

**I have observed two different worldviews that lie behind the motivation for Christian schools.** One is a “fortress mentality” where the motivation is to protect our children from a world that is hostile to godly values. The other is a “salt & light mentality” where the motivation is to prepare our children to play a leadership role in the world in which God has placed them. (I have just used some Christian jargon by referring to “salt & light” but this will be familiar to those who recall the words of Jesus in what is called the Sermon on the Mount – see Matthew 5:13-16).

There will be considerable overlap in the outworking of both these worldviews. Those with a “fortress mentality” do want their young people to reflect godly values to the world around them and those with a “salt & light mentality” do recognise the need for their children to be protected, especially when they are young and undiscerning. But one of these worldviews tends to be driven by fear while the other tends to be driven by hope. One of these worldviews tends to be inward looking while the other tends to be outward looking. The differences can be seen more clearly later in life, long after the young people have left the protective environment of the school.

At Pacific Hills, we do want our young people to grow up with a strong sense of purpose, underpinned by a strong sense of security that comes from a personal relationship with the God who made them for that purpose. We do want them to make an impact on the world around them – whatever the particular vocation they ultimately experience.

One of the keys is to understand that real purpose, fulfilment and joy come from using our gifts in serving others. Each one of our young people has a unique set of gifts that needs to be nurtured and developed to reach its full potential. However, along the way, there needs to be a developing understanding that there are two ways to use these gifts. One is a self-centred and selfish way – the other an outward looking and generous way. One way leads to small hearted people living in an unsatisfying and diminishing world – the other leads to big hearted people living in a fulfilling and expanding world.

There are many ways in which Pacific Hills seeks to develop this understanding in our young people. One key strategy is to encourage participation in mission trips. These often lead to very significant growth in those who are involved. They often lead to a greater understanding of the counter-intuitive principle:

*One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.*

*(Proverbs 11: 24-25)*

Tony Morgan, Board Chairman  
Pacific Hills Christian School