



Victory Christian School Making a Difference In the Lives of Students - Part 2 Words have Power

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Superintendent

In his article "How Teachers Wound Kids" Dr. Jeff Myers provides the following illustrations:

"A music teacher once mocked me for not being able to match a note. I was in 3rd or 4th grade. Now, I'm nearly 50. I still won't sing where anyone can hear me."

"Our teacher/coach embarrassed me in public at a sports awards ceremony as she talked about how slow I was as we ran laps...I received the Most Improved award for 'hanging in there, even though she always finished last.' Wow...even today at age 39 that still hurts."

"My fifth grade teacher was one of the many reasons I chose to home school my children; I swore I would never allow them to deal with the injustice and favoritism that went on in her class. Forty-one years later I can still remember the humiliation and anger she directed my way."

"In middle school I had a teacher who wrote every student's test scores on a chalk board and publicly praised the high performers and belittled the low performers. As one of the low performers I was particularly hurt. I had not thought of this for several years and it still causes me to feel terrible and angry."

He continues, "These teachers may have been forgiven, but they're certainly not forgotten. The lessons they taught through their negative performance have shaped both the resolve – and the insecurities – of their students for many, many years."

Your Words Have Power to Influence and Shape Lives

If you have been at Victory Christian School for any length of time you will know the importance of guarding your words. Proverbs 18:21 warns, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and

those who love it will eat its fruit. "Jesus said, "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." (See Insights 1-5)

Actions that Harm Students

Based on his surveys, Dr. Myers categorized the following "five harmful things bad teachers do."

1. Humiliation: Made fun of students, ridiculed students when they gave wrong answers, and publicly humiliated students. These memories of awful embarrassment were the largest grouping of stories, by far.
2. Devastation : Expected students to fail, talked down to students in belittling and disrespectful tones, were sarcastic, criticized, and compared some to others who were more talented (esp. older siblings). In most cases folks recalled a specific instance, rather than a general memory, that wilted their confidence.
3. Indifference: Failed to express care for students, build relationships with them, or invest in them personally. Students felt the teacher did not like them.
4. Poor Punishment: Exercised harsh punishment that resulted in extreme public embarrassment, punishing students for factors beyond their control (learning disability, the actions of others) or failing to control the class through effective discipline.
5. Anger: Displayed significant anger problems that led them to explode unpredictably and frequently yell at their students. A common response from the students was to describe their fear of the teacher.

He calls on teachers to "make every effort to substitute good fruit in their place."

- Replace humiliation with humility
- Replace devastation with hope
- Replace poor punishment with careful discipline
- Replace indifference with connectedness
- Replace anger with patience