**Assignment #1: Core Essential Elements**

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1. Write a three-paragraph essay responding to the following question:

When have you noticed your prejudgments influencing your interpretations? How have you

experienced a "fusion of horizons" in your learning experiences?

 **Core Essential Elements**

My pre-judgments are definitely influencing my mindset due to the changes in our society and the public school system. As a Christian who believes the Bible is the moral authority, most of the changes are in direct conflict with the teaching of the Word of God. Christians are being forced to support policies that contradict their moral values in public school systems across the country. Employees, regardless of their moral beliefs, must identify and refer to a girl as a boy or a boy as a girl. This fusion of horizons is more than just a difference of opinion; enacting such policies robs Christians of their religious liberty (John 8:36). As a school administrator, I support public education because it provides education to all students, but my support should not mean that my religious freedom is taken away.

Another one of my prejudgments in conflict with school policy is the biblical belief that parents have the right to train their children in the Lord (Proverbs 22:16). My school district is following the national trend of taking rights away from parents. For instance, a student can select a preferred gender and name without their parents' knowledge. Believing their children are being influenced and wanting to teach their own morals and values to their children, parents have been fighting these trends. Working against these parents is the Equality Act, which would extend Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to include sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) as protected classes. The Equality Act would lead to changes to curricula in public schools, requiring texts to affirm and promote views on gender and sexuality (Jones, A., & Kao, E., 2019). The constant assaults and legislative attacks on the teaching profession have caused Christian and non-Christian teachers alike to abandon their classrooms, thus creating a teacher shortage. Colleges and universities have seen a sharp drop in the number of applications to teacher preparation institutions. Several political leaders blamed public school teachers as they tried to gain support for privatizing education. This has greatly contributed to the decrease in students entering education programs to become teachers. “How can a nation educate its young without well-qualified, experienced teachers?” (Ravitch, D., 2020, p. 4).

Faced with alienation or persecution for merely asking questions about the policies being enacted, the environment for Christian educators is often hostile. I want to establish a ministry solely for Christian educators in public schools and universities. While I have started with my life group of almost fifty, as I have been researching and writing for OGS, the Lord is making it crystal clear. Initially, I kept writing about what the church should do, and then I realized that this is something that God has laid on my heart. God has shown me through my experience with missions, ministry, and education that He wants me to do this work. Christian educators are God’s ambassadors in the public school system, and most churches do not view them as missionaries or have programs to support them. God has not forgotten about the children. The Lord has planted His ambassadors in all sectors of education to care for the students, to advocate for them, and to represent the Kingdom. Jesus said, “And whoever receives one such child in My name, receives Me; but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it is better for him that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck and that he be drowned in the depths of the sea” (Matthew 18:5–6). I am praying that God will give me wisdom as a leader to continue to navigate through these fusions of horizons.

**Works Cited**

Jones, A., & Kao, E. (2019). Sexual Ideology Indoctrination: The Equality Act's Impact on School Curriculum and Parental Rights Backgrounder No. 3408. *Heritage Foundation*.

New American Standard Bible (NASB), 2020 *Lockman Foundation* (Original work published in 1960).

Ravitch, D. (2020). *Slaying Goliath: The passionate resistance to privatization and the fight to save America's public schools*. Vintage.