

Conference paper from Teacher Christian Fellowship of NSW : USING TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM: HOW CHRISTIAN IS THAT?

The dinner speech at the TCFNSW RUCAS Conference was presented by John Capper Theological Educator and Consultant. He provided a highly entertaining and contemporary approach to the subject with excellent use of PowerPoint. This summary of the main points by John Gore captures some but not all of the talk.

Technology of itself does not result in learning. Learning might come from application of technology.

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Nathan ponders the reality of
John Capper's beard

Some have argued that placing a computer in the hands of every student would realise educational outcomes. The fallacy of this argument is shown in the expectation that world class musicians will automatically result from placing a piano in every class room.

The world uses information and communication technologies to reach and to communicate with as wide an audience as possible. Teachers need to understand that the use of technology will shape the way we think and the world we live in.

Two Christian Principles

1. Incarnation

The entry of Jesus Christ into the world of humans, the *Word* made flesh, is a cornerstone of Christian understanding God. This event represents a turning point in history, beyond human comprehension that the God of the universe would choose to identify with humans to the extent of being one of them.

That God should choose to be there, present and in relationship with his creation is the mystery John speaks about at the beginning of his gospel.

God is there not technologically but in relationship. As teachers we are also there in the learning process, present to interact and relate to the learner in a way that technology never can.

Technology by itself will not change our lives. It needs to be applied and classrooms are no exception.

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Thinking about the words

2. Relationality

God is into relationships, so much so that his very nature is relational-Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

He relates to his creation and in particular to humans *in his own image*. The Bible tells of the history of this relationship in all its glory and folly.

The world into which Jesus entered was less technologically advanced than our world of today. But like our world, technology under the Romans was changing with increased momentum. Through successive ages God is known within changing times and culture. He makes himself known and teachers need to understand the context and world of their students so that they also can embody the message (the learning) in a particular way that the computer cannot. Computers can be only part of a relationship.

Jesus, the perfection reflection of God, is not the complete picture of the Trinity. He wants us to know God and not just know about him, to take the relationship further to learn more about God.

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Focussing on the food

In the same way we want to use computers and technology to help students go beyond our understanding of the curriculum, to enhance learning within teacher-student relationships.