

# LIFEWISE ACADEMY



## VISION STATEMENT & PHILOSOPHY

**“To reach unchurched students in public schools with the gospel through a replicable released time religious instruction program.”**

### **Vision Philosophy**

#### **About Our Mission Field – “unchurched students in public schools”**

Our vision to reach unchurched students in public schools requires that we interface with groups who may or may not be sympathetic to our gospel-centered objective. Therefore, we will be vigilant to “walk in wisdom” as we interact with those “outside the faith” (Col 4:5). All our public messaging, branding and communication will be intelligible, relatable and engaging to those without a church background or a prior understanding of the intrinsic value of Scripture. Classes themselves will also be designed primarily to engage unchurched students, as opposed to mimicking traditionally Christian gatherings, such as corporate worship services and Sunday school classes.

#### **About Serving Schools – “a replicable released time religious instruction program”**

We are committed to providing a high-quality released time program with an emphasis on character education. We believe such a program meets the felt needs of schools for improved student behavior, mental health, academic performance and other benefits. We seek to meet these needs out of a sincere desire to serve students, schools and communities, not simply as the means to an evangelistic end.

#### **About Teaching Scripture – “the gospel”**

We are committed to the faithful, gospel-centered teaching of Scripture. We believe Scripture is the revelation of God manifested most supremely in the person and work of Christ, the Word of God incarnate. For this reason, all biblical teaching will be tied to the broader context of the gospel, the metanarrative of God’s unfolding plan of redemption—that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has come to reconcile individuals by His grace and to renew the whole world by and for His glory. This is the gospel that saves and empowers true inward change. Out of this gospel-centered teaching, we will apply explicit and implicit character principles. We will also use apologetics when appropriate to help engage students with the text of Scripture, but we will not expect anyone to be intellectually argued into the Kingdom of God.

#### **About Results and Responses – “reach ... with the gospel”**

We trust that the faithful teaching of the Word of God is spiritually effective and fruitful. We expect the results to vary in magnitude and visibility. We plant and water, but it is God who brings true inward growth and change. While many tools to mark spiritual conversions have been used, such as altar calls, recited prayers and commitment cards, we will avoid using formulaic methods and defer to families and local churches to authenticate and celebrate spiritual conversions. Our continual appeal to students will be to believe the gospel, repent from sin, trust in Christ and get connected with a local church. While always striving to be winsome, we will measure our success primarily by whether students are hearing the gospel. We will look for and track other indicators of effectiveness, but we do not feel obligated to accomplish the impossible task of fully quantifying the spiritual results.

### **About Relating to Churches – “a replicable released time religious instruction program”**

We understand that LifeWise Academy is not a local church. However, we aim to serve local churches as an effective tool they can wield in their mission to reach their communities. We will look for every opportunity to strategically connect students and their families to the broader ministry of local churches. We will be careful to leave the responsibilities of robust spiritual shepherding, church discipline and administering baptism and communion to local church leaders.

### **About Fighting Vision Drift**

We are fully committed to our vision. While our methods and strategies will evolve over time, our vision is settled. We recognize that vision/mission drift is a constant danger to all ministries, particularly one like ours, which interacts so closely with government institutions such as public schools. Therefore, we will always be careful to consider every decision in light of our vision. We understand this will be a path of hard choices and sacrifices. We will opt out of seemingly good opportunities that would move us away from our vision. We will also opt into challenging situations that are necessary for the effective pursuit of our vision. We trust that God will use our efforts in the building of His Kingdom as our team is totally unified around our vision.