



PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Waymaker Institute exists to equip the next generation of high-capacity and high-character leaders to build up the local church. Waymaker Institute's unique philosophy of education enables it to form a firm foundation for the next generation of leaders.

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

Waymaker Institute believes the role of education is not to equip students with knowledge, but to enable them to coherently think about God, themselves, and the world. Thus, Waymaker Institute believes education exists not only to teach students what they should love, believe, and pursue, but also to challenge them to seek, discover, and articulate why.

Therefore, education is the process of growing discernment in students—an appreciation and love for all that is good. Through developing a thirst and desire for the good God has woven into the grain of the universe, Waymaker Institute equips students to critically assess the world. Yet, education is not solely for the student. Waymaker Institute has a fundamental conviction that the Church has a message that is both valuable and interesting to proclaim to the world. Thus, Waymaker Institute equips students to authentically live as the people of God not just in belief, but in deed and orientation.

As such, Waymaker Institute does not attempt to shield students from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or deeply offensive. Rather, Waymaker Institute encourages students to evaluate the merits of all ideas on the basis of their congruity with the character of God and His commands to His people. Education enables students to ask questions of God, the world, and themselves, while simultaneously opening students to being questioned by faculty, staff, and God Himself.

EDUCATIONAL AIMS

Waymaker Institute does not exist to transmit information to students or provide credentials that increase their future earnings. Rather, Waymaker Institute exists to shape and aim the desires of its students. Waymaker Institute is an institution dedicated to formation—crafting and molding the character and habits of students so they love God, love people, and want to see His kingdom come.

Waymaker Institute has three primary educational aims:

- Form a love for God in the hearts of our students
- Grow virtuous character in the souls of our students
- Shape a kingdom perspective in the minds of our students

Waymaker Institute is devoted to producing healthy citizens of the Messianic Kingdom. Waymaker Institute's first concern is not what students know, but rather who they are, and who they love. Thus, students at Waymaker Institute are crafted into worshippers who manifest the image of God and the cruciform nature of His kingdom to a broken world.

EDUCATIONAL METHODS

Waymaker Institute forms students through intentional practices and environments that challenge student's minds, shape their hearts, and equip their hands.

- Waymaker Institute challenges student's minds through academic environments that disrupt cultural narratives and liturgies and directly connects truth learned in the classroom to the life of the believer and mission of the Church.
- Waymaker Institute shapes student's hearts through worship. Classrooms are chapels in which the Spirit of God meets with His people through the telling of the grand story of redemption. Through practices that retell the story, the desires and loves of student's hearts are aimed at God and participation in His kingdom.
- Waymaker Institute equips student's hands through practical work. Students are sent from the classroom into the Church. What is learned in the classroom is immediately applied to the community of faith. Education is embodied in the practices of ministry and the life of the Church.

These methods are inextricably linked to the life of Waymaker.Church. Waymaker Institute flows forth from—and is nourished by—the call of Waymaker.Church to form followers of Jesus. Without participation in the baptized community of Waymaker.Church, the formation of students at Waymaker Institute is impossible.

Waymaker Institute uses these educational methods to create sacred space for students to discern and affirm their calling. Through intellectual study, embodied worship, and participation in the community of faith, Waymaker Institute shapes students who will bless future generations of Jesus' followers and bring more of heaven to earth.

THE ROLE OF WAYMAKER INSTITUTE

Waymaker Institute has a unique relationship with traditional institutes of higher learning (i.e., four-year degree granting institutions) that varies based on the unique calling of a student at Waymaker Institute.

TYPE ONE: STUDENTS CALLED TO FULL TIME VOCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

For students called into full time vocational leadership in the local church, Waymaker Institute exists to **enhance** their education. Waymaker Institute recognizes that leading at an executive level in the local church (lead pastor or similar position) requires a level of academic training Waymaker Institute is unable to provide. Thus, Waymaker Institute serves to enhance the education of type one students by providing them opportunity to put what they learn at the academy into practice in the local church. Though continuing in the Internship and Residency after the Academic Program, type one students remain grounded in the local church during their formal academic training.

TYPE TWO: STUDENTS CALLED TO WORK AND SERVE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

For students who are called to work in the local church, Waymaker Institute serves as an **alternative** to a traditional four-year degree. Waymaker Institute recognizes that some individuals are called to use their skills and talents in a local church on a paid basis, but are not called to full-time vocational ministry, and thus do not require the same level of academic and



technical training. Thus, Waymaker Institute serves as an alternative, experience-based mode of vocational training that equips students with hands on, practical experience in a local church without significant student debt.

TYPE THREE: STUDENTS CALLED TO WORK IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

For students who are called to work in the public square, Waymaker Institute serves as a **gateway** to higher education. Based on the unique calling of the individual student, Waymaker Institute provides a foundation of Christian presuppositions that type three students can either take directly into the marketplace, or into a traditional four-year degree.

FURTHER READING

- Anderson, Matthew Lee. *The End of Our Exploring: A Book About Questioning and the Confidence of Faith*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2013.
- Caplan, Bryan. *The Case Against Education: Why the Education System is a Waste of Time and Money*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018.
- Hauerwas, Stanley. *The State of the University: Academic Knowledge and the Knowledge of God*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.
- Lukianoff, Greg and Jonathan Haidt. *The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas Are Setting Up a Generation for Failure*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2018.
- Smith, James K.A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.
- Smith, James K.A. *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016.
- Anderson, Hannah. *All That's Good: Recovering the Lost Art of Discernment*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2018.