believes in it or not. Bible studies or

truth claims are viewed with suspicion - as tools with which one sub-culture seeks to impose

its values and morality on another. This is seen as a very bad thing. To question or denigrate

in any way the viewpoint of another is seen as intolerance, arrogance and a bad thing

(Butterfield, 2003, pg. 667).

 During the Post-modernism era people have tried to take prayer out of schools,

take the word "God" out of the "Pledge of Allegiance," and two teenaged boys entered

Columbine High School and massacred 12 students and a teacher before they turned their guns

and killed themselves. Abraham Lincoln feared this many years ago, "the philosophy of the

schoolroom in one generation, will be the philosophy of government in the next. So when you

eliminate the Word of God from the classroom and politics, you eliminate the nation that Word

protects" (Carmen, 2005, pg. 1).

   Comparison of Post Modern and Modern Era

    The comparison of post modern and modern eras reveals that there are points of

convergence as both eras promoted the movement toward fantasy and away from tradition.

Both eras represent leadership models of "progress, objectivity, certainty and personal identity"

(Kopff, 1999, pg. 135). Divergence also occurs between the Modernism and Post-Modernism as

the Post-Modern era is dominated by a

    mass media in which there is no originality, but only copies of what has been done before

    This type of behavior promotes liberation with a lack of creativity. 'You must not think that

living according to your country's way of life is slavery, it is salvation,' says Aristotle.

Tradition promotes that one can be happy rooted in family, in Nation, in religion, in culture

in order to rise above them-is lost on the critical theorists. By betraying home and family,

You have no spouse, no companion. You have no farm, no land. You have no love. To

destroy that is your love. (Kopff, 1999, pg. 135)

Modernism and Postmodernism promotes turning ones back on the traditional foundations

in which the nation was built upon. In his farewell address, George Washington said,

You can't have national morality apart from Religious principle, and it's true. Cause right

now we have nearly a hundred and fifty thousand kids carrying guns to these

war zones we call public schools. In the 40s and 50s student problems were chewing gum and

talking, in the 90s, rape and murder are the trend. America is now number one in teen

pregnancy and violent crime, number one in illiteracy, drug use, and divorce. Everyday a new

Holocaust of 5,000 unborn die, while pornography floods our streets like open sewers.

(Carmen, 2005, pg 1)

In an ideal school the only problems that a teacher should have to deal with is chewing gum

and talking, but students need their parents to support and respect the educators of today. In a

local middle school a student was very disrespectful to a teacher and the teacher had the student

to sit during recess. When the parent found out that the child had to sit the parent went to the

superintendent having a fussing fit about the child having to sit. This parent should have

supported the teacher, and not the student who was wrong. When a parent places his or her child

above what is right the child does not have a chance to learn right from wrong.

I recently visited a school where only high risk students are enrolled. The students have been kicked out of pubic schools, and this school is their last chance to have the opportunity to earn a diploma. The director started that for 50% of the students enrolled their problem was not that they were from a home that could not provide the needs of the students, but instead 50% of these students were from homes where the parents had given their children too much. The parents of these students believed and supported everything their children told them about school whether or not the student was in the right or the wrong. These students had learned from their parents to respect no one.

Educators must model appropriate behaviors in order for parents to feel secure in trusting the educational system with their children. When teachers are on the news for sexually abusing an under aged child the hope of getting back to the basics of life in the educational system seems impossible. One of the principals in my school district was a business manager before he became a principal. He shared that the some of the same principles can be used whether striving to create a successful business or a successful school, a firm foundation is needed to build upon. Frank Toney and Merrill Oster share in *The Leader and Religious Faith* an example that reveals the importance of building a business on a firm foundation, this same idea can also be applied to the world of education:

> A study investigates the relationship between the exercise of religious faith by the leader, and goal achievement, self-fulfillment, and community good. Results support the premise that entrepreneurial Chief Executive Officers who 'always' consciously apply the teachings of their religion during the daily decision-making process, attain superior goal achievement results over those CEOs who 'never' apply the teachings of their

religion. CEOs of faith have more profitable companies and greater annual, personal net

worth increases. They rank in the top quartile of questionnaire results that measure

business acumen, leader performance, and organizational goal achievement skills. They

are quick to point out that the intensity of one's religion is not necessarily tied to good

times and positive increases in net worth. Research results support its value in times of

stress, turbulence, instability, and trouble. The CEO of faith also has less focus on profits

and wealth, and indicates that their superior profit performance is a by-product of religion

based practices. Their personal lives benefit from a stronger feeling of fulfillment and

satisfaction as well as better health. Community involvement is evidenced by charitable

contributions far exceeding those less intense in the application of their faith. Practices

of the CEO of faith are characterized by emphasis on service to others, faith that

everything will turn out for the best, and the view that the company is simply a vehicle

to carry one to his or her personal goals. Type of religion is important with Protestants

and Born Again Christians dominating the top performing category.

(Toney & Oster, 1998, pg. 1)

A firm foundation in a person's beliefs is a vital part of who that person is and who that person

will become.

   I believe that having a firm foundation to build upon helps in developing relationships and

true caring about the lives of others. I am an elementary school teacher, and in the school setting

I have learned that once I develop a relationship with my students then I have begun to know

them, and allowed them to know and understand me. After building a relationship with my students my students are willing to follow me because they trust and want to follow. The students realize that I am on their team, and I am pulling and cheering for their success. Not only are my goals achieved in the classroom, but the students and I enjoy the journey to achievement. The first year I taught school I heard these words from a teacher, who had one of my students the previous year, "Mrs. McGinnis be ready for Ryan, because he is BAD; he never does his work, and he fails anything he does turn in." An administrator also rolled her eyes at Ryan's name when she saw him on my class roll. I was determined in my heart not to let these words remain in my mind; I literally tried to erase the words out of my memory.

As the school year started Ryan did have trouble in class, and he seemed not to care or take interest in any activities or lessons during class time. By the end of the first nine weeks he had all F's and one D on his report card. I was still determined not to give up on Ryan. At the end of each nine weeks the high school cheerleaders and football players always came and performed before the awards were given out to the students for the previous nine week period. I noticed as the cheerleaders were performing that Ryan was on the edge of his seat, this was the first time he had taken interest in anything all year. On the way back to the classroom, Ryan raised his hand going down the hall, and told me, "I can do a back handspring and a back tuck just like those cheerleaders." I was so excited. I took the class outside and told Ryan to show me and the class what he could do. I was very nervous and hoped he would not hurt himself. Ryan was terrific. He could absolutely fly through the air. I sent one of my class helpers to get the cheerleaders to come and watch Ryan. He flipped over and over with excitement. I asked the cheerleaders if Ryan made all A's and B's this next nine week period could he perform with them. They said they would be glad to have Ryan part of their team.

Ryan immediately started working and he did not stop until the last day of the school year. He made all A's and one B on his next report card, and he helped the cheerleaders every time they came to perform. I ignored the words that had been labeled on Ryan, and I did not form any prejudices against Ryan. The philosophy I exerted to be successful with Ryan was I never stopped believing in him, and I formed a relationship with Ryan by taking interest in whom he was and by building confidence in him instead of making him think, he was a failure.

My personal philosophy of education is based on the idea that an educator "must share vision, rally support, and genuinely care about student success" (Kinhead, 2003, pg. 7). Much wisdom resides in this proverbial statement, "A student does not care how much a teacher knows, until the student knows how much a teacher cares"   "Teachers or leaders must strive to share the dreams of their students" (Kinhead, 2003, pg. 7). What is the most important attribute that a teacher or leader can possess? Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi believed that love is "the sole and everlasting foundation of teaching or leading. Without love, neither the physical nor the intellectual powers will develop naturally" (Krzymowski, 2003, ¶3). I agree with Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi that love is the connection between an educator and the success of his or her students. Love builds a bridge of trust between an educator and his or her students. The bridge provides a means of open communication and a stress free environment. Students realize that the teacher is on their team; therefore, the student is free to relax and learn instead of constantly stressing out in the classroom which leads to worrying about what the teacher thinks or may say instead of learning.

In my ideal school all of the educators would take time to better understand himself or herself. Knowing one's strengths and weaknesses helps a teacher better understand where he or she needs to improve in order to become the best possible teacher. I realize how important it is

to model appropriate behaviors in order to reach desired behaviors of others. I agree with David O. McKay, "A religious leader with much concern for education who stated, 'the highest, noblest purpose in all our education from the grades to the university, is to teach citizenship and noble character. A man's [or woman's] character is greater than intellectual attainments or social privileges'" (Krzymowski, 2003, ¶3). I realize that if another person is going through something that I have not personally experienced then I will not be able to understand exactly what the person is going through. In an ideal school, all of the educators would take the time to be compassionate and caring for others and their circumstances.

"It is true that one person alone cannot change the world… It takes the concentrated energy, ideas, and enthusiasm of many people." (Kouzes, 2003, chapter 1, pg. 1) As an educator I will strive to continue to be a life long learner who realizes when it is best for me to lead and also realizes when it is best for me to follow.

There is only one philosophy that can really unify education and life. That philosophy is the philosophy of Christian theism. What is needed is an educational system based on the sovereignty of God, for in such a system man as well as chemistry will be given his proper place, neither too high nor too low… . In such a system, God, as well as man, will have his proper place. This alone will make education successful; for the social, moral, political, and economic disintegration of a civilization is nothing other than the symptom and result of a religious breakdown. The abominations of war, pestilence, and economic collapse are punishment for the crime, better, the sin, of forgetting God. (Clark, 2007, ¶7)

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