



Tennessee Christian Preparatory School
4100 Stephens Road NE
Cleveland, Tennessee 37312

FEBRUARY 2, 2023

The students, faculty and staff of Tennessee Christian Preparatory School were honored to have guest speaker, Dean Sikes, join us for our weekly chapel service this week. The student group was our middle and high school students.

For the 20 – 25 minutes he spoke, Mr. Sikes held the audience spellbound. The points he made hit straight home with our students. As they captured notes of the wisdom he shared, there was total silence in the room except for his voice. His ability to immediately connect with each student, from all the ages represented, and with the adults in the room at the same time, is evidence of his grasp of real-life struggles.

Life is tough, and even those who are surrounded by grace and Christian examples each day in the classroom, face challenges not unlike teenagers everywhere. Mr. Sikes immediately tuned in on their level and related stories from his own life that let them know he gets it. Key questions he asked opened our hearts for searching, and at the conclusion, he was bombarded with students who wanted to have a more in-depth conversation. As the tears flowed and students shared their burdens, their worries and concerns, hugs and prayers were shared all around the room. The response from our students really opened my eyes that, even in a safe, Christ-centered environment, the struggles still exist.

After the profound impact of this time with Dean Sikes, I asked our teachers to be extra attentive to students, since students continued to come forward even after he left the building. He delivered a message to our school that we needed to hear – a non-judgmental, helpful message that let them know that they matter, every single one of them, and they have a purpose.

His ability to connect and captivate the audience with words that ring true can only be from God. He did not use notes because he delivered the message that God gave him for his time with us. I know this was the right message because the response from our students was overwhelming. I am so thankful for the time that Dean Sikes gave to us. Lives were changed on this day.

Patricia Sluder
President, Board of Trustees
Acting Head of School