

Students at Immanuel Christian School had a 'holiday' last week while their teachers went to 'school' for two days. They attended the Edifide Christian Educators Association convention in Ancaster.

The keynote speaker was Andy Crouch, author of *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*. He argued the case for Christians to be more than just consumers of culture. As Christians we must also critique culture. This does beg the question of how this can help Christians to live in the world but not be of the world.

Crouch takes it a step further and calls Christians to be culture makers, to influence culture by contributing to it and so in effect changing culture. He calls Christians to claim their cultural mandate, to be the creative cultivators that God has designed us to be.

For our students to be culture makers, initially requires an understanding of the culture we live in. Our culture making can only be properly understood when done in partnership with God's own making and transforming of culture.

What Crouch emphasized is recognizing the depth of artistic expression in whatever media our students work. He gave examples from his music training. To create culture one needs to blend the musical artistry with the lyrics and message of the music.

We can prepare our students for culture making activity by giving them a strong education in the various arts; music, drama and visual arts. Making students proficient with one or more musical instruments is one step. Teaching students a variety of art media is another small step. These areas of the curriculum have been reviewed recently with encouraging results.

The ongoing challenge is helping our students become culture makers by sharing their culture creating activities. For that we need to expand the use of technology to enable students to share their creativity. To expand the use of technology requires planning and a clear vision of how to move ahead. That's an area we are tackling this year.