

Chronicles of Hope

(Christian English Language Educators in Korea and Abroad)

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

Welcome to our sixth issue of the Christian Teachers' Special Interest Group's Newsletter!

Good teaching involves a number of inter-related themes: sound linguistics, depth of pedagogical theory, a healthy respect for accepted praxis, enthusiasm for the craft, a love for people, motivation to help others. All of these come together with God at the core of what they do.

Good teachers are passionate teachers; we like to discuss our art. We want to learn from others in similar contexts, and share what we know works. It is in the pursuit of these ideals and goals as well as a drive for practical excellence that this newsletter receives submissions from teachers in Korea and abroad.

We are blessed to have a profile piece with George Van Bruggen who works at Handong Global University. He has quite the story on how God brought him and his wife to Korea.

Ma Hazel Ramos has written a piece entitled "Teachers of

Righteousness". We are called to righteousness as teachers of English and she goes into great detail on what is involved in this call.

"On Being Observed: An Unexpected Goodness" by Julie Prentice raises a number of relevant points on how teacher observation can be an opportunity for growth.

Chuck Sandy has honored us with "Christmas in May: Teaching at an In-Between Time". This was originally published on the our blog before Christmas. This piece speaks so well of hope and how one teacher was able to bring hope into his classroom.

"Religious Faith and Teacher Knowledge in English Language Teaching" is a review on Brad Baurain's first book. Personally, I am looking forward to reading more from this dedicated professor who now teaches at Moody Bible Institute! This adds to the small amount of research and literature on the connection between religious faith and what that means for those of us who teach.

I hope you enjoy all of these articles. We would love to hear discussion on our Facebook group.

May God bless you as you teach!

Virginia Hanslien



Teachers, Your Work Matters

It is the middle of the term and you are exhausted. Piles of grading.irate parents. Disrespectful, disinterested students. Constant testing and unreasonable requirements. These, and many more things, conspire against teachers and try to bring us down. To discourage us. To make us wonder if we are wasting our time.

And today I want to offer you a small word of encouragement. – You are NOT wasting your time. What you're doing DOES matter. Your labor is not in vain. You are making a difference.

There are those who will be thankful even though they don't say it directly to your face. There are students in your class who will look back on this year and be thankful for your influence. They may even be the one causing you the most trouble.

I know that you know that growth takes time and the seeds you are planting in young hearts and minds will grow and bring forth fruit, even if you might not see it yet.

You, dear teacher, are making a difference. There are students who care. There are students who are grateful. There are students who are grateful. There are those who are learning. There are those who are

growing. Even if they never tell you.

I was going to tell you all of this until I realized that all of these things pale in comparison to one very important fact.

God sees you and what you are doing. God sees your effort, your time, your work, your labor. He sees you and the reality is He is the only one that truly matters.

God sees the long hours of lesson planning and the shed tears of frustration over students not understanding. He knows your biggest frustrations and your deepest hurts. He doesn't overlook you. And He doesn't take you for granted.

A lot of thoughtful effort goes into doing our best for our students. We work on being the best teacher possible for their sake. And while we should emphasize the kids' needs above our own, there is someone else that we should be serving above all else: our God.

And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the

Lord Christ. (Col 3:23-24)

This powerful verse reminds us that we are working for an audience of one: Christ Jesus our Lord.

He is there watching everything. When no one else seems to notice, He sees you.

When everyone else you work with does not seem to care, He cares.

When our words seem to be falling flat, He sees our effort and is pleased with our faithfulness.

If we're doing it all for Him.

So today, in the midst of the busyness, the frustration, the chaos – take a moment and remember the real reason that you are teaching. It shouldn't be for the praise. It shouldn't be for the satisfaction. It shouldn't even be for the students.

It's good and right for us to remember the real reason we are teaching. It's for God. And if we keep our focus on Him, it doesn't matter as much what's happening around us.

So don't give up. Don't quit. Be encouraged in the Lord. Keep making a difference.

Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)



“I felt God was calling us to do something more with our lives ... I felt that God was somehow calling us to Asia.”

Profile Piece: George Van Bruggen

How did you become involved in Christian English language teaching?

This rather long story is definitely a testimony to God’s amazing grace, guidance and perseverance. It all started around 2001. My wife (Judy) and I were raising our family (3 children) on a 4 acre property in a country home we’d built north of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. We were living very comfortably and life was good but, as we were reading and reflecting on God’s Word, Judy and I felt God was calling us to do something more with our lives, although we didn’t know what that was. As we prayed and reflected, Judy and I felt that God was somehow calling us to go to Asia.

At that point, we had no idea what we were to do or where we were to go, other than to anticipate that changes were coming in our lives. Shortly afterwards, we decided to put our property up for sale, which sold fairly quickly. We purchased a smaller home in a small city further north of Winnipeg and proceeded to ‘downsize’ our belongings. In the summer of 2001, our son moved out to attend university, and the remainder of our family (Judy and I, our 2 high-school aged daughters, and one large dog) moved house and prepared for an

even further commute into Winnipeg, where both Judy and I had jobs. I was the Executive Director of a small Non-Government Organization, and my wife worked in the office of a farm-implement manufacturer. Due to the long commute (40 minutes in good weather conditions – much longer in the winter), Judy and I decided to commute together, which generally worked out well.

We had previously developed a habit of reading books to each other, something we enjoy to this day, in which Judy and I would each read a chapter of a chosen book and then we’d discuss the contents. During the winter months, Judy did all the reading during our long commutes into Winnipeg while I concentrated on the driving. This worked out well for both of us, as I didn’t mind the ‘white-knuckle’ winter driving conditions that often afflict that region, as long as my poor wife was distracted enough by reading not to become too alarmed by the poor driving conditions.

To make a long story short, we read books on money, missions and missionaries on those commutes, and learned that God has much more in mind for his people than just to live comfortable lives! We also read about English as a Second Language teaching opportunities, which intrigued us – I’d

previously had a high-school teaching background in another part of Canada, and both my wife and I really enjoyed teaching Sunday School in various churches we’d attended throughout our married lives. I don’t remember exactly when or how we made the decision, but we decided to extend our commuting time (in winter, no less!) to attend a 120 hour TESOL certificate program (evening classes) at the University of Manitoba, located in the southern part of the city. As much as we enjoyed and learned from those classes, the 1 hour drive home late at night was sure not easy! However, we all (including our 2 daughters, who were used to their independence) adjusted.

In 2004, we sold the house and purchased an even smaller condominium close to the University of Manitoba, which our oldest daughter was going to attend, and proceeded to ‘downsize’ even further. By that time (summer, 2004) Judy and I had both given notice to our respective employers that we were going to teach in Asia, although at that time neither of us still had any clue about where we were going. During that autumn, we heard about and decided to apply to an mission organization that recruits teachers to go to China and other Asian countries. We were accepted and left Canada in January 2005 for training before being assigned to a city in China to (Continued next page)



“Koreans are kind and patient and have generally helped my wife and I to navigate the various challenges of living in a foreign country.”

Profile Piece: George Van Bruggen

teach at a university, where we stayed for 1 ½ years.

How long have you been here?

My wife and I have been in South Korea since July 2006. After our term ended in China, we hoped to remain in Asia, so looked into coming to South Korea. We decided to teach at a hagwon in Daegu. We remained for 3 years in Daegu, two of which were spent teaching at Kyungpook National University (KNUC).

While at KNU, the small English-language church congregation we were part of traveled to Handong Global University on Mother’s Day, 2007, to attend an English worship service. My wife and I both fell in love with Handong, especially after reading “The Papyrus Basket Conspiracy”, an auto-biography penned by the wife of the 1st president of the university. At much as we enjoyed Daegu, we felt called to come to Handong. We were still working on our respective Master of Education degrees, yet applied when positions in the ESL department there became available. Although we didn’t get interviews, we didn’t let that deter us and applied again 2 years later when we’d completed our master degrees. Praise the Lord, we were hired and began teaching at Handong in September 2009.

I have taught full-time continuously since then, and Judy has come back to teach

part-time in the Department of Language Education after leaving to support her aging mother in Canada for 1 ½ years.

What is the most challenging aspect of Korean culture for you?

Just when I think I have an adequate understanding of Korean culture, something always happens that makes me realize how much more I have yet to learn! I hate the thought of offending or annoying my Korean hosts, either deliberately or inadvertently. The more I’ve learned about Korean culture, I truly hope I’ve minimized the former, yet I don’t like the thought that the latter still exists due to ignorance on my part. Fortunately, I have good Korean friends who I’ve asked to be honest with me when I make mistakes – I wish they would be more frank (brutally honest), but their advice and counsel has been extremely helpful nonetheless!

What aspects of Korean culture do you particularly enjoy?

The hospitality and graciousness of the Korean people has been particularly a wonderful blessing! I’m reminded over and over again that, even though my Korean language skills are not what they should be, Koreans are kind and patient and have generally helped my wife and I to navigate the various chal-

lenges of living in a foreign country. I have counted on that fact in regards to using the (excellent!) medical system, traveling (my wife and I enjoy camping, so have traveled to most parts of South Korea) and even shopping. Koreans have given us much more than we have even felt comfortable accepting – I recall one time when I had a slow leak in a tire of our vehicle – when I pulled in to get the tire checked out, the gentleman spent about a ½ hour to find and identify the problem, yet refused all my attempts to pay him for his efforts, since nothing needed to be purchased (‘service’ he kept saying over and over again!). My wife and I have also been often invited over to the homes of Koreans and, even though we try to reciprocate, feel that there is always more we should do.

What other ministries are you a part of?

As previously mentioned, my wife and I were part of a small English church in Daegu when we lived there. Since 2011, I have gone back once a month to preach at that congregation. For several years, there was declining attendance but, since last year, each Sunday service averages about 20~30 people, most of whom are foreign exchange or transfer students who are studying at Kyungpook National University.

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“How the teachers speaks is a gauge of our spiritual maturity and perfection.”

Teachers of Righteousness

If you are a teacher who has received and responded to the call of teaching, you are doing a great partnership with God.

There is a special flame in your heart and mind that keeps you working with the Creator of the Universe in shaping human behavior and character and determining the destiny of students.

You have spent the vast majority of your time in giving yourself to others—that require stellar dedication. Without teachers like you, it would be impossible for one generation to pass down to the next generation skills and knowledge, and propagation is learning will never come to existence.

Teachers are life-changers, remembered and celebrated as the epitome of God’s gifts and grace. And you are called to a higher divine calling and purpose in these last days – to be a “teacher of righteousness”.

Our Father in heaven desires to raise up teachers of righteousness who will help guide others into maturity and perfection. The ultimate goal of a teacher of righteousness is to help others to come to perfection and spiritual maturity, which is beyond teaching skills and knowledge.

The phrase “teachers of righteousness” can be taken from Daniel 12:3, “Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like

the stars forever and ever”. The part that says, “Those who are wise can be translated as “those who are teachers. Those who are teachers and turn many to righteousness can be called teachers of righteousness.

Ephesians 4:11-13 declares, “And He himself gave some to be...teachers...for edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”. Jesus Christ said in Matthew 5:48, “therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect”. To present a people who have been perfected by the workings of God will sum up the purpose of all Bible teaching.

Let’s examine what the Bible says about aspects of perfection:

1. Perfection as showing goodness and love to all.

In Colossians 3:14, Paul tells us that “love is the bond of perfection”. We find that love and Christian perfection are equivalent; through this, teachers of righteousness are channels of agape love to all—especially to our students.

2. Perfection as seen in the control of the tongue.

James 3:2 says, “If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body”. We are given warnings in the Bible in the area of controlling the tongue because it is

the most difficult member of the body to control.

The words that flow out of the mouth at times without consideration of the damage that they might do to the students and to others can ruin a life. How the teacher speaks is a gauge of our spiritual maturity and perfection.

The words of a teacher live in the lives of the students and sometimes produce fruit for many generations to come. Teachers of righteousness must be able to control the speech as it reveals how much of the nature of Christ they have.

(If you are a teacher who has received and responded to the call of teaching, you are doing a great partnership with God.) There is a special flame in your heart and mind that keeps you working.

3. Perfection of Heart.

We read of King Asa in I Kings 15:14, “Asa’s heart was perfect with the Lord all of his days”. The word “perfect” is repeatedly used to describe the lives of the kings of Judah liking to almost a report card upon their reigns.

The word “perfect” does not imply that teachers are infallible, but that teachers walk in all the ways of God. A teacher of righteousness who walks in the perfection of heart has a willing mind and desire to please the Lord in all aspects of life.

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Teachers of Righteousness

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4. Perfection as Maturity.

We read in Hebrews 6:1, “therefore leaving the elementary teachings of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection”. Perfection in its fullest meaning is maturity.

Teachers of righteousness are called to grow and progress not in skills and knowledge, but in the spirit. As partners with God in shaping character, teachers are called to grow and progress not just from a spiritual babe in Christ, but to become mature in Christ, and become spiritual fathers and mothers in the Lord.

5. Perfection as the completing of our God-appointed task.

Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:6-7, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished my race, I have kept the faith”. There is a call to fulfill in the lives of teachers just as in all of mankind, according to God’s own blueprint. We are held accountable as to whether or not we finished our course here on earth. Teachers of righteousness are runners that win the race and gain the prize.

Part of the preparations of becoming teachers of righteousness is the continuous hunger for the Word of God. John Cotton Dana said, “Who dares to teach must nev-

er cease to learn”. Through the expositions of the Scriptures, teachers can mold many young lives in the ways of God.

Teachers of righteousness are not here to show abilities, but to impart on the lives of students. In 1 Timothy 4:12, “Be an example to all...in what you teach, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity”.

Teachers have mighty influence when they boldly proclaim the Truth. “If we are faithful to study, pray, and live our teachings, God will ensure that, like Jesus, we shall see our seed and be satisfied.” (Isaiah 53:10-11)

God gave us a great promise of reward and honor in Matthew 5:19. He states, “Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” It is clear that the rewards are given to the ones who faithfully practice the commandments of God and teach others to do so. These shall be termed “great in the kingdom of heaven”.

To be a teacher of righteousness is a high and holy calling from the Lord. It requires time spent in the presence of God, soaking in the words of the Teacher of teachers, to be spiritually equipped and grow in knowledge of Him, to be rooted deeply in the Word of God, and bear fruits upward for His glory.

No teacher should strive to make men think as he thinks, but to lead them to the Living Truth, to the Master himself, to the Greatest Teacher, of whom alone anyone can learn anything. God’s image and mantle must cover us so that, with humility and honesty, we can manifest His image to our students.

Teachers of righteousness will be raised up by God to nourish the newborns and bring the mature to perfection and glory. It is my personal prayer that as a teacher, you may say, God, count me in, to be a teacher of righteousness by your grace.

Ma Hazel Ramos (BA Linguistics, Post Diploma and Masters in Industrial Relations) teaches at Korea Nazarene University. She has been both a professor and a Human Resource practitioner for more than eight years in International Business Management and Tourism and Hospitality. She is involved in Biblical Teachings and Worship Discipleship, Youth Revive Camps, and Worship Leading.

“No teacher should strive to make men think as he thinks, but to lead them to the Living Truth, to the Master Himself, to the Greatest teacher, of whom alone anyone can learn anything.”



“Preparing for an observation requires us as educators to stop and think, in the busyness of daily life, and to re-examine why we’re doing what we’re doing.”

On Being Observed: An Unexpected Goodness

In an ideal world, “I’m being observed tomorrow” wouldn’t be the cause of emotions ranging from slight anxiety to full-out dread. Presumably, this spectrum of responses comes from the fact that observations in an educational institution are sometimes used as the basis for merit pay or promotion, or may figure heavily into annual performance reviews, or might even be required by administrators whose responsibilities and/or experience preclude them from being wise observers.

But what if observations were genuine tools for professional growth and development? What if they were a means of seeing with the intent of seeking the greater good of our students? Can we find benefits in observations, regardless of the scenario? I think so, if we choose so.

Preparing for an observation requires us as educators to stop and think, in the busyness of daily life, and to re-examine why we’re doing what we’re doing. Even for a veteran teacher, there is value in thinking through a lesson and how we sequence content and activities. I have found that this exercise can result in either sending me in a panic to find some better (and much-needed) activities or

can bear the fruit of a pleasant reminder to my soul (also much-needed) that the way I’ve been approaching a task is, after all, quite OK.

In preparing for this observation (that we may not have chosen!), we can pause to remember what we know about the individuals who do so much more than simply “sit” in front of us day after day. Perhaps by preparing with extra diligence, we can see them anew. Just as the Master Teacher saw beyond the visible reality and into the deeper realms of life, so we, too, can strive to use this extra requirement of *being* observed to do some observing of our own.

Even in the best of our situations, being observed doesn’t always equate to being truly seen. Did my observer see how hard I worked to prepare this lesson? Did she see that my students were unusually talkative today—almost out of control—because they thought it would make the teacher look good to answer all the questions? Does he know how very far this class has come in terms of working together and helping each other? Does she know that I strive with fierce diligence to know these students so that I can serve them? Does my observer really see me?

And so from understanding the degree to which I myself desire to be seen and known, I am reminded of how truly invaluable it is to offer this gift of *seeing* and *knowing* to my own students. Do I understand that a reticence to work in a group may be the result of hurtful classroom experiences in the past? That deep fear of failure may be the reason for copied homework (not laziness)? That feeling like a child linguistically is a soul-felt challenge to an older learner?

As a teacher, this kind of insight, with its potential to yield a harvest far beyond any grade that I pen at the top of a test paper, takes time and intentionality, but will undoubtedly result in the greater good of students and can be, perhaps, the most treasured windfall from an observation.

What’s your perspective?

This post talks mainly about one benefit of observations. What other positive results have come from your being observed in a teaching and/or work situation?

How do you seek to see the people around you?

If you work in a supervisory position, what are some ways that you help to decrease the anxiety that many feel in being observed?

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“It’s been my experience that it’s in these secular contexts where circumstances might require us not to say too much that some real magic can happen.”

Christmas in May — Teaching at an In-between Time

We often feel in-between when we are teaching. We know what’s come, what is, what’s coming and we know what will come again: Christ the King. It’s an in-between time, and a perfect time for some self-reflection and activities which might help our students (and ourselves) better mindfully journey through the days.

This year I’m reading through Malcolm Guite’s ***Waiting On The Word*** which provides a poem a day with reflection for each day of Advent and then on through Epiphany in January. While a book like this would be far too difficult for our learners, the idea behind the book is one that could be easily turned into an Advent activity we *could* do with students – and done in whatever kind of school or community we hold our classes in.

In secular schools, we could set up a Christmas-themed project-based-activity which would have students work in groups to either write or find poems about topics like love, kindness, people traveling in difficult circumstances, gift-giving, and the like. This would be an ongoing project, with a little time devoted to it in each class, and around the time that Christmas comes, student work

could be then gathered into a booklet that’s published either online or offline.

One could do much more directly of course in Christian schools and with church groups. Yet, even for those of you who can do this much more, I’d still like you to think about ways you could do some outreach in secular contexts. **It’s been my experience that it’s in these secular contexts where circumstances might require us not to say too much that some real magic can happen.** But here, let’s just go ahead and call these happenings the miracles that they are.

One of these miracles took place some years ago when I was teaching O. Henry’s ***The Gift of The Magi*** to a group of Japanese University students. This story, which is always fresh no matter how old it might be, really resonated with these students. That’s why we decided to extend things by having the class work in small groups to come up with modern versions of the story in which the young couple lived in a run-down apartment and worked at jobs that would be typical for central Japan.

Students came up with some truly fabulous and very original versions, but one in particular shone far brighter than the others. That was the one about an unmarried couple expecting a baby at Christmas time, a couple who didn’t even have an apartment because no one

would rent them one. Veering even further from the original story, the gift the couple ended up giving each other was a safe place to spend the night on Christmas Eve. There’s more to the story than this, but what I want to tell you is that **as the leader of the group who wrote that version read this story out loud, I felt the room grow quiet and the presence of the Holy Spirit come sit with us.**

That in itself would have been more than enough, but then this happened: a few days later one of the students from that class came to my office and asked if she could talk with me. As she sat down, she noticed my copy of *The Gift of The Magi* on the shelf and began telling me how much she enjoyed it. Then after a few false starts, she told me she was pregnant and might have to drop out of school because of this.

There’s a long story between that previous paragraph and what I have to say next, but **the time came when I was able to witness to this young woman about Christ’s love for her.** This was years after that day in my office, sometime near the day she was about to graduate from university, and not long before she married the father of her baby.

Writing this today many years later, I’m able not only to see how God was at work in this story even long before I was aware of what was happening, but also how very (Continued on page 9)

“No matter what age-group you teach or what context you teach in, you’ll have students who do not need much explanation to know what it’s like to be in an in-between time.”

On Being Observed: An Unexpected Goodness

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Try it Out

Invite someone to come into your classroom and observe you. Before the observation, negotiate what s/he will be seeing. Afterward, discuss the observation. What do you see about your students from the observer's perspective?

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This article was originally published on the Master Teacher blog, April 20, 2017.

(masterteaching.leapasia.org/2017/04/20/on-being-observed-an-unexpected-goodness/)

The Author

Julie Prentice feels most at home with world travelers or international students, and no wonder since she lived in China for 17 years. She taught university students in the capital and beginning level students in one of Western China's most out-of-the-way places. Now back in the town where she received her MA TESOL, she tutors and teaches those the Master Teacher sends her way. Outside the classroom, she enjoys reading, relaxing in nature, and resting in His presence.

Christmas in July — Teaching At an In-between Time

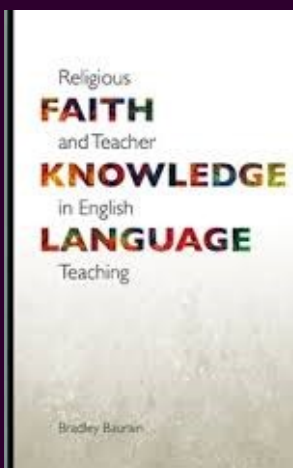
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clearly it was a whole series of in-between times for this young woman.

No matter what age-group you teach or what context you teach in, you'll have students who do not need much explanation to know what it's like to be in an in-between time. Any activities that you could do with your students that works in this gap between what is (or what was) and what's coming would be an easy way in to unleashing the power that drives the mysteries of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.

The Author

Chuck Sandy is a writer, teacher trainer, motivational speaker, educational activist and pilgrim. Although his training and expertise is in English language teaching (ELT) and teacher training, he's recently become known for his work on spirituality and compassion. Some of this grew out of experiences he had when walking the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route across northern Spain in 2014.



“Most teachers spoke of their faith as motivation to become excellent teachers.”



Religious Faith & Teacher Knowledge in English Language Teaching:

Book Review

The specific question that this book addresses is: How do overseas Christian ESOL teachers describe putting their religious beliefs into practice in their profession? The introduction affirms that the purpose of asking the question above is to explore the influences of teachers' religious beliefs on their overall teaching lives that includes teaching philosophies, pedagogical commitments, curricular choices, and cultivation of student relationships, among other areas. The focus is specifically on mainly evangelical Christian teachers of ESOL working in secular and pluralistic higher education contexts, with the participants further identified as teaching overseas on Southeast Asia.

This book approaches this question from a teacher knowledge perspective. Teacher knowledge is defined within language education as the “complex, practically oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs” on which teachers draw (Borg, 2003, p 81). “Teacher knowledge research seeks to explore the beliefs teachers hold about what works pedagogically—that is, how they know what they know about what constitutes successful teaching, learning, and overall professionalism—as well as how they come by such beliefs, how these beliefs develop over time, and how the beliefs might be changed” (p 2).

The first chapter reviews

relevant academic background and research literature related to religious beliefs as a dimension of teacher knowledge. This includes 1) teacher morality and values, 2) teacher spirituality, 3) teacher religious beliefs, 4) sociocultural intersections of education, language, and religion, and 5) Christian and church-based education.

“Researching Intersections: Personal Faith and Professional Identity”, the second chapter, describes methodology and research design for this study. The purpose is to explore the influences of teachers' personal religious beliefs on their professionalism. How do overseas Christian ESOL teachers describe putting their religious beliefs into practice in their profession?

“Emergent themes: Professionalism, Relationality, And Witness”, the third chapter, begins to present the study's findings. Most teachers spoke of their faith as a motivation for seeking to become excellent teachers. Interestingly, a focus on relationships with students undergirded and permeated almost everything the teachers discussed relative to faith and teaching. Witness or “sharing” indicated a multi-dimensional process of students becoming aware of the teacher's religious faith and reaching an understanding of its significance and impact on the teacher.

“Taking a Close Look: Four Case Studies”, the fourth chapter, builds portraits or descriptions of individual teachers chosen mainly for

their value as instrumental cases. The case studies here include Tammy, Michael, Robin, and Neil.

“Making Comparisons: The Issue of Witness”, the fifth chapter, presents three issues for cross-case comparisons among all participants. The first issue is distinctiveness and witness which is what participants thought set them apart as Christian ESOL teachers from non-Christian ESOL teachers investing in lower proficiency and disadvantaged learners. The second issue is applied theology and witness, how participants used Christian theological concepts to interpret or reinterpret their TESOL professionalism on terms of their spiritual lives and understandings. The third issue is professional and witness, how participants framed their desire to share their Christian faith with their students in ways they viewed as professionally acceptable or consonant with their personal and professional integrity.

“Going Beyond: Faith in the Classroom”, the final chapter, discusses issues raised by this study's findings. The first issue raised is the predominantly inward-focused nature of the findings. The second issue is the controversy over Christian witness in TESOL. On the whole, the desire to convert was only implicit in the data, and tallying converts was not at all a standard by which they evaluated the success or failure of their Christian witness.

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Profile Piece: George Van Bruggen

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My wife and I also lead a life-group in our apartment through Handong International Church (H.I.C.) – this life-group, called “Christianity Explored”, is designed to reach out to non-believers, and is a video/booklet study series about the incarnation and mission of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to those who take up His cross and follow Him. We have also led similar H.I.C. life-groups in the past.

For about 3 years, my wife and I were also part of a Pohang inner-city ministry that focuses on reaching out to international people in the city of Pohang – ESL teachers, migrant workers, ship ministry, etc. We were part of the leadership team, led small (cell) groups and I also preached one per month on average.

How do you connect your faith to your teaching?

First off, I know I regularly need to read, reflect and meditate on God’s Word as well as be in regular communication with my Lord and Savior through prayer. I’m not nearly as thorough and consistent in these areas as I need to be but, thank God, He is patiently and lovingly showing me the errors of my ways so that I’m more consistent. My prayers include thinking of and praying for my students – both generally and also specifically regarding particular needs and requests. Second, I’ve come to rely on reading and studying the gospels to learn about the principles and techniques of the greatest (and only perfect) teacher, Jesus Christ. As a result, I’ve learned a lot about my

own deficiencies and where I need to improve. As stated below, I believe it’s my obligation to be the best educator I can possibly be, which is a daunting but attainable challenge.

Do you think there is a Christian way to teach English?

As a Christian, my focus is on relying on my faith in Jesus Christ to develop and maintain a world-view that is in accordance with Biblical principles. At Handong Global University, professors are encouraged to pray and lead short devotionals in the classroom, which I’m happy to be part of. Even if I weren’t part of a Christian-based university, I would still prepare my lesson plans and conduct classes in accordance with Christian principles – love for others, respect for differing student opinions, desire to openly engage about our differences, diligence in lesson preparations designed for effective teaching, and keeping abreast of new and exciting pedagogical developments. I believe it’s important that I be a life-long learner in order to enthusiastically and effectively teach what I have both learned and am learning. My teaching philosophy is based on what someone else wisely stated: “*I’d rather have my students drink from a running stream than a stagnant pool*”. I need to continuously give my best so as to invest effectively in the lives of others, just as Christ Jesus modeled throughout His earthly ministry and explicitly stated in Matthew 10:24-25. To my way of thinking, this is the Christian way to teach English.

George and Judy Van Bruggen and Judy sold or gave away most of their property and possessions between 2001~2004 after being called by God to minister in Asia in 2005. They served with English Language Institute China (E.L.I.C.) for 1.5 years before going to live and minister in South Korea. While teaching at Kyungpook National University in Daegu (2007-09), George obtained a Master of Education (TESOL) Degree. Since 2009, he has taught various English-mediated subjects at the Department of Language Education of Handong Global University in Pohang.

“As a Christian, my focus is on relying on my faith in Jesus Christ to develop and maintain a world-view that is in accordance with Biblical principles.”



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Christian Teachers SIG (CT-SIG)

Purpose Statement:

The purpose of this group is to inspire Christian teachers to seek excellence in their teaching, integrity in their lifestyle, and serve others by:

- providing role models who integrate their faith with their profession.
- sharing resources for teaching and personal growth
- encouraging one another through fellowship and worship

Religious Faith and Teacher Knowledge in English Language Teaching

The second implication of this study's findings is that the larger context for dialogue on this issue in TESOL must include broader academic disagreements about the nature and role of religion in education. The third and final issue is how beliefs are put into practice at all.

How are beliefs put into practice? This question is philosophical and spiritual and assumes neither that the lines between personal and professional are clear, nor that religious beliefs are merely a private concern, nor that beliefs and practices interact in only one way or in only one direction. "The beliefs-practices relationship or nexus is a foundational aspect of human nature and community, in and out of the classroom, and spiritual and religious beliefs and practices are a major dimension of this

relationship" (11).

The Author

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