



A classical approach to the restoration of discipline in South African schools

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Abstract

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As a result of the era of civil disobedience associated with the struggle for freedom and democracy discipline in many schools has deteriorated. The persistent lack of discipline in all South African schools can only be countered by means of a wise application of discipline. Application of "discipline" according to the standard dictionary meanings of the word will, however, not be appropriate since it implies a clamp-down on disruptive behaviour, including punishment, chastisement and retribution. Discipline associated with the paideia ideal of well-educatedness and of the educator as the servant of his learners (paidagogos), though within the context of a reformatory perspective of discipline on the other hand, will be more suitable.

Opsomming

'n Klassieke benadering tot die herstel van dissipline in Suid-Afrikaanse skole

Die voortslepende gebrek aan dissipline in Suid-Afrikaanse skole as gevolg van die tydperk van burgerlike ongehoorsaamheid gepaardgaande met die stryd om demokrasie kan slegs die hoof gebied word deur middel van verstandige dissipline-toepassing. Die toepassing van "dissipline" volgens die gewone woordeboekbetekenis van die woord is nie gepas nie, aangesien dit neerkom op die bestryding van verkeerde gedrag by leerders. Dit sou onder meer straf en vergelding insluit. Dissipline in die nastrewing van die klassieke paideia-ideaal van volronde opgevoedheid en gebaseer op 'n siening van die opvoeder as die dienskneg van sy leerlinge (paidagogos) en wel in die konteks van 'n reformatoriese perspektief op dissipline, is meer gepas.

1. Introduction

South Africa today, nearly a decade since the birth of the “new” South Africa in 1994, is still plagued by the after-effects of the civil disobedience associated with the political struggle during the period 1976-1993. In addition to this, we find ourselves in an era where there is a breakdown in family structures and basic social values. The fact of the matter is that learner discipline has to start at home (Leshilo, 2002:3). Another factor is the abolishment of corporal punishment in terms of section 10 of the *SA Schools Act* of 1996 (South Africa, 1996). Zulu (1999, 2001), Oosthuizen (2001), Steyn, Wolhuter, Oosthuizen and Van der Walt (2003) offer succinct descriptions of the breakdown in discipline still occurring in schools. There is also concern about the breakdown of discipline in schools in Asia (Spice, 1997:22), the United States of America (Fields, 2000:73), Great Britain (Merrett & Taylor, 1994:287), Australia (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, 1994), and elsewhere. Optimal schooling can obviously not be effected in such conditions. This situation raises the question how discipline can be restored in schools.

2. Problem statement and methodology

One solution to this problem would be to clamp down on unruliness and disruptive behaviour. Such an approach can be defined in terms of the standard dictionary meanings of “discipline”. Roget’s Thesaurus (Kirkpatrick, 1988), for instance, offers related meanings such as “order, teaching, severity, obedience, compel, restrain, restraint, punish”. According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* (1995) and the *Collins Concise Dictionary* (1999), “discipline” can indeed have one or more of the following meanings: training or control, often using a system of punishment or chastisement, aimed at producing obedience to rules or the improvement of physical powers and self-control; the controlled, ordered behaviour resulting from such training; the state of improved behaviour resulting from such training (*Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, 1995:329); a method by which training may be given; systematic training in obedience; set rules of conduct; a system of rules for behaviour (*Collins Concise Dictionary*, 1999); a branch of knowledge; a subject of instruction; a branch of learning or instruction; to train oneself in obedience; to punish.

Every educator is conscious of the fact that the application of “discipline” in terms of these meanings does become necessary from time to time. However, from an educational point of view, the

application of “discipline” in the sense of punishment or chastisement should preferably only occur as a last resort. Educators ought to prefer to base their approach on classical views of discipline, viz. the views associated with the classical Greek, Roman and Jewish-Christian traditions. From a Biblical (reformational) life- and world-view perspective it is, however, inadequate to base the restoration of discipline in schools only on the insights flowing from these traditions. Classical insights about education and discipline might be valuable in themselves, but they are inadequate when viewed in the light of a reformational perspective (see the first article in this volume). The gist of the argument outlined in 4.4 of that article with respect to discipline is as follows:

Discipline from a Biblical/reformational perspective should be restorative and corrective, rather than punitive (Van Dyk, 2000:239-240). A true disciple is one who not only hears the Word of God but also does it. Doing the Word (the will) of God is a form of servanthood. Servanthood has two sides, according to Galatians 5:13-14: caregiving and peacemaking or healing. People were created to be good stewards of God in creation, but because of sin they now face the additional task of binding wounds and relieving suffering. To be a disciple is to participate in this renewing and redeeming work. To be a complete and true disciple is equivalent to doing what human beings were created to do in the world, to God’s glory. The ultimate goal of a true disciple is to live, in both word and deed, according to the intentions (i.e. the will) of God. In educational context, education means to recognise the original, authentic, serving discipleship according to the intent of God (Van Dyk, 1997:33-42).

“Discipling” in educational context refers to the act of guiding and equipping the child not only to recognise the regularities (i.e. the lawful order) in and of creation, but also to conform in his or her own life to God’s will (his laws and injunctions). “Discipling” can be regarded as the over-arching goal and purpose of schooling (and education in general): it entails guiding learners not only to hear God’s will for creation but also to do His will. It also means guiding them on the right road, to correct deviant behaviour in a loving and caring way, and to warn and support where necessary (Van Dyk, 2000:239-240).

A strategy for restoring discipline in South African schools should therefore, on the one hand, be based on guidelines flowing from the classical tradition rather than on the principle of “merely clamping down” on bad discipline, disorder and disruptive behaviour. This approach should, on the other hand, form an integral part of an

embracing reformatory strategy of disciplining or “disciplining”, i.e. loving, caring, guiding and equipping and preparing learners to follow the right road.

Research over the centuries has underscored the educational value of several elements of the classical approach, which is why cognisance should be taken – even today – of the main tenets of this approach. In an effort to explain how the classical method of disciplining learners in fact works, the following steps will be taken in the rest of this article. Firstly, a brief description will be given of how classical Athenians used to view the “disciplining” of learners. This will be followed by similar expositions with reference to the classical Roman and Jewish-Christian traditions. The latter will contain a discussion of Biblical perspectives and classic concepts, and the outlines of a conceptual framework. In conclusion, a number of possible guidelines for the restoration of discipline in South African schools will be formulated. The aim, then, of this article is to discover guidelines for dealing appropriately with the problem of inadequate discipline in South African schools.

3. The classical Greek approach to discipline

Early Athenian education (from 800 BC) was dominated by Solon’s maxim of “Nothing to excess”. Instituting reform in the government of Athens, Solon changed it into a democracy (Encarta, 2000). Solon drew up a set of laws that addressed most of the pressing fiscal, social and political issues of the day and guided life in Athens for several centuries. He encouraged learning, and formulated the ideals upon which it was to be based. Early Athenian attitudes to education and discipline largely sprang from his influence (Wilds & Lottich, 1970:96). Throughout Athenian history a conflict existed between the aristocracy and the lower classes. Thus anarchy and tyranny were constant dangers (Mayer, 1973:91).

In Athens, the ideal of individual excellence for public usefulness was stressed, and individual excellence meant the fully rounded development of mind and body (the *paideia* ideal). Athens emphasised the concept “man of wisdom” far more than the concept “man of action”. Athenians sought beauty and grace of body but also knowledge and things of the spirit. They believed that the best requisite for citizenship was many-sided development (Mphahlele, 1992:15). The best preparation for the citizenship of the individual was development through participation in the religious, social, political and military activities of the state, with a rigid public opinion upholding traditional ideals of morality. The focus was on personal

and community life and development. The whole purpose of early Athenian education was the development of virtue, to which knowledge was to provide an introduction. The Athenians believed that they were free, but not free in everything. Herodotus wrote: "There is over them a Master called Law, whom they fear more than thy slaves fear thee". A dread of *hubris* (pride and insolence, especially towards the gods, leading to downfall) also restrained them (Wilds & Lottich, 1970:97).

Education was a matter of family pride, a tradition to be followed. The women at home were, however, so poorly educated that the children were often badly brought up and acquired mischievous habits. Boys would learn little at home and were usually instructed in private schools. The little training acquired by girls was sometimes given by the mother, but usually by slave nursemaids. The boy's school teacher held a rather lowly social position. When very young, the young boy was placed in the care of a *paidagogos* and remained in his care for his basic education. Often the pedagogue was chosen for this duty because he was not fit for anything else – an influence hardly sound, say Wilds and Lottich (1970:99). In his later training the young boy was entrusted to the supervision of state officials who acted as drill-masters and moral guardians. The Athenian youth learned by living (Mphahlele, 1992:17-19).

The Athenian youth also learned much by imitation and through the example of the living model. Most aspects of their education were derived from participation in the activities of life. Unfortunately, discipline was severe (Mphahlele, 1992:20). Corporal punishment, often very cruel, was used extensively, even by the *paidagogos*. Although classes were small, there was not much of a bond between teacher and pupil (Wilds & Lottich, 1970:101; Kittel, 1973: 599). This approach did not change significantly after the birth of the Athenian empire around 479 BC, although discipline became more humane and reasonable (Coetzee, 1963:48).

The life of an Athenian school boy is described by Plato in *The Protagoras*:

Education and admonition commence in the first years of childhood, and last to the very end of life. Mother and nurse and father and tutor are quarreling about the improvement of the child as soon as ever he is able to understand them; he cannot say or do anything without their setting forth to him that this is just and that is unjust; this is honourable and that is dishonourable; this is holy, that is unholy; do this and abstain from that. And if he obeys, well and good; if not, he is straightened by threats and blows, like

a piece of warped wood (quoted in Mayer, 1973:92; Encarta, 2000).

4. The classical Roman approach to discipline

Roman history can be divided into four periods, each of which possesses important characteristics (Curtis & Boulton, 1977:47; Encarta, 2000) (the Republic, from the third century BC onwards, the later Republic, the early Empire and the later Empire). The most influential thinker about education produced by Rome was Quintilian (born about 35 AD) (Encarta, 2000). In his time, Roman boys received instruction in physical training and in speech, but the Romans differed widely from the Greeks in their outlook upon this training. They considered the main value of the instruction as consisting of its influence upon the bearing and speech of the youth. The training of the youth was not the result of a careful study of the aims of education (such as the *paideia* ideal); it developed in response to practical needs and to the pressure of public opinion. Rome judged all things by their usefulness; Romans were essentially a utilitarian people. They judged everything by its serviceability and effectiveness. Even religion remained a practical means of getting on in the world, a means of regulating everyday life, closely connected with the family and with political and business affairs. It consecrated love of country, hallowed the family relation, preserved the sanctity of oath, developed a sense of duty, and gave authority and sanction to most of the goals of education. The only educational aim of the early Romans was to train men to be active and efficient in daily life, to be conquerors in war, wise in politics, and to have reverence for the gods (Wilds & Lottich, 1970:11, 121).

Quintilian believed that training could not begin too soon. According to his view training starts from the cradle and this implies that careful thought must be expended upon the choice of the infant's nurses. They should be people who speak correctly, and should have an unblemished character. When the child begins to talk, the speech of his nurses will serve as a model for imitation (Curtis & Boulton, 1977:56-57). The parents also carry a grave responsibility. It is an advantage if both father and mother themselves have been well educated. If not, parents, aware of their own deficiencies, should exercise all the greater care in the early upbringing of their children. The same principles should apply to the slaves with whom the child will have contact. This is especially true of the *paedagogi*; if they themselves are not well educated, the next best thing is that they should be aware of their shortcomings (Mphahlele, 1992:37-39).

Discipline was exceedingly rigorous during that time, say Wilds and Lottich (1970:125). Corporal punishment and even death could be inflicted by the father at will. This was possible under the power known as *patria potestas*, granted by ancient law. The father held absolute power and authority. His word was like an edict of the state. The mother was held in high esteem. Both parents wanted to be proud of their offspring. The ideal of Roman education was to cultivate manliness and self-control in boys. During the early history of Rome all education centred in the parental home, but during the later stages the Greek education system was adopted and transformed into “a virtually perfect system” (Coetzee, 1963:68).

Quintilian, on the other hand, was quite firm about the place of corporal punishment in school. He wrote:

As for corporal punishment, though it is recognised practice ... I am completely opposed to it, first because it is disgusting, fit only for slaves and undoubtedly an insult ... in the next place, because a pupil whose mind so ill befits a free man's son as not to be corrected by reproof, will remain obdurate even in the face of blows – like the vilest of slaves. And finally because there will be no need of such chastisement if there is always somebody present to diligently supervise the pupil's studies ... If you coerce the child while he is young by means of blows, what will you do when he is a young man who cannot be compelled through fear and has many more important things to learn (*Institutio* Book 1, c. 2. Quoted in Curtis & Boulwood, 1977:60).

A teacher should remember that each pupil has his own individual characteristics and should be dealt with along lines best suited to him. Quintilian was quite optimistic about the attitude of the average pupil. According to Quintilian a pupil is not at all averse to learning; in fact he delights in acquiring new knowledge and really wants to make progress. If this quality appears to be lacking in him, more often than not the fault is the teacher's and not the child's (Mphahlele, 1992:38).

Roman professional education was extensive: In legal education the natural rights of all human beings and equality before the law became important legal concepts (Mayer, 1973:113).

5. The classical Jewish-Christian approach to discipline

As in all Eastern cultures, in early Hebrew education individuals were subject to an external authority, but this was no longer the authority of ancestor, caste or state, but of their God, Yahweh. It is this concept, more than anything else, that gave ancient Jews their

unique place in the educational history of antiquity. As would be expected, theocracy controlled and dominated, as well as motivated, both Hebrew educational theory and practice. Education was focused on religion, especially living according to the demands of the covenant (Lev. 19:2) (also cf. Encarta, 2000).

The chief end of education from the Mosaic period onwards was to develop faithful and obedient servants to the personal and living God, thereby ensuring harmony and co-operation in civic life and a glorious future for God's chosen people. The educational objective was to prepare people for their destiny and to prepare each succeeding generation to fulfil its task faithfully within the framework of the great work preceding it (cf. Deut. 4:33-40). Thus the dominating feature of the entire educational system was that a Jew was taught to consider holiness before the Lord as aim of his daily life (Eccl. 12:1; 13-14) (Wilds & Lottich, 1970:70).

Education was democratic in that all people were trained on an equal basis. The Hebrews held that education should be free to everyone, regardless of class. Since all people were regarded as equal before God, the Law was applied to all, and the ceremonies and sacraments were not the secrets of a class. Thus education was universal. It was considered essential for everyone to be educated if the nation were to survive. The ignorant man suffered civil disfranchisement and social ostracism, for the ignorant man could not be religious, and the irreligious were a detriment to the nation. It is interesting to note that the Jews were the first to insist on a holistic education of all people and were willing to establish schools for this purpose (Mphahlele, 1992:41).

Domestic training was raised to a new level. The Jews developed a much better home life than that of other peoples. A female was believed to have been created, not to be a slave of her husband, but as a help. The mother was held in high esteem in the Jewish home and assisted the father in inculcating in the children their first lessons in the meaning and practice of religious ceremonies and rites. Girls were trained by their mothers in all the household duties, some of which were exceedingly complex (Wilds & Lottich, 1970:75-76). The parents were seen as the child's benefactors. *Paideia* was not a divine gift but had to be achieved, especially by the parents (Kittel, 1973:613).

Both the school and the teacher (the scribe or rabbi) were revered. In the *Talmud* one reads:

He who studies and teaches others possesses treasures and riches.

He who has learned and does not impart his knowledge to others, disregards the word of God.

It is not permitted to live in a place where there is neither master nor school.

Your teacher and your father have need of your assistance; help your teacher before helping your father, for the last has given you only life of this world, while the former has secured for you the life of the world to come. (Quoted by Wilds & Lottich, 1970:78-79.)

The discipline at home and in school was somewhat rigorous, with corporal punishment recognised as a valid method of control. Severity, however, was tempered with kindness, as is shown by the maxim: "Punish with one hand, and caress with two" (Wilds & Lottich, 1970:78-81). Children were expected to accept everything on authority; there was no place for doubt. Only those learners who clearly possessed the intellectual capacity to learn had to be disciplined (Coetzee, 1963:32).

The high esteem in which children were held in Jewish communities can be ascribed to the expected birth of the Messiah. Children were regarded as gifts from God, and each woman longed for the birth of a child. The Messiah was expected to be born in Israel, and each woman's deepest wish was to become the mother of the Messiah (Coetzee, 1963:29; Mphahlele, 1992:41).

Christians, on the other hand, regard the birth of Jesus Christ as the fulfilment of this prophecy. Based on perspectives gleaned from both the Old and the New Testaments (the Bible) a complete Christian philosophy of education has been developed (cf. for instance Malan, 1986 and Van Dyk, 2000 for discussions of such Biblical perspectives). Discipline and punishment form part of the system known as "Christian education", and have been expounded in a plethora of books on the subject.

Jesus himself recognized the principle of activity in his teaching. He urged his disciples to be "doers of the Word and not hearers only". In other words, He enjoined them to become true disciples. He encouraged questions and gently rebuked his followers for not asking the questions which they had. His method was objective, forthright and personal. He directed attention to the external world and objective activities. His own life was the best advertisement of His teachings: His obedience to authority, His observance of the spirit of the law, His humility, His mercy, His charity were continual

examples set before the disciples for their guidance (Wilds & Lottich, 1970: 146). To Him, the teacher was the representative of God, for he brought forth what is best in man. Jesus converted others by using informal conversation. Rather than formalising the educational process as we know it today, He made it part of life, all of man's concerns and ideals. Like all the great teachers of mankind, Jesus was personalistic in his approach: He taught by example. He believed in democracy for He had faith that all could learn and that wisdom was universal. He spoke with firmness and not merely as a debater. He was inspired by an inner vision which He communicated to His audience. Jesus taught that we cannot communicate what we cannot feel. Words are empty if they are not exemplified by action.

Jesus reminds us of the importance of sympathy in education. He never talked down to his audience; He always respected their ability; He saw life from their perspective (Mphahlele, 1992:41-43). Sympathy is the prelude to wisdom, and understanding is the basis of progress (Mayer, 1973:128). According to Coetzee (1963:90), Jesus's teachings showed the following features:

- It always progressed gradually, commencing with easy-to-understand concepts and progressing to more difficult aspects.
- It was personal: it was always addressed to a particular person (usually a sinner).
- It was brief: He always concentrated on core aspects.
- It was always educational: it entailed more than mere teaching and learning.
- It was always genuine as well as true: there was never a trace of falseness in His teachings.
- It was practical: Jesus always enjoined listeners to also do something, to act according to His words.
- It was visual: He made use of parables and images.

At this point it has become possible to draw together two lines flowing from the preceding discussion, viz. the Greek and the Christian perspectives (especially perspectives from the New Testament, originally written in Greek). This is done in the form of an analysis of a number of Greek concepts, all in different ways pertaining to discipline:

- The Greek word *sophronismos*, derived from *sophron*, literally means "an admonishing or calling to soundness of mind, self-

control, self-discipline". The word *sophron* is derived from two root words, viz. *saos* (contracted to *sos*, meaning "safe") and *phren* (meaning "mind") (Vine, Unger & White, 1985:172). *Sophron*, meaning self-discipline or inner soundness of mind, is demonstrated in the classic myth of Apollo refusing to fight against his uncle Poseidon. His inner soundness of mind prevented him from doing so. Proper conduct, says Kittel (1971: 1098), is marked by restraint and modesty. Thus, *sophronismos* refers to an attitude reflected in classical literature of living a self-disciplined, sober, self-controlled and sound life. *Sophronismos* can also imply the act of bringing someone else to understanding or to make such a person wise. It can also refer to the act of admonishing someone to do better (Kittel, 1971:1104; Louw & Nida, 1989:414).

- The word *sophronitzo*, on the other hand, has the meaning of bringing someone to reason, helping him become sound of mind, self-controlled. Philo spoke of *paideia* in association with *sophronitzo* (Kittel, 1971:1104).
- The Greek word *kathartizein* is derived from *artios*, meaning "suitable, adapted, right, faultless, normal and capable of meeting demands". *Artios*, from which *kathartizein* is derived, as used in the New Testament, denotes what is right and proper, and especially that which is becoming to a Christian (cf. 2 Tim. 3:17). In 1 Thessalonians 3:10 the word *kathartitzo* is used, meaning to establish or to confirm Christian character within the unity of the community. *Kathartitzo* refers to discipline in the sense of the process of bringing someone (a child, for instance) in line with what is right and normal in a specific community (Kittel, 1972:475-476; Louw & Nida, 1989:414). The word *kathartizein* was used for the notion of "equipping or fully furnishing someone or something for some given purpose". This meaning was sometimes used for the idea of mending something, or of equipping somebody or of setting together dislocated or broken limbs (Barclay, 1959:67).
- The word that is used for discipline, more than any other word in classical Greek literature, in the Bible as well as in the Rabbinic literature is *paideia* (see 3 above). *Paideia* signifies the well-rounded upbringing of a child growing to maturity – a child who needs to be directed, guided, taught, instructed, and also disciplined (in the sense of chastisement). *Paideia* thus refers to both the education and the cultivation of a child, as well as to the goal which is to be attained (Kittel, 1973:596-625; Louw & Nida, 1989:414, 467).

- The term *paidagogos*, as used in Galatians 3:24, refers to the slave who acted as pedagogue or teacher for a Greek boy (see 3 above). The law of the Lord is likened to a *paidagogos*, in other words a slave that leads or guides. God's commandments are guidelines in the life of the believer to direct him or her, to give meaning to his or her life, to keep him or her from sinning (Louw & Nida, 1989:466).
- The English words "disciple" and "discipline" were derived from the Latin *discipulus* (pupil), which in turn was derived from *discere* (to learn). "Disciple" refers to a follower of the doctrines of a teacher or a school of thought, also to one of the followers of Jesus Christ during His earthly life (Collins Concise Dictionary, 1999, cf. Van Dyk, 2000:65-66 for a more exhaustive discussion). Discipleship requires first of all a hearing of the will of God. "Hearing the will of God" involves nothing less than experiencing God's presence in one's life. In educational context, it means actually experientially encountering Him. In response to such hearing, the teacher (educator) must teach (guide) the learners to do His will. Doing His will refers to loving servanthood, and servanthood consists of two dimensions: The first is stewardship or care-taking as well as care-giving. Learners have to be guided to take care of themselves, of one another, and of the entire creation. Since sin has come into the world, an additional dimension of servanthood has become necessary: healing, reconciliation, and peace-making. Distortion and brokenness are everywhere, and discipleship now requires that educators and learners set about to heal such brokenness wherever they encounter it (Van Dyk, 2000:65-66). The overall aim of education from a Biblical perspective is to help and guide learners to be and become responsible disciples of Jesus Christ, i.e. followers who grasp the vision of the teacher and live accordingly. This view involves understanding and committing oneself to Christ and the vision of God's Kingdom, responding to the mandate of the Kingdom, and to, by God's grace, beginning to carry it out in one's life. This includes, among the many things Jesus taught, being pure in heart, living as a peacemaker, loving one's enemies, eschewing love of material possessions and worldly standards for them, being an ambassador of reconciliation, opposing evil societal structures, using one's authority to serve others in humility, and maximising one's God-given abilities in service to Him (Van Brummelen, 1988:7; Van Brummelen, 1994: 31).

6. Discussion: guidelines for the restoration of discipline in South African schools

- The *paideia* ideal of the Athenians is worthy of emulation, even today (though preferably in the context of a Biblical view of discipline). Educators should always strive for the well-rounded development of the learners entrusted to them. Learners should learn by living and by participating in real life, and should be guided to develop into well-educated individuals. Education is therefore in essence a prospective process: it has to equip the learner (though preferably in the context of a Biblical view of discipline) for a future career and to become a useful citizen of the country. It also has to prepare the learner for integration into an adult working society. By the same token, discipline (in the sense of “followership” – not chastisement) should be prospective: it should enable a learner to become an effective and well-behaved future functionary in society (Oosthuizen, 2003:80). This is, in fact, the main difference between the educational and the juridical exercises of discipline. Whereas the educational exercise of discipline is prospective, the juridical is retrospective: it punishes past transgressions, and is therefore a form of retribution (Van Zyl & Van der Vyver, 1982:27). The *paideia* ideal also implies equipping a child with the necessary tools for meeting the requirements of his or her calling in life, including fitting into the community (Kittel, 1973:613; Louw & Nida, 1989: 414, 467). It also entails mending, i.e. the correction of a learner, if and when necessary. All these actions have to be guided by a norm or value system (Hosten, Edwards, Bosman & Church, 1998:3). Christians should take care that this norm and value system be based on the Bible, i.e. the Inscripturated Word of God.
- The lofty ideas contained in the *paideia* ideal were unfortunately contradicted by the harsh discipline applied by Athenian educators. Such forms of discipline can be avoided if a bond of love and trust existed between educator and learner, which unfortunately was not a feature of Athenian or Roman education.
- The loss of insight into the true aims of education in Roman education caused educators to focus more on practical considerations than on matters of principle. The teacher should always have a clear view of the aims of education (such as contained in the *paideia* ideal and in the Biblical view of discipline). This will help him/her remain focused, guide learners with purpose, keep them busy constructively, and keep them from wasting time and energy on mischief.

- Quintilian's views on constructive teaching and learning, and especially on discipline, are amazingly modern. In his opinion, learners have a natural aptitude for learning and the acquisition of knowledge, and if they fall into mischief much of their disruptive behaviour can be blamed on the teacher who does not succeed in keeping them busy constructively.
- All the classical Greek and Roman views on discipline in schools are either based on convictions about democracy, natural law, the interests of the community, the responsibility and/or ability of educators to give proper guidance, the natural aptitude for learning of children, and so forth. Sophisticated ideas about the rule of law and basic human rights and responsibilities had not yet been developed. However, they were present in seminal form and were to develop to maturity in the centuries to come.
- Compared to Greek education, Roman schools were rather too practical, not sufficiently focused on distant educational goals, and too much under state control.
- Jewish education underscores the importance of universal schooling. All children of school-going age should be able to attend schools and should be kept busy constructively. This would prevent them from loitering around and falling into mischief.
- Jewish education also illustrates the importance of focusing on the ultimate goals of education. Such focus will assist teachers to guide their learners with singular purpose, with true discipleship in mind.
- Greek, Roman and Jewish education illustrate that corporal punishment might have a place in education, but that it should be administered with great discretion. Such forms of discipline should be applied within the context of educational love and care for a child (i.e. the context of true discipline). Jewish education emphasises that educators should punish with discretion ("with one hand"), yet should caress and soothe "with both hands".
- The fact that Jesus did not refer to discipline in any retributive form can be ascribed to the fact that He only involved Himself in informal teaching-learning situations, and that He merely avoided unruly or disruptive behaviour. His approach to teaching and learning reveals that He possessed an intuitive understanding of how to keep his listeners constructively involved and to inspire them to go and do as He instructed. He expounded his views on

education from the perspective of the Kingdom of God and its mandate for believers.

- The notion of punishment, chastisement, retribution or justice does not appear in any of the Greek words discussed above (although *paideia* implies a degree of chastisement, if and when necessary). It also does not form part of the meaning of the Latin roots of the word “discipline” or “disciple”. The analysis of terms like *sophronismos*, *kathartizein* and “discipling” indicates how discipline can be restored in schools in a constructive manner.
- The discussion thus far leads us to define “discipline” as follows: it is the action by which one person (e.g. an educator) calls another (e.g. a learner) to order and to self-disciplined thinking with the purpose of instilling in the latter a sober and balanced state of mind and self-control, enabling the latter to become fully equipped for his or her calling in life and for meaningful existence within the constraints of acceptable behavioural codes in his or her particular environment. As indicated, this generic definition can gain great significance if viewed from a Biblical perspective, especially with regard to discipline.
- An analysis of this definition brings the following to light:
 - There has to be a disciple, a follower.
 - There has to be a “disciplinarian” (in the *paideia* and *paidagogos* and Biblical senses of the term).
 - The educator has to adopt a prospective approach.
 - His/her disciplinary actions have to be directed by norms.
 - Discipline is aimed at equipping the disciple for the demands of life, for responding to his/her calling in life.
 - Discipline is aimed at mending and repairing the sin-devastated life of the disciple.

7. Conclusion

Discipline and order can only be restored in South African schools – and elsewhere – once teachers (educators, facilitators) have been brought not only to an understanding of the *paideia* and *paidagogos* meanings of discipline in the context of the Biblical/reformational meaning of the term. The persistent lack of order and discipline in South African schools as a result of the period of civil disobedience associated with the political struggle for freedom and democracy can only be counteracted if educators understood that the application of

discipline does not imply a clamp-down on unruly, mischievous and disruptive behaviour, but that it actually meant entering into loving, caring, serving, guiding and “discipling” relationships with learners. The exercise of discipline entails moderate chastisement where necessary, accompanied by loving and caring caress. It also means serving learners the way a *paidagogos* would do, i.e. in a spirit of self-sacrifice, in order to assist learners to attain *paideia*, i.e. becoming well-rounded and fully educated individuals capable of responding adequately to their callings in life and able to be true disciples, i.e. followers of Jesus Christ.

The *paideia*, *sophronismos*, *kathartizein*, “discipling” and *paidagogos* perspectives acquire greater significance when seen in Biblical perspective. Educators should see themselves as servants of the Triune God of the Bible: prepared to follow the example of Jesus in serving others, in this case, the learners, inter alia by keeping them constructively busy and involved in creative teaching-learning processes. In doing so, the learners will in time understand that the time for disruptive and mischievous behaviour is over, and that they will only benefit by becoming true disciples, i.e. followers themselves of the example set by Jesus Christ. In doing so, educators ought to be able to contribute significantly to the restoration of discipline in South African schools.

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Kernbegrippe:

dissipline, klassieke benadering tot
Griekse, Romeinse en Joodse sienings van dissipline
paideia
pedagogie

Key concepts:

discipline, classical approaches to
Greek, Roman and Jewish views on discipline
paideia
pedagogy