Chapter Seven

Celebrating 44 Years as a Christian School Teacher:

Unchanged Mission in a Changing World

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Abstract

This chapter is a narrative of my experiences over 44 years of teaching in Christian schools. Through literature and my experiences, I trace changes over this time in pedagogy, philosophy, and the accountability of teachers. The changes I discuss include students' life priorities and career choices, sustainability, social awareness, multiculturalism, discrimination, gender-related issues, teacher accountability, technology, teaching conditions, behaviour management, individualised instruction, problem-solving, parent input, community expectations, globalisation, legal issues, and child protection. I trace these changes from an academic as well as a personal perspective, with my overriding theme being that the aim has always been to introduce each student to Jesus in the process of educating the whole person.

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Introduction

In this chapter, I explore almost half a century of changes, moving from the end of my teacher education through my career as an educator. I examine the processes of living and learning in an academic world from within a Christian culture. Much of what I relate is from my personal reflections, but the changes I describe were observed and experienced in the context of vast social and cultural shifts. This cultural context has been described as our social imagination (Gristy et al., 2020). Mills (2000) suggested:

> The individual can understand his own experience and gauge his own fate only by locating himself within his period . . . . We have come to know that every individual lives, from one generation to the next; in some society; that he lives out a biography, and he lives it out within some historical sequence. (Mills, 2000, pp. 5-6)

Mills (2000) went on to suggest that no description of the social narrative is complete without considering the intersection of one's biography with the history of the era and the society they are located within. Of course, when looking back at a lifetime of teaching in Christian schools, multiple cultures must be considered. There is the changing global culture, Christian culture, and the specific Christian denomination I worked within. Therefore, this chapter is my account of a lifetime of teaching within my social imagination, and I consider my life experiences, my family's experience, and the history of this period more broadly.

I have experienced many changes over almost half a century in school-based education, but the essence of Christian education has stayed the same. One of the founders of the Adventist model of Christian education proposed that all education should be concerned with developing the whole person. This includes the person's physical development, intellectual development, and "spiritual power" (White, 1903, p. 28). Aristotle expressed a similar sentiment more than 2000 years earlier when he said, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all" (cited by Wass, 2018, p. 63)

These ideas about the purpose of education align with current ideas from positive psychology researchers. Seligman (2017) argued that there is a strong connection between the physical body, the brain, and the emotional side of the learner. He proposes that none of these

should be left out of the education process. Seligman's concern is with wellbeing and happiness and, as Christian educators, this should also be our concern. Though Seligman does not write from a Christian worldview, it is useful for Christians to note that we are not alone in advocating for holistic education. For us, holistic education isn't about adding the spiritual aspect to the physical, intellectual, and emotional aspects of the person, but more about approaching all areas from a Christian perspective.

One could say that the objectives of Christian education have not changed a great deal over the decades. My career in Christian education has stretched over 44 years. In this chapter, I share my reflections on the changes I have experienced over this period while teaching with the objective of educating the whole person and having been fulfilled by working with sometimes maligned teenagers.

Having quoted a piece of Aristotle's philosophy, I can also put forward a less philosophical, but more famous, statement he made about young people:

> Teenagers these days are out of control. They eat like pigs, they are disrespectful of adults, they interrupt and contradict their parents, and they terrorize their teachers. (Aristotle, n.d.)

Given that this was written before Christ was born, it would be difficult for anybody today to argue that teenagers have gotten worse over the years. From a teacher's perspective, teenagers couldn't be much worse than Aristotle's description, but Christian teachers see it from a different perspective.

Dr George Akers was one Christian teacher who had a much more delicate view of students. In 1980, during my second year of teaching in Christchurch, New Zealand, Akers ran a special staff meeting for the teachers at my school. Even though this was 42 years ago, I remember his exact words: *"[We need to see our students] not as vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lighted."* He added that we should put signs up at the entrance to our classrooms that say: *"Tread softly – people are growing here."* Akers' perspective reminds us that our students are being made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Children and teenagers are individual children of God who are going to make many changes in their thinking and actions as they grow up. Being there as a Christian teacher to influence their thoughts and behaviour in a rapidly changing period of history has been an honour.

Working with students today means working with open-minded people who are more independent and free-thinking than students in past decades. With easy access to a diverse range of material and opinions, students have been prompted to think deeply about personal, social, spiritual, and political issues. These ideas are often different to the narrow applications students in Christian schools in the last century were exposed to in Bible classes. One of the most important present-day issues is that sometimes teachers are from a history and culture that predates the birth of the students they are teaching, and these teachers therefore have trouble adjusting to substantial culture shifts. As a result, many within Christian denominations make calls for a return to their roots. However, young people see their place in the world and their role in thinking through its current issues as central to their Christian faith.

Kinnaman and Hawkins' (2011) research found that young people today see religion and the Christian worldview as overprotective and demonising anything outside the church. Young people do not see God in organised religion and see Christianity in general as rejecting the value of science and having an overly simplistic and judgemental perspective on sexuality. Young people find Christianity to be too exclusive in a pluralistic world and feel marginalised when they raise questions on these points. I have recognised this trend in my teaching over the last half-century, and it has required me to make changes to the way I related to young people. There is a fine line to be found between the extremes of fully subscribing to some young people's views and rejecting their concerns on the other.

Working with Cultures and Languages

In the middle of the last century, both students and teachers in Australian city-based schools were largely Anglo-Celtic, with only a small proportion of European immigrants. There was little awareness of diverse cultures outside of the racist jokes made by some Australian teenagers with each wave of immigration. Indeed, my memory of being a secondary school student in the 1970s is that the teachers in Christian schools were little more sensitive to the needs of these students than the Australian students were.

Moving forward to the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, Australian schools became increasingly more diverse, with many

cultures represented, including students from Asian, Pacific Island, and Indian backgrounds. Over the same period, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in mainstream schools also increased. As increasing numbers of Australian students were citizens with diverse cultural backgrounds, Australian schools re-examined their cultural attitudes and policies, as well as responding to the need to cater for students with English as a second language. The increasing presence of international and exchange students has also added to the cultural diversity that has enriched school communities, but also brought challenges to teachers who were working within a fixed, 'whole of class' approach to learning and teaching that assumed greater homogeneity of experience within a class (Foster, 1988).

As the Principal of a Christian school that brought international students into its regular classrooms while introducing scheduled English language classes for these students, I had to remind some teachers of their professional and Christian responsibility to be inclusive. As part of raising teachers' awareness of their impact on international students, I asked a former student to reflect on his first encounters with teachers on his arrival at the school. His response was published in a staff newsletter:

> *They say, "First impressions last". I can still vaguely remember my first day in school at the school. It was exciting as well as nerve-wracking. For me, one thing that still stands out from that first day of school is how teachers greeted and treated us. Since we (international students) were not good at understanding what the teacher was saying at that stage, we were very good at reading and sensing a teacher's intention and emotion through his/her body language. Believe it or not, a person's body language says a lot about the person. I remember that on a few occasions, my friends and I preferred one particular subject to the others, just because that subject teacher had given us a warm and genuine welcome and/or self-introduction when we firstly arrived in that class. A teacher's genuine smile and sincerity really has a profound impact on students' feelings and attitude towards a subject.*

While limited to Sydney, one study (Watkins et al. 2016) noted that the New South Wales school system had 30% of students with language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE), including 12,000 students from refugee backgrounds and 18% of students needing

English as a Second Language (ESL) support. In New South Wales, more than 6500 students per year need ESL support. In my experience, the figures for Christian schools would broadly parallel these figures.

Many more statistics could be reported, but the central point is that the changing demographics of school populations over recent decades have presented Christian teachers with a whole new challenge to support students with LBOTE in a way that exemplifies how Jesus would work with them and the value He places on them. This responsibility is in addition to the curriculum requirements of the National Curriculum introduced in 2013 which holds *intercultural understanding* as a capability (Watkins & Noble, 2016). Teachers need to not only implement changes to benefit students with LBOTE but to make real changes in the ways they think about cultural complexity as they approach this task. However, despite considerable professional learning in the area, there is still resistance evident from teachers to changing the way they work with diversity (Watkins & Noble, 2019).

Teachers and Accountability

Over the course of my career, I have also seen dramatic changes in the accountability expected of teachers. Some of these changes have resulted in worthwhile improvements, but constantly changing requirements and updated curricula have diminished many positive aspects of teaching, especially the capacity to build relationships with students and colleagues.

My observation of a deterioration in relationships due to the requirement of increased accountability is supported by research. A study by Mausethagen (2013) identified increased student testing and media attention on student performance as having harmed teacher-student relationships. With a greater focus on teaching for the test, teachers have had less time to devote to developing a meaningful rapport with their students. Another negative outcome of time-consuming practices of teacher accountability has been the deterioration in teachers' social relations. Teachers feel less content with their social engagement and collaboration with other teachers as the focus on student performance intensifies. Increased teacher accountability may be having the opposite effect on student learning than was intended or anticipated.

New teacher accountability practices have had an impact on teacher time through managing pressure from helicopter parents who continually question the professional work of the teacher (Calarco, 2020), more stringent risk management processes, higher levels of accreditation, increased reporting burdens, recording of teacher activities, greater planning requirements, and limitations on extra-curricular activities. In my experience, paperwork for accountability has taken away from time for teaching preparation and the student care that used to be a hallmark of Christian schools. According to Freeda Pirillis, a long-time teacher who is now the coordinator for an International Baccalaureate program in Chicago, "It's almost become so burdensome and distracting to doing the job that's important" (cited by Madeleine, 2019, p. 5).

Corresponding to the increased requirements of teacher accountability over the last five decades is an expectation that teachers will demonstrate an increasingly bureaucratised level of professionalism. As part of this bureaucratisation, teachers must now be accredited with a professional body, which usually entails logging a specified number of hours of professional learning, a teaching portfolio, and reports from administrators. While teachers and teacher education institutions are held accountable for decreasing educational standards in schools, little responsibility for student performance is placed on other influences, such as parents and home environments, social media, and electronic gaming. Teachers are having to manage increased classroom diversity, regular innovation and change in learning technologies, the performance of their students in standardised tests, and the scrutiny of administrators and their peers. The teacher's classroom is no longer a sanctuary, free of scrutiny. While these changes have brought many positives for students and parents, they have come with added pressure on teachers.

Sexual Awareness

Students are becoming sexually aware and active much earlier than in past decades. By 2008, the average age at which Australian males became sexually active had decreased over the past forty years from 18 to 16, with the average age for Australian females also dropping from 19 to 16 (Skinner et al., 2008). The same study reported that most year 10 and year 12 students had been involved in some form

of sexual activity with a quarter of year 10 students and half of year 12 students reporting having had sex. While there is no available data about students from Christian schools, I believe there is a similar trend toward a younger average of sexual activity.

According to Dent and Maloney (2017), parent opinion about sex education in Christian schools varies. However, there appears to be a widely held view that any sex education in Christian schools should teach abstinence. This view is based on the idea that educating students about contraception amounts to expressing tacit approval of premarital sex. Some parents reportedly believe that sex education is not within the remit of schools' responsibility and it shouldn't be taught at all. However, Dent and Maloney (2017) found that there was a silent group of evangelical parents who did not agree with abstinence-based sex education as they believed it gives students a falsely negative message about sex. These researchers suggested that a more in-depth study would be likely to find that any push for teaching abstinence in schools may be vocal, but is not widespread.

These issues leave Christian schooling in a confusing position. While Christian schools know that students have easy access to explicit material, communicate more freely with each other over sexual matters than in previous generations, and are experimenting with sex at an earlier age, they still need to be able to promote Christian values. The critical question that remains unanswered is whether schools maintain a 'head in the sand' approach to sex education, or whether the sexual safety of students becomes a joint priority for schools and families.

Gender Identity

Another emerging dilemma for Christian schools whose management has conflicted with the Christian principles of love and care, is how to teach LGBTQIA+ students, including transgender students or students who experience gender dysphoria. Increasingly, I have observed that Christian school leaders are confused about how to balance their personal values with their obligation to care for and love every student. While the Bible is frequently used to oppose acceptance of LGBTQIA+ students, these students need genuine care and acceptance that may not be provided in Christian schools. Smith (2021) reported what LGBTQIA+ students experience in Christian schools, noting that while the sexual orientation and gender identity

(SOGI) statement put out by the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) is positive in its aim to treat these students with respect, it does nothing to deal with the actual harm and humiliation students experience:

> We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28–31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behaviour or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of [the organization]. (ADF, 2015, p. 27)

Smith (2021) points out that the SOGI statement fails to address LGBTQIA+ students' experience of abuse and harassment. For example, verbal harassment is experienced by nearly two-thirds of LGBTQIA+ students, while a quarter have been physically harassed. Around half report having experienced homophobic remarks made by teachers and school staff, sexual harassment, and cyberbullying (Smith, 2021). Smith also reported that LGBTQIA+ students are four times more prone to self-harm and suicide attempts than other students. For LGBTQIA+ students of colour or those with disabilities, this ratio is even higher.

These issues have been experienced by students across the half-century of my time in Christian education but, until recently, haven't been formally discussed or addressed. An experienced school counsellor reported to me that over the years these issues have become more openly discussed and students have more knowledge about sexuality and gender identity. Importantly, while students in some Christian schools are now encouraged to embrace and explore their experience and identity, many don't feel safe to do so in either their Christian school community or society more broadly.

I have identified important issues around gender, sexuality, and racism, but to advance thinking about young people in Christian schools today we need to understand that young people are a sample of wider society and the polarising, whether it is politics or Christianity. As educators, we have transitioned to a conceptual teaching model and students are encouraged to think critically and independently. Many young people care deeply about climate change, the environment, and discrimination in all its forms. However, other students more strongly echo the traditional views of their parents' generation or their church toward such issues as women's role in society and LGBTQIA+ people's rights.

Ward (2017) suggests that the behavioural manifestations of racism and homophobia in schools are identical and there should be no difference in the way schools manage them. In fact, the Australian National Curriculum (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2017) clearly outlines how students should be taught to respond to social diversity of all kinds:

> Strong intercultural relationships are built on mutual respect between people, communities and countries. Respect is based on the recognition that every person is important and must be treated with dignity. It includes recognising and appreciating differences between people and respecting another person's point of view and their human rights. (ACARA, 2017)

As the Christian sector experiences the exodus of young Christians who find the Church has no personal relevance, churches are being forced to come to terms with the same issues that schools struggle with. Kinnaman (2011) interviewed young people, parents, and pastors, and identified several reasons behind the trend for young people to leave the Church. Importantly, young people want to engage with their contemporary social world and believe that Christianity in general should be more involved in current real-world problems. Young people are not finding their faith is affirmed in a church setting and are disturbed by the anti-science mentality of many churches. They find churches to be judgemental about sexuality and lifestyle and compare churches to clubs in terms of their social exclusivity. Most importantly, they feel that they are condemned if they doubt or ask questions. Overall, both Christian schools and churches themselves must respond to young people's concerns if churches aren't to lose the next generation of Christian youth.

Technology

The last 50 years have seen an uptake of new technology that no students or teachers could have imagined. Calculators, invented in the mid-1970s, started to become affordable for students when I started my career as a mathematics teacher in 1979. Less work on calculation made more time for problem-solving. This meant that even in mathematics, students moved toward thinking and analysing situations, as they were already doing in other subject areas.

Computers made their appearance in schools in the mid-1980s, with the internet being introduced in the mid-1990s. While students

adapted to new technologies quickly and easily, teachers had to work to ensure they stayed ahead of students. As students proved so comfortable with technology, it became apparent that there was an opportunity for schools to integrate key learning areas with preparing students for new and emerging workplaces in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM (Rifandi & Rahmi, 2019). STEM crossed disciplines and promoted group work, addressing what are still seen as the key strengths students needed to be competitive in the workforce. As pointed out by Rifandi and Rahmi (2019, p. 2), the types of occupations teachers prepare students ready for had changed over the last 50 years:

> Criteria for workers needed in the 21st century are workers who have good problem-solving skills, creative, innovative, critical, and can work in teams. The 21st century skills are digital age literacy which encompasses communication competency, analysing and interpretation of data, understanding and assessment of models, task management and task prioritization, involvement in problem solving, and ensuring wellbeing and safety.

Differentiated Learning

Individualised instruction originally meant students learning at their own pace. In the 1970s, a movement advocated programs in which students within a class worked to individual programs at their own pace, particularly for literacy and numeracy. For example, using a card-based system called SRA Reading Laboratory (mheducation, 2022), students worked individually on tasks outlined on colour-coded cards that helped develop reading comprehension while strengthening word recognition and fluency. When students completed a given level, they moved on to the next level. Along the same lines was the Scottish Module Mathematics (SMM) scheme. In their time, these programs were considered innovative best practise but, over the remaining years of the 20th century, whole-class teaching returned to the forefront in education.

Now, small group instruction and cooperative learning have become widely used, and individualised learning has made a return to the classroom. With the rapid advancement in technology, computer-based programs such as Maths Pathways (https://mathspathway.com), have made a return to pedagogy in schools. However, contemporary individualised instruction involves adapting instruction using adjusted

programs designed to fit students with special learning needs who have been integrated into general classrooms, rather than segregated into a specialised stream or school. Rytivaara and Vehkakoski (2015, p. 12) found that classroom teachers have experienced the integration of students with special learning needs into general classrooms, as a "possibility, necessity or threat." Looking at individualisation through either a social or a cognitive lens, Rytivaara and Vehkakoski (2015) concluded that effective integration of students with special needs into general classrooms depended on a greater level of cooperation between home and school.

Of course, including students with special learning needs in a general classroom has implications for the teachers' workload that may increase the stress experienced by teachers if classroom numbers are not adjusted downwards or additional support provided. My observation as a school Principal has been that although teachers are supportive of the inclusion of special needs students in their general classes, this change has had an impact on their teaching experience that hasn't been addressed within school budgets and resources.

Streaming vs Mixed-Ability

Over the last half-century, educators have debated whether classes should be streamed or based on mixed abilities (Kilgour, 2008). Attitudes toward streaming, mixed-ability classes, and the integration of students with special needs, have been closely linked to the culture and practice of the era. In terms of student achievement and opportunity, there were clear winners and losers in the last century when streaming categories were largely determined by standardised tests. Students were allocated to upper or lower streams, academic or practical pathways, top-ranked schools or 'normal schools.' Often, allocations were based more on social class or gender than ability (Gristy et al., 2020), or on tests that may or may not have accurately predicted academic success had opportunity been equally available to all.

However, while streaming was seen by some as a form of differentiating learning to suit individual students, it can be brutal in its separation of students into distinct ability- or achievement-based groups, sometimes based on standardised testing. This separation harms students' self-perceptions, including as learners (Kilgour,

2008). A study by Kilgour (2008) found that once students were separated by ability in year 9 and 10 mathematics classes, the 'top' classes advanced quickly in performance, application, and self-perception of their abilities in the subject. In classes categorised as being lower in achievement, the opposite happened.

This evidence provides a good argument for mixed-ability classes with peer tutoring, or even self-paced individual programs. However, with syllabi in some states being streamed, whole-class teaching becomes difficult in mixed-ability classrooms. As a result, streaming is still heavily relied upon in many schools. However, I have noticed that over the past five decades, there has been a growing awareness of alternative pedagogical approaches to managing mixed-ability classes that challenge the systemic bias toward streaming by ability.

Parents in Education

According to Coleman (2018, p. 1), "(o)ne of the most important factors in a child's success in school is the degree to which his or her parents are actively involved in the child's education." Parents' involvement in their child's education can take many forms, but it has not been conclusively determined which parental activities contribute to a child's success. My observation is that over the past few decades, there has been a widening continuum of parental involvement ranging from parents who have little involvement in their children's schooling because of their work and church commitments, to the increasingly prevalent helicopter parents (Bristow, 2014). Helicopter parents stifle children and teenagers by monitoring and dictating their every movement, rather than allowing their children to develop and exercise independence in their learning and decision-making. Overall, I have found that both extremes on the continuum of parental involvement are damaging to the child and obstruct the work of the teacher.

Respect for the Teaching Profession

In what might be a corresponding trend to parents becoming either too little or too much involved in their children's education, there has been a noticeable decline in community respect for teachers and the teaching profession. This decline hasn't been helped by a constant barrage of criticism of teachers and teaching quality by politicians, heightened by the revolving door of federal education ministers

in Australia. While International standardised test results have demonstrated a decline in the ranking of Australian students against other developed countries, governments have blamed teachers for these declining education standards to deflect attention from government education policy and funding. (Brunetti, 2001; Kumashiro, 2015; and Watts, 2013). This has eroded respect for the teaching profession in the community.

Emeritus Professor Don Watts (Watts, 2013) made it very clear that if any blame for declining standards is to be laid, it belongs with the politicians who repeatedly invest money and require school and teacher time to be spent on mandates and curriculum reforms that have no bearing on school performance, while ignoring the needs of students in remote schools and schools in areas with relatively low socioeconomic status that bring the national average scores down. Over the last half-century, Australia has seen a rapid increase in the number of independent schools that have been established. These schools 'consistently out-performed our state school system" (Watts, 2013, p. 17) which is administered by bureaucracies of the governments who blame teachers for declining standards. I have found this attitude demoralising, as have many other teachers.

Worzel (2008) outlines several other reasons for the decline in community respect for teachers. Parents don't fully understand the work of the teacher or the nature, amount, and complexity of the tasks they do. As its public face, teachers are also convenient and accessible scapegoats for any frustrations parents experience with the education system. I have experienced and heard reports from many other teachers of growing parental dissatisfaction with the perceived quality of work the teacher is doing.

Problem-Based Learning

The introduction of problem-based learning into schools has been an innovation of this century (Walker et al., 2015). This pedagogy has students working in groups to solve a problem that is usually open-ended. The advantage of this method of learning is that it closely emulates what students will later encounter in the workplace. It develops in students the ability to work in groups to solve problems and provides opportunities for leadership skills to emerge. Problem-based learning is based on a vision of integrating multiple key learning

areas in the problem-solving process and encourages initiative and independence as students work separately from the teacher. Working separately also requires students to develop the research skills necessary to find information independent of the teacher and provides opportunities for students to help each other.

While some commentators see this approach as a fad, I have witnessed the growing confidence, teamwork, and application of students doing problem or project-based learning. I have found it helpful for developing students' skills through guidance without being directive, with teachers helping students find the answers rather than being the guardians of information to impart to students. Indeed, if there was an international measure of students' abilities to research, work together, solve problems, and integrate learning, I believe that Australian students would be closer to the top than in existing standardised testing comparisons, and this would be a more useful measure of students' capabilities.

Wellbeing and Child Protection

While I could easily write another chapter about changes in education, schools, and classrooms over the course of my teaching career, I will limit myself to two key developments. First, while many still call Australia a Christian country, the teaching of scripture in public schools has been eroded. However, chaplains and counsellors have become permanent employees in schools and, while chaplains' discussion of religion is limited in public school appointments, these wellbeing employees have helped to address the growing plague of mental ill-health among young people, including anxiety, depression, and suicide risk.

Second, teachers and the profession have become more aware of the many forms of abuse and domestic violence experienced by young people, and their important role in child protection. The introduction of mandatory reporting, while unimaginable to previous generations of teachers, has helped to protect students.

A Summary of My Lived Experience

After studying at university for four years to fulfil my passion for teaching mathematics, I couldn't find a position. Christian schools wouldn't employ me because I was trained at a public university and

Catholic schools had the luxury of experienced teachers to employ. Public schools wouldn't employ me because I wasn't a member of the trade union. Therefore, in January of 1979, I found myself a volunteer at an idyllic school in the Cook Islands where I could try my new career as a mathematics teacher – and an English teacher, and a science, geography, history, and Bible teacher. I walked into the classroom and found bookshelves of outdated, yellow-paged books donated from schools in Australia. From this meagre resource, along with paper, pens, blackboard and chalk, and a skeleton syllabus, I worked out what I would teach.

Today I rarely use paper or printed books. My computer contains my work and my communication. When my computer isn't with me, my phone steps in to do everything my computer does and more. Students submit work on an electronic learning management system or an e-portfolio application. I could never have imagined how teaching would look in 2022.

Every part of my experience between 1979 and today has shaped my social imagination. Thousands of personal and shared experiences inside the culture and history of society, family, and church, have unfolded, framing my social reality. However, this journey was never about me. While I never took an exact count, I estimate that I have had around 5000 students in my classes during my career. If I have been able to make a difference in the lives of even a fraction of these, I am very satisfied.

In this chapter, I have outlined many changes I have witnessed and experienced over 44 years of teaching. I want to finish with what has not changed. Our schools and universities are still staffed with people who care deeply about the well-rounded development of their students. They are people who work extremely hard, despite the noise from stakeholders, parents, communities, and governments. The belief systems of the people I work with today aren't as compartmentalised as those of the teachers I worked with half a century ago, but these teachers still firmly believe that their role in a Christian school is to espouse and live Christian values.

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