



## Recognising Bias!



It is always great to start a new year of teaching!

A fresh bunch of Year 7s come in to my classes to be challenged by the message of the gospel. They also bring with them a whole raft of questions, "Who did Adam and Eve's sons marry?", "What's the difference between Catholic and Christian?", "Where is Heaven?"

In my first lesson with them, I like to ask them a question - **"Do you think I will be biased as I talk about religion?"** Many will say "No." Others, might then be a little cheeky and say "Yes", at which point, I agree with them.

It is impossible to be neutral when considering what we or others believe. Nevertheless, if we **recognise our bias**, we can put aside our assumptions and think carefully about matters of God and the Bible, life, and death.

My students come from different backgrounds with varying levels of understanding of the gospel, so I work hard to do two things.

First, to **breakdown any biases** the students have of the true gospel, that salvation is found in Christ alone.

Second, to build up the Christian students to see that what they believe is not just intellectually reasonable, but grounded in the absolute truth of Jesus' death and resurrection.

**Please pray that through SRE lessons students would respond to the true gospel, with transformed hearts and lives.**

**Tony Jones, SRE Teacher, NBHS.**



***“Is SRE the religious stuff?”***

***“God seems to have a crazy obsession with humans!”***

These are my two favourite quotes of the year so far!

The first came from a Year 7 Buddhist student during our first lesson. There are over 100 Year 7 students enrolled in SRE and a significant number come from different religious backgrounds. There has been a mix of confusion and curiosity as to what SRE is about, and

whether they should be participating. Please pray that students will be open minded and interested in learning about Christianity and that good relationships will be quickly established.

The second quote came from a Year 9 atheist student during another first lesson. This term we are exploring worldviews and life’s big questions. As we began looking at the origin of life, students were invited to share their observations and questions from Genesis 1. This student could not fathom why God would place humans in a position of importance – let alone make humans in his likeness. While she does not believe in God, she could see how the God



of the Bible is a powerful and loving creator. In the video, I share more about other students’ responses. Most students believe life’s purpose is to live it to the fullest, making the most of what we have. However, many struggled to articulate what they believe about what happens after death, and their reference point for morality.

**Please pray that God will stir up students’ hearts to want to seek the truth.**

**Christine Chin, SRE Teacher HGHS**

## **PRAYER POINTS**

### **Hornsby Girls’**

- Pray for good relationships to form quickly with both staff and students, and for the supernatural ability to remember 354 names!
- Pray that the students will come with open minds and a willingness to engage with the Bible and that I will be sensitive to God’s leading as I prepare the lessons.



- Pray for good health and sleep, particularly as I adjust to routines of work and balancing family life.
- Thank God for the 'Highlite' Christian group leaders, and pray for wisdom and direction as they lead the Bible studies this Semester.

### **Normanhurst Boys'**

- Pray that I will build good relationships with staff and students and that there will be opportunities for good conversations.
- Pray that the students will be keen to learn more about Jesus, and ask good questions to help them grow in their faith.
- Pray for me to continue to work hard at improving the lessons so they better connect with the boys and help them to understand the gospel and its impact for their lives.
- Pray for the Christian group 'Connect' to start well, with Year 7 students joining, and the leaders continuing to lead with dedication.

### **FINANCIAL NEWS – March 2023**

**Thank you to all of you who so generously supported NCEA in 2022. It was most encouraging to see the increased giving from individual donors, along with the continuing support from the supporting churches.**

**We give thanks to the Lord for His continued provision through His people, in this the 32nd year of NCEA!**

**The budget for 2023 is \$120,000.**

The Australian Tax Office has endorsed the Normanhurst Christian Education RIGS(Religious Instruction In Government Schools in Australia) Fund as a tax deductible gift recipient. Our bank account details are identified over the page. However, receipts reflect the name Normanhurst Christian Education RIGS Fund.

**Donations to support this ministry can be forwarded by cash, cheque, online direct debit, or credit card (see over page).**

**Glenys Porter,**

**NCEA Treasurer, March 2023**