

## A Child of God: Dressed, Prepared, and Ready for School...for Life!

What memories do you have of your preparations for each new school year as a student? I remember fondly the excitement, the anticipation, and the expectation of new adventures spiritually, academically, athletically, and socially. In addition to the usual school supply shopping, my sister and I would go with my mom to select fabric, and she would sew us three new dresses for the school year. My aunt, a fashion designer in New York, would also send us several dresses. We felt “dressed and ready” for school!

As Christian educators, our preparation perspective has expanded to include a plethora of plans that go beyond clothing and school supplies, as we seek to support each child in learning and living a life of love and service to God and others. As lifelong learners, we are called to not only be prepared, but to prepare our students for lifelong learning. The Lord calls us to perpetuate the legacy of the Christian faith, to encourage, to equip, and to love as He loves us.

Jesus, our Master Teacher, provides both teachers and students with the ultimate plan to follow in the new school year and in life. As we address the basics of the 3 R's and more, may we remember the 3 P's: Prayer, Preparation, Planning. Throughout His ministry, Jesus prioritized prayer, and exemplified that prayer is intrinsic in preparing to carry out the will of our Heavenly Father. As Jesus effectively and successfully carried out the plan of salvation, He prayerfully, prudently, and patiently prepared. In carrying out the plans God has for us and in preparing our students for the plans He has for them, may we find wisdom, guidance, and encouragement in following the example of Jesus. He has provided us with the ultimate textbook and lesson plan as we look to His saving Word, a lamp for our feet, and a light for our path. We have direct communication through prayer with our Master and Teacher. As teachers and students, our strength and power to stand firm comes from the Lord, Who prepares us fully with His armor: the belt of truth; the breastplate of righteousness; feet readily fitted with the gospel of peace; the shield of faith; the helmet of salvation; and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

LOVE is the most important lesson we teach as Christian educators. It is the golden thread that binds hearts and minds with true and lasting wisdom to know and apply throughout life. Learning that God loved the world that He gave His one and only Son as Savior; learning that Jesus in love gave His life to save us and reconcile us to our Father; learning that Jesus calls us as children of God to love Him and to love others is wisdom beyond what the world can give learners of any age. This lesson extends into eternity. It is the ultimate and eternal lesson we are privileged to share.

May you and each of your students remember this lesson not only as a new school year begins, but each day of every year. A Child of God...

Loves, lives, learns, and leads through Christ, our Light.

Obeyes the Lord and offers thanks and praise.

Values God's Word and people.

Encourages others and follows Christ's example.

Serves the Lord and others in love and submission to our Savior.

Dressed and ready for school and life? Colossians 3:12-17 gives us our dress code:

***“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another, Forgive as the lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”***

A Song for the School Year (To the tune of “Jesus Loves Me”)

Jesus Christ, our Savior dear  
Bless and keep us this school year.  
Help us learn and grow in grace.  
Guide us in all things we face.

Jesus, we love you.  
Jesus, we need you.  
Jesus, we serve you.  
Lead us in all we do.

In our hearts, may your peace rule,  
As we learn of You in school.  
May your love in us grow strong.  
May we share it all year long.

Jesus, we love you.  
Jesus, we need you.  
Jesus, we serve you.  
Lead us in all we do.

Charlene Soon August 2016