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**A Philosophical Critique of a  
biblically-based Christian educational model**

Paul Andrew Kidson BA (Woll.) DipEd (Woll.)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
of the degree of Master of Education (Honours)  
of the University of New England

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I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not being currently submitted for any other degrees.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge any help received in preparing this thesis, and all the sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.

Paul Kidson

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## Abstract

The presence of the newer Christian schools within a pluralist liberal democracy such as Australia raises a number of philosophical questions: what is required for models of education to be valid for use in pluralist liberal democracies? what rights do parents have in providing a religious upbringing, including formal education? how does this relate to the rights of children in regard to their education?

This thesis argues for a perspective on education necessary to a pluralist liberal democracy that values critical reflection of a student's personal world view, recognition of, respect for and tolerance of alternative world views. It also argues that the right of parents to provide a religious upbringing is valid provided it does not preclude such a perspective.

The Biblically-based Christian Education (BCE) model (primarily) developed by Christian Community Schools Limited is investigated for the extent to which it is able to satisfy the criteria for educational models in a pluralist liberal democracy. It is argued that the model is deficient in a number of areas including its epistemological foundation, the role of hermeneutic authority, its lack of a coherent theory of faith development and its technical curriculum orientation. It is then argued that a Christian Praxis Education (CPE) orientation derived from the Christian Religious Education model of Groome and Astley, as well as the Transformational Christian Education ideas of Hobson and Welbourne is able to overcome these difficulties. It is argued that the Christian Praxis Education orientation is able to satisfy both the criteria for validity of educational models in a pluralist

liberal democracy as well as maintaining many of the faith concerns of the Biblically-based Christian Education model.