

## Episode 379 – What Does It Mean to Teach 4 the Heart?

### 00:00 Teaching for the Heart: An Introduction

Linda Kardamis (00:00)

What does it mean to Teach 4 the Heart and why is it important? Let's explore this important question today. Well, welcome back to the Teach for the Heart podcast where we tackle teaching challenges from a biblical perspective. This episode is brought to you in partnership with the Herzog Foundation. I'm here today with Sarah Humes, one of our Teach for the Heart plus mentors and Teach for the Heart team members. And we're gonna talk about what does it mean to teach. ~

for the heart. We'll also talk a little bit about why that's our name and why that matters in your classroom. Sarah, thanks so much for being with us here today.

Sarah Humes (00:35)

Thank you so much for having me. I am so excited about this episode.

Linda Kardamis (00:39)

So I want to start by kind of sharing a little bit of why we are called Teach for the Heart. And it's not just so we could talk about Teach for the Heart, but it's because this principle that was built into the name of the organization is actually something core that I believe and I think a lot of you believe too. we actually, I was just talking to Sarah and saying, we actually don't talk about this that much, which is ironic because it's literally our name. So. ~

When I first was going to create Teach for the Heart, it's like I had to come up with a name. I was just going to be a blog and I was really just debating all these different names. And I was thinking a little bit about what does it mean to teach? What is important in teaching? And in particular, at that time, I was really thinking about how important it is to Teach 4 the Heart, meaning when we're teaching students to...

do it in a way that's reaching not just their external, not just their minds, but also into their hearts. And part of the reason I was thinking so much about this was because I grew up in an environment where there was a lot of focus on external, a lot of focus on what you wear and how you look and what you do and how you present yourself. ~ But a lot of times there was not a lot of focus on like what's actually in your heart.

and what's actually behind your actions and your motivations. And I had noticed this kind of disconnect between, you know, kind of really focusing on like do, do, do, do, and recognizing like, okay, you can use all kinds of tactics to get someone to do what you want. But if the change is just surface

level and it doesn't reach down into your heart, ~ it's just only gonna last so long as the circumstances last, right?

But when we really ~ change in our hearts, when we truly believe something, then that is a true change that will then manifest in all these different external actions. And it's really gonna last. So that's where I was thinking about it, and that's where I said, okay, I wanna call it Teach 4 the Heart. Because we're teaching not just for the external, not just for the mind, but also trying to reach students in their hearts.

## **02:57 The Importance of Heart-Centered Teaching**

Sarah Humes (02:57)

I absolutely love that. ~ It resonates so much with me because it doesn't matter what subject I was teaching. was always trying to, you know, it wasn't just about memorizing facts for me. It was, how can you take this and apply it to your real life? And how can you, you know, even more than just spiritual matters, I was like, these things that you're learning, you can apply them and make the world better.

And so this resonates so much with me, Linda. I'm so excited. Yeah.

Linda Kardamis (03:31)

Yeah, so I want to kind of dive into some examples of what this actually looks like. And I hope that as you're listening to this, you might realize, wow, I'm already doing that in a few areas. But that will hopefully also give those of that are listening some ideas on, wow, I can take this a little bit further too. So one area that is almost like top goal ~ where this can show up is in Christian schools, we are allowed to actually

Disciple students and actually share with them about God and go for that like heart change that is eternal and pointing students towards God So that is like to me that is like the end-all-be-all like best-case scenario when we're able to really help them You know believe love worship God Repent of sin like and really just put all the pieces together I think that's really really amazing when we're able to just help students in a variety of way and see like wow there was true heart change that is like

the most exciting kind of highest form, I think, of teaching for the heart. But there's a lot of other ways, even if you're not in a Christian school, or we don't see that every day, right? We don't get to do that every day. Those are kind of those special moments. But I do want to start there because that is something that, ~ especially if you're in a Christian school, you should be seeking. And God is still working in public schools, so you can't be as overt, but God can still do that work in students' hearts no matter where we teach.

Sarah Humes (04:59)

Absolutely he can.

Linda Kardamis (05:02)

So that first area is, you know, actual spiritual change in our heart, ~ worship. The second area though, where I think we can Teach 4 the Heart, is in motivation, okay? And there's so much, I mean, how do we motivate students is such a big topic right now because we're seeing a huge issue with student motivation and so much demotivation and there's so many ways to tackle this. ~ But I do not think we should ignore the heart aspect of this, right?

And so internal motivation ~ would look like, okay, a student actually realizing, my goodness, my education is important. I actually want to do my best because this is going to better my life. we, like that, just think for a second, if that heart change is happening, the external is gonna take care of it, right? That's so much more powerful than, I guess I'll do this so I can get the piece of candy. So that's not to say we should never offer candy, but that when we are able to teach.

Sarah Humes (05:55)

specific.

### **05:59 Motivating Students from the Inside Out**

Linda Kardamis (05:59)

~ really get to the heart. And Dave Stewart Jr. talks a lot about this. His entire model for motivation is based on five key beliefs, which are heart beliefs and things that we can do to gradually help shape what students actually believe. But I think, yeah, motivation is definitely an area where this can show up and where we have an opportunity to gradually make an impact on students.

Sarah Humes (06:25)

Yeah, and I love using the big pictures of what Dave has talked about in those five key beliefs. ~ Particularly, I love when we can see that our students are whole people. And if we can show them what we're teaching matters to what matters to them. You know, I love bringing

Linda Kardamis (06:44)

Mm.

Sarah Humes (06:54)

real life examples to their world. So one time I was teaching math to a young man who honestly he was not going to graduate if he did not pass this math class. And so I was brought in as a one-on-one tutor and I got to work with him because he loved construction. And so I brought everything into a construction lens for him and it was the highest honor to watch him come alive.

As he got to see, ~ yes, this does matter because I'm going to use this every single day in my future job. And it was so exciting. And I had another student who despised my Spanish class with every part of his being, but he was very passionate about his EMT work. And so I gave him a list of medical words and let him engage with those words. And he's like, wow.

this is kind of cool. And just by meeting students where they are with what matters to them most, sometimes it just gives them another chance to come alive and be interested in what we're teaching them.

Linda Kardamis (08:09)

Yeah, I love that so much. It even brought to mind kind of this idea that too, beliefs are also not just like, yes or no, especially something like schoolwork matters. You know, it's not like sometimes it's like removing students just the tick. Maybe it does. Maybe this is a little, you know what I mean? Just like helping them see. And sometimes you have those opportunities to make a huge swing. Wow.

This really, really matters. So that's really cool. We're gonna link in the show notes to some of the episodes we've done with Dave because we're talking here about kind of the idea of, you know, does schoolwork matter? But there's so many other pieces to that. So many other beliefs, the work, you know, will my hard work actually pay off? Can I succeed if I do this? There's so many pieces to that. So we're just really scratching the surface.

So internal motivation is one area. Another area where we can Teach 4 the Heart.

is classroom management issues. Okay. So there is so much when we teach, you know, in classroom management plan that is kind of more ~ outward or just like transactional, right? You do this, you get this, and that is an important part of our plan. That is like a base that we absolutely need. But it's important to also recognize.

### **09:56 Classroom Management with Heart**

that there are opportunities to go underneath that, right? Like that is our base level that just keeps almost like the laws of the land, right? It keeps things running. But there's opportunities sometimes to have a conversation with the student or to go deeper, a meeting with a parent and kind of try to figure out what is actually going on? Why is the student doing this? What may be underlying fear, concern, problem, know, ambition, like what is going on in their heart that's

causing this behavior. And when we can actually address that, that is going to make that long-term change. So I really see classroom management, I mean, there's probably multiple prongs, but it's almost like two prongs, right? There's just our standard things that we do, you know, the consequences, the expectations, the procedures, all of that structurally. But then there's this underlayer, particularly when something, I think I like to pull this out, just some ideas of when to pull this out. When you have a student that's doing something out of character, what's going on? When you have

continual chronic problems that you're like, the normal is not fixing this, there's something else. Or just anytime you feel the Holy Spirit lead you, these are particularly answers. So for example, something as simple as blurting out. If you're able to have a conversation with a student or whatever methods you're using, get them to the point of actually realizing, my goodness, when I blurt out

answers, it actually causes problems for my teachers and classmates. I feel bad and I want to change. That is totally different than a student just being like,

I guess I won't blurt out because I don't want to get in trouble. Right? You've really changed and that's going to help them as a person, but also like they're going to be much, cause much fewer problems then. So when we have the opportunity to do that, make such a difference.

Sarah Humes (11:50)

Yes.

Linda Kardamis (12:02)

Sarah, have you ever had opportunities where you've kind of been able to get to the heart of an issue with a student? I don't know, I think of lot of examples of parenting, but. ~

Sarah Humes (12:12)

Yes, well, you know, I just think of the times where I've had students reflect a lot of times, a lot of times just the way the school days structured. I don't have time to have those deep conversations, but one of the consequences in my classroom are reflection essays. And so sometimes that's what they would get assigned, particularly

Linda Kardamis (12:18)

Hmm.

### **12:39 Fostering Personal Growth in Students**

Sarah Humes (12:39)

for things like blurting or inappropriate behavior in the classroom. And so they would have to reflect on the impact their behavior had on their classmates, on the learning, on the efforts of the day. And that's

I mean, some students just once again went through the motions of doing the essay, but others, particularly those who were not repeat offenders, they were like, ~ yeah, that was not my best moment. And it was a particularly powerful intervention. So I really appreciated that.

Linda Kardamis (13:18)

Yeah.

I'm so glad you brought that up because yeah, you're right. There's not, there's definitely not always time to have these. Like these are kind of few in far between where you can actually talk with a student ~ in depth. So that is a great way discipline essays. And then also like don't ever underestimate what like a couple sentences of thought, a thought provoking question, or just, just something that you can drop on a student, particularly older, you know, you know, upper elementary into, into secondary, the impact that can, that, can have. So I think this is just,

~ Something to be aware of and just kind of have in the back of our mind and to sometimes ask ourselves like, what maybe is going on underneath here? And just keep an eye out for that. Like if you just kind of open your eyes to this whole heart underneath issue, underneath things, ~ it's kind of amazing, you know, and pray about it too. ~ And see what God opens your eyes to. It's kind of cool. You might have some cool opportunities there.

Sarah Humes (14:08)

Yes.

Linda Kardamis (14:16)

So classroom management issues, the last one that we're gonna talk about today is personal growth, right? So ~ I think a lot of, one of the reasons a lot of us are teachers is because we wanna see students grow, right? Not just academically, but also in their personal lives, right? Grow in character, integrity, work ethic, like all of these, citizenship, all these things. And so... ~

Similar to classroom management, there's sometimes opportunities to help students grow, whether it's in large group conversations, individual conversations, activities that we do with them, all kinds of ways. But, for example, a student that's saying, wow, I realize integrity matters. I want to be a person of integrity. That's like a heart change, right? Versus, I can get away with a lie, I'll do it, right? Totally, totally different. So kind of those, think we...

Sarah Humes (15:05)

Yes.

Linda Kardamis (15:10)

we have those opportunities sometimes to move students' hearts. And there's, my goodness, we could do a whole other episode and like all, there's so many different ways, winsomeness, little server that's conversations, activities, so many things. ~ But yeah, that's really, really amazing.

## **15:28 Creating a Positive Learning Environment**

Sarah Humes (15:28)

It really is. And one of the things that ~ I really wanted to instill in my students is that learning doesn't always have to be this cumbersome, heavy thing. It can be fun and it can be light and it can be enjoyable. And I think that truly most of my students that were that I've had found that to be the case because it was, you know, my classroom.

was a very happy environment where learning was natural. that, you know, even things like that are ways to really teach to their hearts and to their person and say that it doesn't have to be just this duty of memorizing. It can be really learning how to converse or understand each other or listen to each other or, you know.

learn to really deeply understand something you're interested in. I think that there's so many different ways that we can do that.

Linda Kardamis (16:35)

Yeah, that's a really good point, right? So we've been talking, a lot of the examples I've given are more like, you know, almost like right and wrong or like type type of examples, but beliefs are so, so powerful. And I think a lot of the beliefs that really sink down sometimes are things that aren't even explicitly taught. They are absorbed from a culture, right? So you're saying I created this culture where learning is fun and light and beautiful.

Like that's something that can sink down. It's like dripping, dripping, dripping day after day after day after day and sink down and be like, ~ And by the end of the year, their heart has changed without any moments of fanfare, ~ just the drip, drip, drip of this culture and seeing it lived out. And I think there's so many different examples we could pull out. You yours example was like learning is fun and wonderful.

but so many different things. guess recognizing that what you believe in your heart, that you put out there day after day after day, can have a really powerful impact too.

Sarah Humes (17:45)

It really does. And it just makes me so excited because when you have educators who are passionate about what they're teaching, that is going to impact their students so much more than they realize. So I definitely encourage, you know, if you really want to Teach 4 the Heart, definitely be passionate about what you're teaching too, because it's so exciting when you see someone who is thrilled about what they're teaching.

Linda Kardamis (18:08)

Yes, there's really no replacement for just kind of genuinely liking your subject. And that's a whole other tangent, but if you're like, but I don't, kind of dig into it. See what you can find that does excite you. cause that makes such a big difference. You're so right. Well, we're running out of time. I was going to talk kind of more about one of our 10 commandments of classroom management is actually you must seek to understand the root.

Sarah Humes (18:14)

Yes.

### **18:33 Final Thoughts on Teaching for the Heart**

Linda Kardamis (18:33)

cause of misbehavior and address them at a heart level when possible. But I think we kind of covered that. If you kind of want to dive deeper into that, you can go back and listen to, have a whole bunch of resources on our 10 commandments. You can check out the whole playlist. You can grab our starter

pack. We'll link all those links down below. Or if you just say, man, you know, I need more help with classroom management, but I want to do it.

I wanna do it with somebody that gets this, that gets that the heart matters, that gets that all this is important. We'd love to have you in Classroom Management 101. We will help you implement a classroom management plan that's rooted in these beliefs. So you can go to [teach4theheart.com slash cm101](https://teach4theheart.com/cm101) and use the code `podcast20` to save 20%. Sarah, any final thoughts as we wrap up?

Sarah Humes (19:19)

just want to encourage educators to keep teaching for the heart because it really does matter, you know, even on the days when it feels like it doesn't.

Linda Kardamis (19:27)

Absolutely. That reminds me exactly of what we say at the end of every episode. You're probably used to hearing it, but it's intentional. So listen carefully to this one today. So thank you guys for being here. This episode is brought to you in partnership with the Herzog Foundation. All views and opinions are our own and don't necessarily reflect those of the Herzog Foundation. Thank you for being with us and we look forward to being with you again soon. In the meantime, teacher, remember God is at work in you and through you and he's using you to make a difference.

Keep your eyes on him and Teach 4 the Heart.