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TEACHING FOR THE INTEGRATION OF THE
CHRISTIAN PERSONALITY

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Practical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE DYNAMICS OF THE TEACHING PROCESS	6
Proper Motivation	6
Improper Motivation	7
Conclusion	9
III. THE RELATION OF CHURCH AND HOME	11
The Role of the Church	11
The Church teaches	11
Atmosphere of the Church	11
Faith of the teacher	12
Life and personality of the teacher	13
Christian growth of the teacher	14
Quality of the teaching staff	15
The entire Church teaches	17
The fellowship of the Church	19
The Church being what it is	19
The necessity of fellowship	21
The fellowship's influence upon the individual	25
The Role of the Home	27
The home is the best teacher	27
The re-establishment of the home and marriage	33
Horace Bushnell's contribution to the home	35
The family-centered curriculum	39
The Interrelation of Church and Home	40
The Church in past has worked alone	40
The one often counteracts the other	42
Conclusion	43
IV. CURRICULUM THEORIES	46
Introduction	46
The Life-Situation Point of View	47
The Doctrine-Centered Curriculum	53
The Church-Centered Curriculum	57
The Bible-Centered Curriculum	59
The Christ-Centered Curriculum	62
Conclusion	62

V. AIMS TO BE MET IF FULL INTEGRATION IS TO BE REALIZED	64
To Instill Action	64
Emotion as an impulse to action	64
Action as a response to purpose	66
The unit method	66
Working with youth	67
To Reach Verdicts and Decisions	68
To Sensitize the Conscience	72
To Create Self-Discipline	75
To Present a Challenge	78
To Maintain Balance Between Intellect and Emotion	80
A matter of mind and heart	80
Intellectual one-sidedness	81
Emotions make religion personal	82
Emotions control behavior	83
Conclusion	84
VI. CONCLUSION	86
BIBLIOGRAPHY	89

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is said that the duty of the Church is two-fold. The first task of the Church is indeed to save souls, that is, to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Part of this same task is that those who have gained forgiveness and have become children of God might be preserved and kept in the Christian faith. As they grow in the knowledge of the Word, their faith must be firmly grounded and strengthened.

The second major task of the Church is that of Christian education. When sinners have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, they become new creatures. "Their whole personality must become, not merely re-shuffled, but completely re-created."¹

The Gospel supplies the basic power which enables the Christian life, so that those who have become wise unto salvation are led into godliness of life by Christian education.²

The purpose of this thesis will be the discussion of

¹The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, Report of the 1954 Educational Conference, July 6-7, 1954 (St. Louis: n.p., 1954), pp. 49-50.

²Edward W. A. Koehler, A Christian Pedagogy (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1950), pp. 117-118.

the "integration of the Christian personality." Something is said to be integrated when the parts of a thing are united into a harmonious whole. If a personality is to be integrated, there must be some central place or purpose which controls all the parts of the personality and so unifies them.

Haentzschel says:

When sincere faith, love, and trust in God hold the central place in a heart, so that they furnish the measure of value and meaning for all else, the way is opened to an integration of life that cannot be achieved by any other means. Then it becomes possible for one to see all the experiences of one's day in the light of a single great purpose and to harmonize all one's strivings under the guidance of a single overmastering desire.³

The goal of Christian education may also be stated as "teaching for commitment." This would imply "teaching for full commitment."

We must recognize the radical nature of Christian integration. In seeking to unite one's powers and entire being under the guidance and rule of Christ, it must be realized that this involves a "full-orbed commitment." This commitment to Christ goes beyond mere knowledge and includes full-hearted responses to the demands of Christ.⁴ "Strong meat is our goal, and we are to leave the milk, which is for the babes, behind."⁵

³A. Haentzschel, Learning to Know the Child (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1941), pp. 75-76.

⁴Clarice M. Bowman, Ways youth Learn (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1952), p. 90.

⁵Randolph C. Miller, Education for Christian Living (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1956), p. 55.

Therefore, one of the purposes of the Church is to make Christ obeyed and exemplified in the whole range of individual life; in body, mind, spirit, and in all human relationships. Brustat would call this a "partnership with God,"

Partnership with God involves the complete surrender of the individual to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is giving over to Him the business of running one's life. It requires the dedication of one's talents, gifts, strength, efforts, will, heart, and material possessions--in short, the dedication of SELF--to the service of God.⁶

Teaching for a full-orbed commitment or for the complete integration of the Christian personality is not substitution for the work of the Holy Spirit. God has placed the means for Christian education into human hands, for He has given the Church the command to teach the Word of God through which the Holy Spirit enters into the hearts of men. Christian educators are co-workers of the Holy Spirit in achieving the desired goal.⁷

This, then, is the purpose of this paper: that we discuss those factors which are essential in teaching for the fullest possible commitment to Jesus Christ.

The first step is to discuss the "dynamics" of the teaching process; in other words, the motivation from which

⁶ August W. Brustat, Partnership with God (New York: Ernest Kaufmann, Inc., c.1947), p. x.

⁷ Wm. A. Kramer, Religion in Lutheran Schools, Published under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1949), p. 13.

Christian nurture proceeds. This particular chapter will attempt to show how the love of Christ, the message of the Cross, is the only means whereby a commitment is possible.

Secondly, the paper will point out the absolute necessity for the cooperation between Church and home in Christian education. At first, both are treated separately. The importance of each is pointed out. In the concluding remarks of this chapter, they are spoken of as co-workers in the task of nurturing souls.

In the third place, it is necessary to deal with curriculum theories. In this chapter, the writer would like to stress the importance of the Christ-centered curriculum. The emphases of this curriculum is Christ, the full and final authority of Holy Scriptures, the Christian truths derived from the Bible, and the necessity of relating these to the Christian life and experience of the individual.

Finally, certain aims are discussed which appear so valuable that these aims must be met if an integration of the Christian personality is to be realized. These aims are: (1) to instil action, (2) to reach verdicts and decisions, (3) to sensitize the conscience, (4) to create self-discipline, (5) to present a challenge, and (6) to maintain balance between intellect and emotion.

The thesis will not be limited to the Christian nurture of children and youth alone. At times, it may be necessary to include the adult. The paper, in general, treats of the "Christian learner" and does not direct itself to a

particular age group.

Certain sections will not be dealt with quite as extensively as others. This is not done for the purpose of minimizing that part of the thesis, but merely because the research uncovered little material concerning it.

Finally, the thesis has not come close to exhausting the subject under consideration. The scope of the topic is wide, but it is the hope of the writer that attention can be adequately paid to the more important aspects of a Christian education that seeks to develop fully-committed and integrated Christian believers.

CHAPTER II

THE DYNAMICS OF THE TEACHING PROCESS

Proper Motivation

The dynamics of the teaching process, which aims at the integration of the Christian personality, has its motivation in the love of Christ. The Christian educator must begin at the basis and starting point of Christian sanctification, this being the new spiritual life or new man which has been wrought through faith in Christ Jesus. Because the child has been sanctified in the faith, he can now be trained in holiness of life.¹ This is the underlying philosophy in the approach to Christian teaching. A conversion experience, a personal experience in which the individual accepts Jesus as Savior and Lord, is the means by which the individual enters the Christian life and is the only adequate foundation and sufficient motivation for Christian growth. By conversion, we do not mean a dramatic or cataclysmic experience, but an experience in which Jesus is accepted as Savior and surrendered to as Lord.²

Dehovre, in discussing motivation for Christian growth in accord with Roman Catholic theology, states that the consciousness of the Divine Presence is the essential thing

¹Edward W. A. Koehler, A Christian Pedagogy (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1950), p. 141.

²Findley B. Edge, Teaching for Results (Nashville: Broadman Press, c.1956), pp. 22-23.

in developing Christian character. It is the principle which animates the life of the genuine Christian. The Christian must carry Christ in his heart. In Christ, the true Christian lives, moves, and has his being. This is the secret of sanctity and the source of holiness in the lives of the saints. For these men and women lived constantly in the presence of God. And this is what all Christians must endeavor to do.³

Character-worth must not be measured by man's accomplishments, but rather by the motives which prompt such a life. The noblest type of character is that which is void of all selfish considerations and is controlled by the love of God.⁴

Christian morality is motivated by the love of God, as Luther expresses it in his exposition of the Commandments. Civic morality has as its driving power utilitarian considerations. The best synonym for utilitarian considerations is selfishness. Selfishness is at the bottom of every philosophy of life that is not permeated by Christianity. Selfishness is not Christianity.⁵

Improper Motivation

The emphasis of the Jew was upon the outward act. Very seldom was there sufficient concern for inner motivation.

³Franz DeHovre, Catholicism in Education, Translated from the French by Edward B. Jordan (New York: Benziger Bros., c.1934), p. 346.

⁴Koehler, op. cit., p. iii.

⁵Arthur Brunn, The Church and the Christian Education of the Children (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1949), p. 5.

This led to certain unfortunate and undesirable results. It saved a system or institution, traditional Judaism; but it lost the individual. This type of education achieved an outward conformity, but it lost the inner experience. Religion came to be a conduct legally correct. Since the motives were of an external nature, the result was an externalizing of the religious and moral life. Free moral action became completely crushed under the burden of numberless legal requirements.⁶

In every area of life, action no longer proceeded from inward motive, was no longer the free manifestation of a moral disposition, but resulted from the external constraint of a legal requirement. All depended on the external correctness of the action.⁷

Improper motivation also arises from a misconception of man's human nature. Modern educators in both the religious and secular fields fail to take into account the original sin with which man is born. Naturally, a man who starts from this premise is going to follow an altogether different educational process than one who believes that the child by nature is corrupt and depraved through sin. This seems to be the current opinion of the status of the child among most modern educators: "The child is neither good nor bad, the child's mind is a blank, upon which may be written things either good or evil."⁸

It is not true that man is by nature morally neutral,

⁶ Edge, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Brunn, op. cit., p. 4.

neither good nor evil, and that his moral character is solely dependent on the kind of training he receives. Scripture, observation, and experience corroborate this truth. Man's own corrupted and depraved nature is an important factor that must be taken into account. A Christian approach to education teaches that before anything good can be written in man, he must receive a new mind. A re-creation is necessary.⁹

Conclusion

"Our dynamic is the love of Christ, and in being our dynamic it becomes our message."¹⁰ God's love for mankind is not one important fact among others, but it is the master fact of them all. When this fact is permitted to pervade the whole Christian teaching, then that which without it might appear as a cold, rigid system of doctrine will become a warm living reality. When the Holy Spirit makes men conscious of the full glory of God's love in Christ, this will move to an answering love. Only God's Holy Spirit can overcome the natural resistance of the human heart. Saving faith is born, and divine love begets love in man.¹¹

Faith dare not be minimized. Emphasis must be laid upon

⁹Koehler, op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁰Henry Cook, The Theology of Evangelism (London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1951), p. 129.

¹¹A. Haentzschel, Learning to Know the Child (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1941), p. 50.

faith as the power of growth. In the end every single effort in Christian education is grounded in Christ.

"Christian education is Christ-centered, because the purifying and energizing power in the Christian comes through faith in Christ, and faith comes by the Spirit of Christ."¹²

¹² Wm. A. Kramer, Religion in Lutheran Schools, Published under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1949), p. 12.

The writer declares that the power of the Sunday school and other religious educational units of the Church is dependent in its atmosphere and the personality of the teacher. If we desire to see spiritual qualities reproduced in the pupil, it is necessary that these same qualities are manifested in the life of the Christian teacher. Many religious educators express their opinion that nothing is more conscious than feeling, and they aim for the goal of creating religious feeling as a part of the very structure of the pupil's life.¹³ The church school in particular and the Church in general is a "living agency," a place where life touches life. Teaching is the conscious act of the trained spirit of the teacher influencing the

¹³ See Crawford Hersey, The Principles of Religious Teaching (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, c.1940), pp. 101-102.

² 1914.

CHAPTER III

THE RELATION OF CHURCH AND HOME

The Role of the Church

The Church teaches

Atmosphere of the Church.--Atmosphere and environment must be largely relied upon in Christian education, which attempts to teach for a fuller commitment on the part of the individual. One writer declares that the power of the Sunday School and other religious educational units of the Church is nine-tenths in its atmosphere and the personality of the teacher.¹ If we desire to see spiritual qualities reproduced in the pupil, it is necessary that these same qualities are manifested in the life of the Christian school. Many religious educators stress their opinion that nothing is more contagious than feeling, and they aim for the goal of creating religious feeling as a part of the very structure of the pupil's life.² The church school in particular and the Church in general is a "living agency," a place where life touches life. "Teaching is the conscious act of the trained spirit of the teacher influencing the

¹Wade Crawford Barclay, The Principles of Religious Teaching (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, c.1920), pp. 101-102.

²Ibid.

less-trained spirit of the pupil."³

Faith of the teacher.—The faith life of the Christian teacher is often taken to task as one of the reasons for the failure to achieve desired results in Christian education. Some feel that even more vital than achievement of standards is the teacher's growing experience in the Christian faith. It is held that the Church, in recruiting new workers, should make the questions about a teacher's faith the pivotal ones. Church leaders find themselves in desperation when new workers are to be found. They often take for granted that because a person is a church member he is sufficiently grounded in the faith. A mature faith on the part of the teacher is important before he can become the means whereby this faith is imparted to those for whose education he is responsible.⁴

Personal religious experiences are a great help in understanding the religious experiences of others. Knowing how the Law and Gospel have affected his own life, the Christian educator is able wisely to use the Word of God, so as to produce similar results in the life of his pupils. "His own religious soul life teaches him better to understand their

³James DeForest Murch, Christian Education and the Local Church (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, c.1945), p. 165.

⁴Randolph C. Miller, Education for Christian Living (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1956), p. 62.

religious soul life."⁵

True faith and love of Christ will inevitably produce a Christian mind, christliche Gesinnung, which is that quality and state of being minded or disposed to be like Christ and to do what is acceptable to Him. . . . If then the personal influence of the Christian teacher is to support his pedagogical efforts, he must needs be truly Christ-minded.

Life and personality of the teacher.--Bowman speaks of the dead seriousness of the quality of a Christian teacher's life. He asks whether the quality of life the teacher leads is an essential witness, and also whether this witness is affirmatively for the Christian way, or palely neutral, or even against.⁷ An affected enthusiasm is a mask which is easily discovered. Sincerity is essential in religion. If one is not committed to the Christian way of living, he will be an indifferent teacher. To cultivate true Christ-mindedness, to develop a Christian character, to live an exemplary Christian life, the teacher must constantly walk in the presence of his God and Savior.⁸

The teacher should demonstrate the validity of the Christian life, The teacher should not only be acquainted with the subject matter in the textbook, but he should have demonstrated in the laboratory of life that he knows what he is talking about, How much more effective our work would be if the pupil could realize that his teacher is a living example of

⁵Edward W. A. Koehler, A Christian Pedagogy (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1950), p. 65.

⁶Ibid., pp. 66-67.

⁷Clarice M. Bowman, Ways Youth Learn (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1952), pp. 8-9.

⁸Koehler, op. cit., pp. 73-74.

the truth he teaches.⁹

Care must be exercised in using such a statement as, "character comes not by drill but by contagion."¹⁰ The aphorism, "religion is caught, not taught," is also widely used.¹¹ These phrases are often utilized at the expense of Christian doctrine, but they do stress the fact that character is partly nurtured by personal influence. The contact which a pupil may have with a true Christian soul plays a tremendous part in character growth.

Especially in the training of young children is the Christian life of the teacher important. For the young child, a teacher is one of the earliest examples of morality. The character of the teacher is not a substitute for teaching ability, but in its own sphere it is a necessary qualification, for the personal association between pupil and teacher cannot be avoided. Teaching cannot be defined in terms of instruction alone, but this relationship between persons must also be taken into consideration.¹²

Christian growth of the teacher.---The place to begin the improvement of our teaching is with our teachers. When teachers are the kind of teachers whose lives embody the

⁹Murch, op. cit., p. 169.

¹⁰Barclay, op. cit., p. 10.

¹¹Murch, op. cit., p. 11.

¹²Victor A. Murray, Education Into Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), p. 124.

truths that they seek to teach, greater results can be expected.¹³ Bowman asks, "If every unit for young people themselves is 'for a verdict,' and bids for life-changing, what about recommitment on the part of the teacher?"¹⁴ Is the teacher himself a better Christian as the result of his teaching? In what ways has he grown? To what decisions has it led him?

The teacher must be what he would lead his pupils to become. If he wishes to train them, he must continue to train himself. He must never be content with what he is but should always work on the improvement and perfecting of his character.¹⁵

Barclay advises teachers,

You are to take yourself in hand and make of yourself the person you know you ought to be. Your first concern, therefore, now and always should be to develop your personality, constantly to grow in grace and strength, in power of mind, integrity of will, beauty of spirit, in knowledge, in generosity--in all Christian graces. Your supreme goal is nothing less than completeness of Christian character.¹⁶

Quality of the teaching staff.--It is said that religious education has been a playground for "amateurs." The word "amateur" is used in two senses; namely, those who have no professional training and those who do it for the love of

¹³ Findley B. Edge, Teaching for Results (Nashville: Broadman Press, c.1956), p. 225.

¹⁴ Bowman, op. cit., p. 132.

¹⁵ Koehler, op. cit., p. 70.

¹⁶ Barclay, op. cit., p. 11.

the work and feel that this is all that is required. The one is the hard-headed practical man, and the other is the earnest enthusiast. One has no use for theory, and the other is suspicious of anything that requires a hard intellectual training. Some view religious education as religious instruction alone; and others view religious education as a matter, not of instruction, but of what is called "atmosphere."¹⁷ At any rate, the key to any educational program is the teacher, and the quality of the program in any school will be determined largely by the quality of the teaching staff. This has been the perennial problem of Christian education.¹⁸

But if the lives of teachers are to count, they must commit themselves without reserve to the Kingdom. This implies full commitment to teaching; and to be a good teacher means earnest work. Many have failed; but just as with explorers in other fields, this should all the more challenge and inspire the Christian teacher.¹⁹

The teacher should be intimately acquainted with the pupils in his class and know their problems. He must have a knowledge of the Bible and religious heritage. He must be

¹⁷Murray, op. cit., pp. 19-34.

¹⁸James D. Smart, The Teaching Ministry of the Church (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1954), p. 73.

¹⁹A. J. Wm. Myers, Teaching Religion Creatively (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, c.1952), p. 26.

up to date in educational method and be a constant student of the best materials for teaching.²⁰

Consecrated teachers are needed, but also those who combine a thoroughly trained mind psychologically with consecration. It is not expected that the teacher is to be a specialist in psychological principles, but it should be expected that the teacher know the content of the pupil's or child's mind, in order that the pupil might be properly taught.²¹

Leadership training has been a recent development in many Protestant churches. Since much of the teaching has been placed into the hands of the laity, many problems have arisen. Often lay people are untrained in theology, educational theory and method, and the knowledge of children. Because of the narrow limitations of available time, these lacks have hampered the educational effectiveness of the Church.²² Besides church representatives have cloaked over the bigness of the teaching task in an eagerness to find teachers. The demands as to preparation, training, and time are minimized.²³

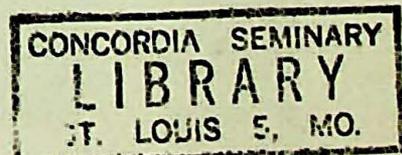
The entire Church teaches.--It is the Church that has the responsibility for Christian education. This means the whole Church, not just a few specially chosen teachers. The

²⁰Murch, op. cit., p. 296.

²¹Charles William Heathcote, The Essentials of Religious Education (Boston: Sherman, French and Co., c.1916), p. 132.

²²Miller, op. cit., p. 38.

²³Bowman, op. cit., p. 163.



primary educational force is the impact of the total Church upon the lives of children, youth, and adult as well. What is done in a Church school or what is said by a teacher occurs in the context of the Christian community. It is the thought of many that they feel no responsibility for Christian education because they hold no office or position with the Church. However, the work of the teacher and representative of Christian teaching will be doomed to failure if their witness on behalf of the Christian faith is contradicted by the witness of the remainder of the congregation.²⁴

Persons must be related to the Church from the time of birth throughout their lives, so that at each stage of their development they may find true nurture and expression of the Christian life. The life and spirit of the Church must be utilized in nurturing the Christian life of each person in the fellowship. The agencies of Christian education must be integrated so that each may make a peculiar contribution to the life of those within the Church.²⁵ Thus, the entire Church program teaches, and all who help in any way are teachers.²⁶

²⁴Smart, op. cit., p. 113.

²⁵Paul Vieth, The Church and Christian Education (St. Louis: Bethany Press, c.1947), p. 46.

²⁶Bowman, op. cit., p. 40.

The fellowship of the Church

The Church being what it is.--The Church serves as an agent of Christian education, not simply by what it teaches, but also by what it is.

What we think about the church makes a difference, too, for if the congregation is just a group of men assembled to reaffirm their beliefs with a musical accompaniment, their educational procedures cannot be a matter of life and death. But if the church is the Body of Christ, a fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which is the channel of God's grace by which men are redeemed, then what happens within this communion of faithful people is of ultimate significance.²⁷

The Church is not a club, charity, or a group which lays down rules to keep people straight, but a divine redemptive fellowship. Christian education must provide for the growth of the individual into this fellowship. The word "fellowship" normally suggests to the mind recreation and social activities. Fellowship in this respect is thought of as a "sugar coating" for religion, and entertainment angle which must be provided in order to hold the member, but which has little or nothing to do with the Christian faith itself. If this were a valid and complete understanding of fellowship, then we would have to agree with those churches which ban all social activities as being the introduction of the purely secular element into the Church.²⁸

If we understand that in the Church, God in Christ not

²⁷Miller, op. cit., p. 6

²⁸Smart, op. cit., p. 122.

only binds men to Himself and opens to them the joy of communion with Himself; but He also binds them to each other in love, and one of their greatest joys is this fellowship of faith, then the fellowship of the Church will be distinguished from an ordinary good fellowship which can likewise be found elsewhere outside of the Church.²⁹

This is not an attempt to give a definition of the "Christian Church," but merely to point out the essential fellowship which is found within the Christian Church and into which its members must be built.

The deficiency of the modern congregation can be uncovered when it is compared with the fellowship of the early Church. The blame is laid to the intense individualism of our contemporary society which has also impregnated the Church. Smart says,

Countless church members think and act as though their religion were a purely private matter. They do not let themselves be bound to anyone in the church, or only to a small group of persons with whom they feel happy and comfortable. . . . This is nothing less than a failure of the church to be the Church; it has become a conglomeration of individuals rather than a close-knit fellowship. It is an awareness of this failure, without any understanding of its source or remedy, that makes men import into the Church a purely secular type of back-slapping good fellowship that is really only a superficial impersonation of Christian fellowship, concealing a basic unwillingness of men to take their relationship with each other seriously. . . . Faith involves us at every point in a two-way relationship--with God and with our fellow man.³⁰

²⁹Smart, op. cit., p. 122.

³⁰Ibid., p. 123.

Relationships are involved in the fellowship of the Church. Since Christian integration arises in the personal relationships between man and God and between man and man, it results from a right religious adjustment by means of which the human person comes into the presence of a Divine Person. And the radical nature of Christian integration involves the total personality of the individual in his relationship with God and with his fellowman.³¹

The necessity of fellowship.--Entrance into and life within the Christian fellowship are basic in Christian education. The sense of "belonging" provides favorable conditions for growth. The young child should have a real sense of membership in the Church. Through the entire life of the member, he should have a sense of belonging to the fellowship. Since every group of the Church should be a manifestation of the life of the Church, growth toward full fellowship may progress throughout the individual's life within the Church.³²

Christian education is just this process of growing up within the life of the Christian Church, and it goes on all the time. The "atmosphere in which grace flourishes" is the environment of Christian education. It is actually God doing the educating through the Church. "We are channels of his grace, doing the planting and the watering, and the

³¹Miller, op. cit., p. 11.

³²Vieth, op. cit., p. 90.

increase is a gift of God."²²

Even the few individuals who have been converted by a Scripture text owe the preservation of that text to the Christian community or fellowship. He must seek within the community of the Church an opportunity for further light and a field of service. It is natural that persons who have committed themselves to the Christian faith are also devoted to the ideals and purposes of the Kingdom of Christ. The Church is the organization that affords him mutual stimulation, expression, fellowship, and the promotion of the cause of Christianity. Experience has demonstrated that the most fruitful and most rewarding Christian lives are those lived within the Church under stimulating contact with others who are seeking the same spiritual values and ends.³⁴

As the group of Christians becomes a living redemptive cell within the life of the local congregation, they also increase in skills of group procedure. Together they stimulate the development of Christian maturity. The need is for something deeper than an outward organization alone. This calls for a kinship or relationship which is deepened by worship, shared responsibilities, a mutual edification, and concerns which are felt and answered together. Secular organizations use this psychology of mutual responsibility.

³³Miller, op. cit., pp. 370-371.

³⁴William Clayton Bower, Religious Education in the Modern Church (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, c.1929), p. 45.

"Has the church of today, in its zeal for numbers and in its administration and organizational efficiency failed to foster this deeper fellowship of the spirit?"³⁵

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is offered to the individual. As individuals they must personally accept the offer. But individuals are not isolated units. They do not live as completely independent beings. No one lives to himself or by himself, and so it is with the Christian within the Christian fellowship. A man cannot grow into Christian maturity save as he interacts with other Christian personalities. It is understood that the Christian is not the product of his own making or of a few Christians, but the result of countless Christians, living and dead.³⁶

The Christian can not live unto himself. Those who are one in Christ Jesus are necessarily one in the fellowship of the church, and only such as are one in Christ Jesus can truly be one in the fellowship of the church. By living united to Christ, the Christian is united in the fellowship of the church. No part of the local church can live unto itself alone.³⁷

Bushnell is also one who points out this organic unity which affects the character of the individuals of the Christian Church. For him the pure, separate, individual man, living wholly within and from himself is mere fiction. No such person ever existed or ever can. Much of the power within

³⁵Bowman, op. cit., p. 28.

³⁶Wesner Fallaw, The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church (New York: Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 7.

³⁷Murch, op. cit., p. 387.

Christian education lies in this organic connection between persons.³⁸

The failure to relate persons to the Christian fellowship has resulted from this regarding of some individuals as separate entities apart from the Church. Several writers have applied this to the area of youth work. Vieth has summed up the hesitation of churches to build up the young people into the congregation:

Having made provision for them with an organization and allowed them the use of a part of the building and equipment, the church has often felt that its duty was done. It was expected that in due time these young people would grow into the church. This may not happen automatically. Young people need the more mature guidance which the adults of the church can give them. They need the sense of fellowship which comes from more intimate contact with the whole church.³⁹

Only by building them into the life of the Church for instruction, fellowship, and worship can we hope to make them strong and lasting Christians. Cook says in a lecture to students of theology,

We are not ordained to be preachers; we are ordained to be ministers of Christ who have a church as our sphere of service; that is to say, we have a living relation to the Church as well as to the Gospel, and our every effort in the pulpit and out of it, should be to get people not so much to come in and swell our congregation as to come and enter into the Church's vital fellowship, . . . that they should become livingly associated with the Saviour and the Church He created. Only by building people into the Church can we secure permanent

³⁸Horace Bushnell, Christian Nurture (New York: Charles Scribner, 1865), p. 30.

³⁹Vieth, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

results.⁴⁰

The fellowship's influence upon the individual.--Recent studies in psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology and related disciplines together with studies from the educational front agree that man is far more a "socius" than has formerly been recognized. The forces which play upon growing personalities are potent. A person, to a very great extent, becomes a part of all that he has met, and all that he has met becomes a part of him.⁴¹ This impact upon individuals by a greater force has been transferred to the area of religious education. Vieth claims that this is the Church's most effective way of teaching. As such it requires forethought, so that results may not be simply accidental, but designed. It requires a plan whereby the less mature may be enabled to flow into more and more mature participation.⁴²

The church is such a body that from its spirit, life, and work there is an influence which flows into its members. . . . The church unites its adherents in such characteristic activities as worship, fellowship, study, and service. But the church is more than these activities through which it seeks to express its life. The church is its people, their lives in home, in their social contacts, in their work, and in their play. Wherever the life of the fellowship impinges upon and transforms the life of every day, there is the church. It is the quality of life in all these phases that most

⁴⁰Henry Cook, The Theology of Evangelism (London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1951), pp. 119-120.

⁴¹Bowman, op. cit., p. 58.

⁴²Vieth, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

powerfully teaches children, young people, and adults, both within and without the fellowship.⁴³

Many Church groups in recent years have experimented with group dynamics. If persons are in a group that accepts them as they are, they tend to accept other persons within the group. This change that comes from mutual acceptance within the group breaks down barriers to communication, and the concerns of the group become the concerns of the individual. Miller feels that here John Dewey's educational insights and the truth of the Gospel come together. People learn to become persons in a group, and the nature of the group determines to a certain extent the kind of persons they will become.⁴⁴

This achievement of becoming a group is in itself a Christian experience when seen in its deeper significance. Although much of the evidence for the working of group dynamics is on a secular plane, the elements of acceptance and of breaking down barriers between persons is a secular parallel of the Christian experience of redemption. The healing of relationships and the bringing of those who are lost into the redemptive community are elements in the Christian experience of forgiveness. The formation of a group in which the individuals have learned to understand and accept themselves, and in turn to become more understanding and accepting of others, lies at the heart of the Christian religion. The church, then, needs to understand clearly the process of group dynamics and to use the insights of the secular experiments in this field for increasing its own effectiveness.⁴⁵

The impact of person upon person is one of the crucial

⁴³Vieth, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

⁴⁴Miller, op. cit., p. 66.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 222-223.

points in all education. This personal element even transcends educational philosophies, so that one learns from great persons even when the philosophy is wrong.⁴⁶ The tragedy of the Church and its effectiveness as a religious educator lies in its failure to be a church where Christian graces and virtues flourish. The environment of Christian education is spoiled when the quality of life of the local congregation fails to rise to the level of mature Christian living.⁴⁷

The Role of the Home

The home is the best teacher

One of the most hopeful signs in religious education today is the growing emphasis on church-home cooperation. Leaders in this field feel that nowhere else may religion be taught so easily and with such abiding results as in the home. Typical today in religious education are such statements as, "The family is primary in God's economy. It is the most potent influence in the development of personality. It may be the most effective means of Christian education."⁴⁸ Edge gives these reasons for the centrality of the home in religious education: (1) The home has the child during the

⁴⁶ Miller, op. cit., p. 42.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

⁴⁸ Vieth, op. cit., p. 163.

most impressionable years of life; (2) The home has the child over an extended period of time; (3) In the home, teaching is done in normal life situations; (4) The home offers opportunity for repeated teaching; (5) The home offers opportunity to observe results; (6) In the home, the child learns by observation of other members of the family, especially of parents; (7) In the home, there is a variety of experiences; (8) The home is the source of authority; (9) There is within the child a desire for family approval; (10) In the home, parents have time to deal with the child as an individual.⁴⁹

Since fathers and mothers are the natural and divinely appointed teachers of the children, the home is the greatest school of Christian worship, of Christian living, and of Christian learning. The Christian home should be a home church, a home school, where the housefathers are both house priests and house teachers, performing the office of the ministry in the home just as the pastors do in the churches.

Carl Berner quotes Martin Luther on this subject:

The kingdom of Christ is publicly preached in the church for the purpose that it may be preached at home. . . . Every housefather is a priest in his own house, every mother is a priestess; therefore see that you help us to perform the office of the ministry in your house as we do in the church.⁵⁰

⁴⁹Edge, op. cit., pp. 180-184.

⁵⁰Carl Walter Berner, Spiritual Power for Your Congregation (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1956), p. 28.

Dehovre states the same principle, when he says that the aim of Divine Providence was to safeguard the generation and the education of the human race by establishing the family and giving to it its twofold character of unity and indissolubility. Christian education needs the cooperation of father and mother. Without the mother, it is cold and unfeeling; and without the father, it is weak and vacillating. The best sort of education will be defective if it is carried on without the parents or against their wishes.⁵¹

Is the Church or the home the first teacher? Since the home is the basic and divinely ordained unit of human society, the home is the first school for every child. Here the small child receives his first impressions, his first knowledge concerning God and Christ, his first experiences in prayer, his first inculcation of Christian love and devotion.⁵² The school and the Church in our time play a larger role than in earlier times, and their importance is not to be minimized; but they are supplementary or complementary. However, in point of time, the home is still the first teacher.⁵³

The teaching in the home is constant. Learning constantly takes place within the family circle. Naturally, easily, and effectively the thinking and living of all are

⁵¹Franz DeHovre, Catholicism in Education, Translated from the French by Edward B. Jordan (New York: Benziger Bros., c.1934), p. 239.

⁵²Murch, op. cit., p. 387.

⁵³Vieth, op. cit., p. 170.

being shaped by the events of daily home life. The experiences of this intimate group, the family, determine lasting attitudes and habits of the individual units of the family.⁵⁴

Koehler quotes from the *Electric Dictionary*:

Generally speaking, every one is being educated, his powers, intellectual and moral, are being developed for good or evil, by all he sees, hears, feels, or does. In this sense education begins when one enters the world and continues all the time when he is in it. In a more specific sense the term is applied to a pre-meditated effort on the part of parents and teachers to draw out one's intellectual and moral endowments, encouraging what is good to oneself and society and discouraging what is hurtful.⁵⁵

The home exerts the greatest amount of influence. The home has a profound influence on the character of individuals. Some years ago the Character Education Inquiry measured the knowledge of right and wrong possessed by children. They measured the resemblance there was between these children's judgments and the judgments of those with whom they were in daily contact. Mothers and fathers proved to be the greatest influence, and the results point to the moral potency of the home. The coefficient of correlation for parents was found to be 54.5 per cent. Almost at the bottom of the scale were Church school teachers with a correlation of .2 per cent. These statistics concern mere moral knowledge and not actual conduct.

Therefore, as the basic unit in society, the family wields major influence upon the young child. The teaching

⁵⁴Vieth, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

⁵⁵Koehler, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

of parents is effective because they teach on the basis of life. The influence of the home will usually overcome any other educational impact. By the faithful instruction and example of Christian parents they can exert the most powerful influence upon the formative minds of their children.⁵⁶

In the home tender regard and sacrificial adult conduct are maintained as nowhere else, if the home is emotionally, intellectually, and ethically healthy. It is this sort of home that a child has the right to have. And if, in addition, he has a genuinely Christian home, he is off to a most fortunate start. . . . Individuals, adults and children, within a family are interactive. The life of the child, his personality, his conduct, his thinking, his faith, are not only colored, guided and very largely determined by the personality, conduct, thinking, and faith of his parents, or by those closest to him who may serve as substitutes for parents; that is not the whole story, While the parent is affecting the nature of the child, the child is modifying, sometimes radically changing, the habits and values of his parents.⁵⁷

Therefore, parents are the real teachers, or as Fallaw has put it, "parents are the real teachers of religion, or irreligion."⁵⁸ Most parents to some degree attempt to be teachers. They teach their children their own acceptance of right and wrong. Large numbers of them endeavor to guide their children into the "good life." Parents seek to inculcate a high degree of moral responsibility. They support character-building agencies in the community. But "character education" is one thing, and Christian education is another.

⁵⁶Berner, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

⁵⁷Fallow, op. cit., p. 16.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. ix.

It is at this point of "purposeful Christian nurture," where the home fails.⁵⁹ All too few homes are equipped for this teaching task, but under favorable conditions it is vitally important that, "the child's mother, who will have the first opportunity of making educational impressions, know God and His Word and manifest His living Spirit."⁶⁰

At this point arises a fundamental problem which was also discussed in chapter three.⁶¹ How is religion best taught in the home? Two points of view are prevalent. These are the direct and indirect approaches. One view emphasizes direct instruction, the imparting of religious knowledge; and the other holds that the most lasting and effective kinds of teaching are the atmosphere in the home and the kind of relationships which the child experiences in the home.⁶²

Smart shows the extremes of the latter view:

Phillips Brook's phrase, "Truth mediated through personality," was misinterpreted to mean that truth does not need to be mediated in any other way than through personality, that the expression of the truth in comprehensible words is quite unnecessary. The smug complacency of a parent who tells himself that his personality has so much truth in it that nothing more is needed to complete his Christian ministry to his children is not hard to detect, and when this is used as a

⁵⁹Vieth, op. cit., pp. 171-172.

⁶⁰Murch, op. cit., p. 277.

⁶¹Supra, pp. 15-16.

⁶²Edge, op. cit., pp. 185-186.

basis for evading the responsibility of coherent Christian conversation in the home, it becomes a serious matter.⁶³

Neither would the family want to depend upon instruction alone in seeking to develop Christian character. Certainly both views are essential.

The re-establishment of the home and marriage

More is needed than just the encouragement for parents to do a little religious teaching in the home. Something far more crucial is involved. This is the recovery of the divine order of the home. The modern generation has consented to this abandonment of the divine order of the home and is presently suffering the consequences. To restore this divine order is the first step in making the family cell the primary unit in the Church as well as in the community.

The divine order for the home is that it should be a seedbed of faith, that in its intimacy the environment should be created in which human beings can best grow up in the knowledge and love of God. Abandon that divine order and its surest foundation has been pulled out from under the home. Its life has been condemned to superficiality. It has lost out of itself those elements which alone enable it to meet the deeper needs of human life and to touch those levels of existence on which true reverence and thankfulness are awakened.⁶⁴

The divine order of the home may involve a conception of the home as a Christian "cell," a miniature community in which the relationships are those of love, law, growth, and

⁶³Smart, op. cit., p. 175.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 184.

the mystery of God's grace. These are basic to an understanding of Christian education in the home.⁶⁵

We must think of the family in its relationship to God. If the relationships of husband, wife, and children are part of the divine order, then the family may be thought of as a cell within the larger organism, which is the Church. Thus, the small family unit has a tremendous role in the Church's program of Christian education.⁶⁶

Smart claims that we must go back a step further and understand, first of all, the very nature of Christian marriage, by which the Christian home comes into existence. Christian marriage is a miracle, for it is the union of two persons into one person. There is an indissoluble oneness, but this oneness is centered in God. Both parties of the marriage estate must have found the center of life in God, so that He is the deepest bond of union between them. This humbling of the self to the rule of God is the work of Jesus Christ. Christian marriage must therefore be rooted in the Christian faith. As children come, they enter into the marriage circle and share in its life. By their presence, they strengthen and enrich the marriage bond. The entire relationship is transformed by the child's coming, because the third person is added not as a unit outside of the family, but as a person within the unity of the family circle. Fur-

⁶⁵Miller, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 6.

thermore, the parent will not count the cost of sharing life with the children on the deepest levels, especially where questions of faith are involved. Thus when the parents ignore the function of the home to bring Christian faith and life to the young, the situation brings into question the Christian character of the home and of the marriage. "It is not the loss merely of a single function of the home, but the loss of the divine order of the home. The home is becoming something other than, in the order of his creation, God intended it to be."⁶⁷

Bruce quotes Luther on the subject of the home:

Luther held a very lofty conception of the marriage relation and held the family in the very highest esteem. "That," he says, "is indeed a very beautiful and happy marriage relation, which has inscribed both on the table and the bed: 'Here is God's favor, will, and most gracious pleasure. Here are the real and immeasurable great blessings and riches'. A truly Christian home and family life is a real church, an elect cloister, yea, a paradise, for the father and mother here become like God, because they are rulers, bishops, pope, doctor, pastor, preacher, schoolmaster, judge, and lord."⁶⁸

Horace Bushnell's contribution to the home.

Horace Bushnell's Christian Nurture was, in the minds of many, the most significant book of the nineteenth century in the field of Christian education. In the judgment of these people, modern work in religious education began with the

⁶⁷Smart, op. cit., pp. 180-182.

⁶⁸Gustav Marius Bruce, Luther as an Educator (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1928), p. 213.

publication of this book.⁶⁹ Bushnell was in reaction against a narrowly evangelistic Christianity which was widespread in New England and closely associated with many of the Sunday Schools. While his thesis is developed almost exclusively in reference to Christian nurture in the family or home, he has profoundly influenced the development of agencies for Christian education within the Church.⁷⁰

Horace Bushnell denies some of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith: original sin, the remission of sins in Baptism, the means of grace, and almost equates Christian nurture to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; yet he is important for this thesis because of his high estimate of the place of the home in Christian education. A short synopsis of Christian Nurture is in place.

Bushnell's major premise was that "the child is to grow up a Christian, and never know himself as being otherwise." His entire book is developed around this opinion. The aim to be sought is not that the child is to grow up in sin, to be converted after he comes to a mature age, but rather that he loves what is good from his earliest years. However, the assumption cannot be made that every child may be so trained that he certainly will grow up a Christian.⁷¹

⁶⁹John O. Gross, Education for Life (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c.1948), p. 198.

⁷⁰Vieth, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

⁷¹Bushnell, op. cit., p. 10.

Truth is revealed in the lives of parents even before the child is of age to understand words. The Christian gospel is wrapped up in the life of the parent and beams out like a living epistle. The "Spirit of truth" makes this living truth as effectual as the actual preaching of the gospel. One can never begin too soon to communicate truth. It is not necessary that the pliant, plastic nature of childhood first be hardened into stone before it becomes a candidate for Christian character.⁷²

The intention is that the Christian life and spirit of the parents, which are in and by the spirit of God, shall flow into the mind of the child, to blend with his incipient and half-formed exercises; that they shall beget their own good with him--their thoughts, opinions, faith, and love, which are to become a little more, and yet a little more, his own separate exercise, but still the same in character.⁷³

The child, in the beginning, is a mere passive lump, and he opens into conscious life under the soul of the parent. The kind and degree of passivity are gradually changed as he progresses through the years. They do not infringe upon the rights of the child. They only fulfill their God-given duty. "Their will and character are designed to be the matrix of the child's will and character. By a gradual process he approaches to the proper rank of an individual creature."⁷⁴

⁷²Ibid., p. 22.

⁷³Ibid., p. 30.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 28-29.

Bushnell pleads for a whole-hearted devotion to the task of Christian nurture. The following quote shows the sincerity of his endeavors:

After all, there is no cheap way of making Christians of our children. Nothing but to practically live for it makes it sure. To be Christians ourselves--ah! there is the difficulty. How can an unchristian, or only non-christian spirit reigning in the house, quicken the spirit of life and holiness in the hearts subjected to its sway? Even if our false modes of nurture are mistakes, who can expect that mistakes will be as good as verities? O, thou, blessed, Son of God, advocate and friend of the little ones, rid us of our falsities, and set us in thy own true spirit, that we may fitly discharge these most sacred and tenderest duties!⁷⁵

The child will not exactly resemble his parents in character. Yet, he will take the moral disease of the family. Unless some other spirit, from outside of the family, reaches him; the organic character of the home will shape and subordinate his character. The spirit of the home is in the individual child by nurture, because it is the very air which he breathes.⁷⁶

The most genuine teaching will be that which interprets truth to the child's feeling by living example. No truth is really taught in words or interpreted by intellectual or logical methods. Truth must be lived into meaning before it can be truly known. Every kind of teaching in religion which sheds no light upon it from a good and beautiful life

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 89.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 101-107.

is nearly or quite worthless.⁷⁷

Home and religion are kindred words; home, because it is the seat of religion, and religion, because it is the sacred element of the home.

This training, in short, of a genuine, practically all-embracing, all-imbuing family religion, makes the families so many little churches, only they are as much better, in many points, as they are more private, closer to the life of infancy, and more completely blended with the common affairs of life.⁷⁸

In short, the religion of the parents is more powerful than any other influence in determining what is to be the religious direction of the child's life. This would sum up Christian Nurture. We can go part of the way with Bushnell in recognizing the continuous unconscious influence of the parents' character and convictions in shaping the life of the child. Yet he comes to an erroneous conclusion, that the child's life is so directly determined by the life of the parent that the parent's life inevitably becomes the faith of the child.

The family-centered curriculum

The Church must not fail to use the Christian family to the fullest. The Church cannot isolate the child from his family and hope to educate him religiously. This is to operate contrary to what we know about how learning and

⁷⁷Bushnell, op. cit., pp. 370-371.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 406.

growth takes place. Wesner Fallaw maintains that the Church must establish an educational program centered about the family unit. This would call for work with adults in addition to spending time and attention on classes for the individual child. Such religious training is confronted by the present lack in curriculum materials.⁷⁹

Fallow presents the program suggested for family-centered education as a threefold task: (1) Curriculum materials must be provided for use in the family group; (2) These materials must be gauged to the various types of families such as the childless family, the family with pre-school children, etc.; (3) The family curriculum must be correlated with content material of the public school and the graded church school.⁸⁰

The Interrelation of Church and Home

The Church in past has worked alone

Increasingly with the years the church school has become the Church's only agency of Christian teaching. Smart claims that in the main there should be three agencies; the Christian congregation in its worship and fellowship, the Christian home, and the church school with its related organizations. In some communities he would add the public school; but this, he believes, lies^s outside the scope of the Church.⁸¹

⁷⁹Fallow, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

⁸⁰Ibid.

Smart points to the place of the home in Bible times. In Old and New Testament times the parents in the home carried the primary responsibility for the education of their children in the faith. The father was recognized as having a priestly function. During the Reformation the teaching office of the home again gained prominence. Both parents were expected to guide the children in the study of the Bible and the Catechism. But during these present times the agency of the home has become almost wholly inoperative for most children, not just for children of non-Christian homes, but also for children of Christian homes. Smart estimates that the percentage of parents who educate their children in the Christian faith beyond the stage of elementary Bible stories can rarely be placed higher than ten per cent.⁸²

This has been the pattern of the modern day Church. It seems as if the Church of today does not expect that the parent should do much in the way of Christian teaching.

After the first few years of the child's life the church school took over that task and the parent was free of it, The church school curriculum was planned essentially for a teacher and pupils, not for teachers, parents, and pupils. The parent was on the outside, looking in. It was not illogical for him to form the conviction that he had no very important place in the Church's program of education. All these forces together have combined to bring about the abdication by the Christian parent of his teaching function and the emptying of the home of much of its Christian significance.⁸³

⁸¹Smart, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

⁸²Ibid., pp. 80-81.

⁸³Ibid., p. 177.

Furthermore, the home has not been given the guidance which it needs to come to its own self-realization that it is the basic institution of Christian education. Much complaint is pointed at the home because of what it has not been doing. Yet there has been little constructive help through which parents might know what they ought to do and how to do it. This is the challenge which the Church must face and meet.⁸⁴

Once parents become aware that the church is interested in helping them to share family life at its highest level, once they experience the satisfactions which intelligent Christian family life can afford, many may be convinced that what goes on in the church on Sundays is of supreme importance.⁸⁵

The one often counteracts the other

Often the teachings and lessons of the Church and home are inconsistent with each other. If the home has been in error and tends toward evil, it is very difficult for all other agencies to counteract and set right what the home has done amiss. The child, in most cases, will go the way of the home. If the home has failed as a positive influence for good, every other educational agency must fail to a very great extent.⁸⁶

However, on the other hand, sometimes Christian parents

⁸⁴Vieth, op. cit., pp. 183-184.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 191.

⁸⁶Koehler, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

fail in the religious training of their children, because the Church counteracts their efforts and example. Bushnell says of the Church,

It makes no element of genial warmth and love about the child, according to the intention of Christ in its appointment, but gives to religion, rather, a forbidding aspect, and thus, instead of assisting the parent, becomes one of the worst impediments to his success.⁸⁷

Conclusion

In concluding, it must be admitted that the Christian home and the Christian teaching agency of the Church are the two most effective agencies for the training of children. In point of importance and responsibility the home stands first.⁸⁸ But even if the home should reach the highest efficiency as a teacher of religion, this still would not lessen the need for the local church to utilize to its fullest its other agencies for Christian nurture. Vieth gives several reasons for this: (1) The Church is the mediator of the Christian faith and must guide the home in its task; (2) There are homes in the local church which are not Christian or are incapable of giving Christian nurture; (3) The task of Christian education is great enough for the wholehearted effort of both Church and home; (4) The Church is needed because all of its members need the fellowship and training

⁸⁷Bushnell, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

⁸⁸Kochler, op. cit., p. 37.

which come from learning the Christian way of life in a larger social group.⁸⁹

There is a necessity for understanding between the Church and the home. Instead of parents assuming that sending a child to a church school is equivalent to providing him with a religious education, parents should realize that the acceptance of a pupil into the church school should carry with it an acceptance on their part of an obligation to carry forward this same process in home religion.

This is not achieved by criticizing parents for not doing their part. It is much better achieved through helping parents to understand how religious growth takes place, and what part they must have in the process. The church which will dare to assume that the family is basic in religious education and will refuse to accept pupils unless parents agree to carry on with a home program will find itself not only growing in effectiveness but also in numbers.⁹⁰

Such a plan will require a program of adult education which is vital and comprehensive, so much so, that it may become the most important phase of the Church's program of Christian education.⁹¹

Together with this cooperative attitude on the part of the parents should be the ability of the local church to understand that its finest nature is expressed by the word "family." Every church should be a family where "mutuality and dynamic interactive qualities enrich the individual and

⁸⁹Vieth, op. cit., p. 110.

⁹⁰Fallow, op. cit., pp. 94-95.

⁹¹Ibid.

strengthen the whole." The best way for any local church to attain its wholeness is for the family units to nurture growing persons in the moods and purposes, which the Church as the Body of Christ possesses. "The church ought to be also families and a family."⁹²

It is not a question of the church calling upon the family to help put over the church's program. Nor is it a question of the family calling in the church to make up for its failures or to take over a difficult part of its task. Rather it is a relationship of complete mutuality. The family finds its richest self-realization in the larger community of Christian love and community of family life. Together they seek to develop each person to his fullest spiritual capacities and to extend that love and community to encompass all mankind. . . .⁹³

Actually, it is not the home or the Church as primary teacher, but the home and Church as co-partners in the task of nurturing Christian souls.⁹⁴

⁹²Ibid., pp. 19-20.

⁹³Ibid., p. 92.

⁹⁴Vieth, op. cit., p. 110.

CHAPTER IV

CURRICULUM THEORIES

Introduction

What shall be the organizing principle of a curriculum which aims at the complete integration of the Christian personality? There has been much confusion in curriculum theory. Generally speaking, there have been two points of view under which other theories fall. One of these is the so-called content-centered view, which regards "material to be taught" as the heart of the curriculum. Under the content-centered view, educators take into consideration such theories as the Bible-centered and doctrine-centered curriculums. The other point of view is the so-called life-situation idea, which regards the ongoing life experience of the pupil as the heart of the curriculum. A satisfactory synthesis of the two points of view has not been achieved.¹

In our own national history there has been the theology-centered school, catechism-centered school, the "conversion at the age of accountability school"-centered school, Bible-centered, then child-centered, and now experience-centered school. However, at any time in history, it has not been as simple as that. Several kinds of school have been

¹Paul Vieth, The Church and Christian Education (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, c.1947), pp. 139-140.

in existence at the same time.²

The problem would not be so difficult if a simple choice of one of these would suffice. But the moment such a choice is contemplated, it is at once clear that the other holds so much of truth that it cannot be left out. Either point of view, to the exclusion of the other, will not give a satisfactory curriculum. An exclusive use of the first runs into the danger of remoteness from life, fruitless intellectualism, and pedantic authoritarianism. An exclusive use of the second runs into the grave danger of trying to educate without content, in an intellectual and a cultural vacuum, cut off from the rich heritage of the past and the enriching contacts of the present. . . . We are forced to conclude that any satisfactory curriculum must come out of a synthesis of these two opposing points of view. This is more than merely trying to reconcile opposites. It is an attempt to see them in proper relation to each other in the light of the needs of persons.³

The Life-Situation Point of View

The life-situation point of view in Christian education is copied from "progressive education," and includes the following features. Racial experiences, community life, curricula, methods and teachers all exists for the pupil and not the pupil for them. The theory stresses pupil participation and demands a place for the pupil in government, planning, and teaching for self-education. It uses the project method, whereby the pupils themselves purpose, plan, execute, and judge the measure of their success. They learn by doing. Instruction is given only when the pupil desires it. The

²Raymond B. Johnson, What is Happening in Religious Education (Boston: The Beacon Press, c.1948), p. 10.

³Vieth, op. cit., pp. 144-145.

psychological method of personal discovery and experience is used. There is free discipline. Its experience-centered aspect does not depend upon a course of study but upon vital experiences which the pupils will find themselves. The "new education" is not a pouring-in or a molding from without, but a reconstruction of experience in the light of changing situations.⁴

Perhaps this would be an over-simplification, but at least in general, it states the aims of progressive education. Applying this progressive education of the secular field to the religious field, extreme advocates of this type of education would conclude:

(1) The pupil determines the process and program of religious education. (2) Like the Greeks, they say that the mind of the pupil is the measure of all things. They deny the existence of absolute reality. To them there is nothing that exists except that which is known and experienced, and this exists only as it is known by the pupil. (3) The project method has a prominent place. (4) Discussion and conference are substituted for instruction. (5) The idea of a set curriculum which contains authoritative and ultimate truth is rejected. The Bible is swept aside as a collection of myths and outdated experiences. In its place they put human experience. (6) Adjustment to the pragmatic sense is their only concern.⁵

The progressive religious educator keeps abreast of educational progress. His aims must be progressive and psychological, in terms of the true learning process, of pupil

⁴James DeForest Murch, Christian Education and the Local Church (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, c.1942), pp. 130-132.

⁵Ibid., p. 132.

experiences, and their reaction to stimuli in all types of situations.⁶

According to Harner, this means:

The first step in Christian education is to come to think first, last, and always of people. In technical phraseology this is called the "life-centered principle" or the "experience-centered principle." At root, however, there is nothing technical about it, but, rather, something very homely and human, To see clearly and to feel deeply that a church exists for people, this is the first commandment with promise in the task of Christian education.⁷

According to Myers, the goal for a teacher of religion is to help his pupils have an experience in which they arrive at an intelligent knowledge of God in keeping with the scientific and cultural enlightenment of the day. Yet it is to be warm, personal and intimate, so that the pupil may feel a "loving spirit" permeated throughout every aspect of his life. This experience is to be created. Myer's slogan is, "creative teaching."⁸

Another writer claims that these three major experiences are needed by the pupil: (1) Seek a workable solution to needs and problems in harmony with Christian principles; (2) Gather information and relate it to the problems of living;

⁶ Philip Henry Lotz and L. W. Crawford, editors, Studies in Religious Education (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, c.1931), p. 79.

⁷ Nevin C. Harner, The Educational Work of the Church (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c.1939), p. 36.

⁸ A. J. Wm. Myers, Teaching Religion Creatively (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, c.1932), p. 45.

(3) Open hearts to the wonders and mysteries of God.⁹

The emphasis is placed on the experience of the pupil. This experience comes through the person's reactions to life in the many situations it presents. While it may utilize experiences of the past, the pupil's experience is contemporary, and that is the problem which must be dealt with. This goes to say that if the learning is to be effective, the things to be learned must be related to the pupil's interests and needs.¹⁰

Furthermore, it is argued by the progressive religious educators that the teaching of religion is not synonymous with the learning of a body of materials. This type of learning has its place as a means, but it is not the end. It is to lead the pupil to convictions, purposes, and a consciousness of needs. Sometimes the pupil is not quite conscious of his needs; and so, these vital needs, not felt, must be aroused.¹¹

Together with the stress on experience and meeting the need of the pupil, the "progressive" has the tendency to undermine any absolute authority. It is believed that the weakness of education as instruction has been that it binds life to the past and seeks to reproduce the past under the

⁹Clarice M. Bowman, Ways Youth Learn (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1952), p. 82

¹⁰Vieth, op. cit., p. 75.

¹¹Myers, op. cit., p. 86.

changed conditions of the present. Instruction with an absolute authority would be to the progressive religious educator backward-looking, static, authoritarian and formal. But they claim "education is an initiation into the ongoing life of the present race and into the ever-expanding world, including the world of God."¹²

The dangers of Dewey's philosophy and "progressivism" upon religious education are evident. First of all, it has placed such an emphasis upon the pupil and the pupil-centered curriculum that the Bible consequently has been minimized. The much speaking of "the quest for God" and "the quest for truth" hints that the Bible does not contain the ultimate truth. Indoctrination has been abandoned for work projects in which the pupils adventure in experiences. And, finally, the new life of a Christian is not superinduced by the Holy Spirit, but comes through the reconstruction of experiences. Many religious educators have so compromised with progressivism that the real vital program of Christian education has been hindered.¹³

"Progressives" in Christian education are abandoning the Christian methods for what they consider superior secular methods. Prof. Laird T. Hite speaks a word of warning here: "One very dangerous and very commonly made assumption is this: The public schools are outstanding examples of effective educational methods. The church may indeed learn many things from the public schools and has learned much, but the public

¹²William Clayton Bower, Religious Education in the Modern Church (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, c.1929), p. 156.

¹³Murch, op. cit., pp. 101-102.

schools are frankly secular in the content of their instruction and coolly scientific in their methods. The whole trend of American life as reflected by its public schools is to depersonalize God and then to ignore Him; to abandon prayer; to neglect the reading and the study of the Bible; to ignore Jesus as if He never lived, and to center life in other interests than religion. This is the spirit of our age and the tendency of the public schools, because the public schools tend to reflect the spirit of the age. If the church extends this too far and applies scientific methods too closely to its work it will stray still further away from its objective."¹⁴

Criticism is also weighed against the expressional activities of the progressivists in the field of religious education. Naturalistic psychology has been somewhat responsible for the great accent on expressional activities, but religious educators of the opposite school of thought question the motivation it provides for such activities. "The naturalist looks upon activities as means of establishing desirable reflexes in the individual and a 'good society' among groups, a view which is fundamentally selfish."¹⁵ The Pharisees, it is mentioned, were also busy in activities, but they were selfishly motivated. Furthermore, it is pointed out that, all too often the leaders of these expressional activities in the Church are worldly leaders who have been chosen because of pleasing personality and organizing ability. They have little or no true conception of the real purpose of the Church, and they have reduced the church school

¹⁴Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 114.

to the level of "sublimated Rotary clubs."¹⁶

The system of the progressivist has no place for the mention of sin, repentance, and conversion. The purpose of the system is to surround the child with a Christian atmosphere, free from any influences which will not permit favorable growth. Furthermore,

He must learn to recognize his faults and failings, but to call them sins is likely to burden him with a sense of guilt that will only impede his progress. In a process of growth there are bound to be imperfect stages and mistakes, but they can be forgotten as one passes on to greater heights.¹⁷

Thus the curriculum has been thinned out and watered down to a point where the Bible, doctrine, and church history are neglected, because many feel that they do not meet an observable need of the pupil. Of such a curriculum Smart says,

It is concerned with what the child needs in order to fulfill an ideal of character which may be only slightly Christian, and not with what the child needs in order one day to grow to his full Christian stature as an intelligent member of a historic Church and an active witnessing disciple of his faith.¹⁸

The Doctrine-Centered Curriculum

To the advocates and leaders of this type of curriculum, the task of Christian education is to impart a given

¹⁶Murch, op. cit., p. 91.

¹⁷James D. Smart, The Teaching Ministry of the Church (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1954), p. 164.

¹⁸Smart, op. cit., pp. 155-156.

body of knowledge. The method is largely transmissive, whereby the teacher acts as the channel through which knowledge is transmitted to the pupil. It is external in that the knowledge comes from a source outside of the pupil; and it is authoritative, in that the mind of the pupil submits itself to some outside authority. The content-centered idea of which the doctrine-centered curriculum is a part appeals largely to the intellect. The knowledge gained may or may not be related to the experience of the pupil. In actual practise, it often is not so related.

In the religious field it finds its fullest fruitage in the Roman Catholic Church. It is an educational system which conserves the experience of the past to a remarkable degree, and secures stability and perpetuity for the institutions which sponsor it.¹⁹

The opponents of the doctrine-centered curriculum claim that acceptance of orthodoxy is the goal of this particular method of Christian education. Some will even parallel this type of teaching with Communism, where correctness of doctrine is elevated above those qualities which make for decent living.²⁰

These same opponents will give a position to doctrine, but this place given to doctrine will depend upon one own's conviction of truth. One ought to accept those doctrines which "speak to our condition," and therefore Christian

¹⁹Murch, op. cit., pp. 132-133.

²⁰Victor A. Murray, Education Into Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), p. 141.

truth is made relative to the individual. In order for doctrine to be sound, it must be void of abstractions and must represent the heartfelt experience of Christian men. Ideas of love and forgiveness have their parallels in Christian experience and can therefore be expressed in doctrinal terms.²¹

The misuse of doctrine occurs when "it is used as the initial qualification for membership instead of being the final expression of that spiritual achievement which it is the function of membership to make possible."²²

In defense of the doctrinal method, Miller stresses that theology is relevant to life. His key words are "relevance" and "relationship." Relevant truths of the Christian revelation must be made to speak to man in every condition. It is likewise just as important to have a sound theology behind the kindergarten lessons as behind the adult discussion program.²³ This is because doctrines and theological concepts arose as means whereby relationships are described. The ideas and concepts of God are descriptions of relationships between God and man. The creeds are statements of faith in a God who did certain things in his relationship to man. He "created the world, sent Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, inspired the foundation of the church, and gave

²¹Ibid., pp. 154-160.

²²Ibid., p. 144.

²³Randolph C. Miller, Education for Christian Living (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1956), p. 36.

us promise of everlasting life."²⁴

Many parents and teachers err in holding to the idea that an ethic can stand by itself. Therefore, there is the demand that ethics be rooted in doctrine, in order that conduct may have meaning and support. Parents feel that they have done their duty by imparting a standard of conduct, even though they have done nothing in the way of imparting Christian truths. The child's understanding of the Christian faith remains on the level of a vague morality. The Christian Gospel itself and other related doctrines have no relation to the whole of the child's life. However, the Christian standard of conduct can only be realized as a supernatural possibility, when it stems from the redemptive power of Jesus Christ through the Gospel. Moralism is an impossibility, because it is not founded upon Christian truth.²⁵

It is well also to understand Luther's conception of the doctrinal method, especially as it is found in both of his Catechisms. Although many modern religious educators pass over catechetical instruction with jibes and ridicule, they do so in ignorance for they do not understand the use for which Luther meant it. Luther used it in the general accepted sense as the essential subject matter of the Christian faith. He did not use catechetical instruction for the sake of intellectual verbalizations. Bruce says of Luther,

²⁴Miller, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

²⁵Smart, op. cit., p. 79.

Hence when Luther speaks of himself daily reciting the Catechism, he does not have reference to the Catechism as a book composed by himself, but the subject matter of that book, the rudimentary and fundamental points of Christian doctrine. So also when he insists on the learning of the Catechism, it is not the book, but again the essential points of Christian truth.²⁶

The Church-Centered Curriculum

Believing that the Church-centered curriculum resolves the antithesis between the Bible-centered and child-centered curriculums, Smart deals with the Church-centered curriculum to some length. He feels that the doctrine of the Church is the foundation upon which the entire structure of Christian education rests. The entire process of a Church-centered curriculum is concrete, and it is contrasted to the abstractness of an education which stresses the making of character or of a generalized Christianity. Many owe their allegiance to Christianity, but they have no sense of responsibility to the Church, even though they were educated in the Church. Their thinking never went beyond abstract ideals. They learned nothing of the history of the Church. Also, there were people who were interested in holding them for the Church, but never confronted them with the idea that they might be the Church. And so they have made no contact with the divine-human reality which is in the Church.²⁷

²⁶Gustav Marius Bruce, Luther as an Educator (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1928), pp. 177-178.

God comes to sinful man in Jesus Christ, and when man, in the nakedness and despair and hunger of his soul, receives the mercy and goodness of God in Jesus Christ, he begins life a second time, he is born anew, this time with God as the center of his being in the power of His Spirit. He is bound into a fellowship with all who share with him in this new life through Jesus Christ so that he has his life in the Church, and not just the Church of the present but the Church of all ages. He know himself one with the whole Church of God across all the earth and through all the centuries.²⁸

Liberal theology has tended to define a Christian as one who holds to a certain body of liberal ideas, and consequently the Christian's relation to the Church has been a matter of secondary importance. They feel that the Church is not essential for Christian growth, and some will even suggest that one might serve Jesus Christ more effectively outside of the Church. Fundamentalism likewise has tended to minimize the doctrine of the Church.²⁹

In contrast, Smart points out that the Christian and the Church belong together. The one who has come to faith is not isolated, but he is a child whom God has called into His Church through the Word of the Gospel. The needs of the believer are to be fed and guided, so that he may grow up to take his place in the Church of Jesus Christ. It is the growth of person from infancy to old age within the Church which is the concern of Christian education.³⁰

²⁷Smart, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 110-111.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 109-110.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 108-109.

This would then imply loyalty to the Church. Miller states that Christian education depends on loyalty to the local church, the denomination, and to the ecumenical Church. However, he feels that the primary loyalty should be directed towards the local congregation. Nevertheless, he reminds us that we are baptized into the community of believers of which Jesus Christ is the head; therefore, we belong to the universal company of believers, which is the historic meaning of the "Catholic" Church.³¹ He also warns that this loyalty to the local church can become idolatry, especially when the local parish becomes the sole center of loyalty.³²

Although Miller and other educators place much emphasis upon ecumenical interests, which many confessional-minded Christians do not wholeheartedly accept, there is much to be gained by their interest in building Christians into the Church.

The Bible-Centered Curriculum

The Bible-centered curriculum has centered its primary interests in the study and use of the Bible. It has been one of the most severely criticized curriculums during past years. Naturalistic views especially have caused radical changes with regard to the place of the Bible in the curriculum. The Bible has just been one book among many according

³¹Miller, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-155.

³²*Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

to the naturalist. Bible study is of minor importance. To this type of educator, the Bible contains only religious experiences of great and good men. The lives of these men may or may not have value for the pupil living under modern conditions. The Bible is merely used to supplement other activities carried on in the church school or Church. "The impact of the living Word is foreign to his beliefs and therefore to his educational practises."³³

Others would advocate a new approach to the study of the Bible. A representative example would be Lotz, when he writes,

The results of critical, reverent, and constructive biblical scholarship were of course rejected by many conservative and reactionary religious bodies, but where they were adopted and used, the Bible assumed a new significance and functioned with a force and effect hitherto unknown. At the present time, it must be confessed, it is still being studied by some for the support it may give to what one has been taught to believe rather than for the help it offers in the conduct of the good life.³⁴

It is clear that this advocate of the "new approach" has no place for Scriptures as the full and final revelation of God.

Those interested in the Bible-centered curriculum will themselves admit the dangers involved. The goal of such a curriculum has often been the mastery of a set of facts or of the contents of Scriptures. The methods are often mechanical and introduced long before the child is able to grasp

³³Murch, op. cit., p. 113.

³⁴Lotz, op. cit., p. 33.

certain meanings. Much Bible information is learned by rote and accepted in the abstract. The goal is often knowledge for its own sake. "The Bible becomes an end in itself, and there is the danger of Bibliolatry that stands in the way of a right relationship with God."³⁵

At the present, there is a trend in religious education back to an emphasis on the content of the Bible. And although it is felt that this trend is wholesome and much needed, warning is given against the belief that the return to the Bible will be the cure for all of the problems in religious education. There is more to the task of Christian teaching than an emphasis on the content of Holy Scriptures.³⁶

If Scripture is to be central so that God may be known, it is not to be studied for its own sake, but for the sake of God's revelation and truth which is found in it. Scripture must not be studied by itself and divorced from the life situation of the pupil. It must be related to the whole of life.³⁷

The content of religious instruction is first of all the Bible; then the materials which have been directly drawn from the Bible or are based on it, such as the Catechism, Bible History, and the Confessional Writings; finally, all materials, sources, aids--such as prayers, church history, liturgics, hymns--which in some way contribute to the faith and Christian life of the child, to active

³⁵Miller, op. cit., p. 174.

³⁶Findley B. Edge, Teaching for Results (Nashville: Broadman Press, c.1956), p. 4.

³⁷Smart, op. cit., p. 118.

and intelligent church membership, and to good citizenship.³⁸

The Christ-Centered Curriculum

The advocates of the Christ-centered curriculum look to Jesus Christ as the author of Christian faith and life. All faith and experience must be derived from Christ who is the source of faith. As a result the will of God is put into the pupil's own experience. The task of Christian education is then to relate the life of the pupil to the will of God through Christ, as it is revealed in Holy Scriptures. The curriculum is largely transmissive, authoritative, and external; but it does not fail to take into consideration the growing life of the pupil.³⁹

Because Christian education centers in Christ, we call it Christian education, and we speak of Christ-centered education. This immediately distinguishes our objectives as Heaven-inspired and Heaven-directed in contrast to man-directed, child-centered, community-centered, or other earth-bound education that never raises its heavy clay feet above the ground along which it is plodding.⁴⁰

Conclusion

The chief problem in ascertaining the correct approach to curriculum theory has been one-sidedness. Various theories

³⁸ Wm. A. Kramer, Religion in Lutheran Schools, Published under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1949), p. 23.

³⁹ Murch, op. cit., pp. 133-134.

⁴⁰ Kramer, op. cit., p. 13.

CHAPTER V

AIMS TO BE MET IF FULL INTEGRATION IS TO BE REALIZED

To Instil Action

Emotion as an impulse to action

Activity is necessary to the educational growth of a pupil. Secular education has considered this of supreme importance, and in more recent years religious educators have given this much thought. When proper Christian instruction has taken place, something positive must be done with the aroused desires of the pupil. A body of wholesome activities should be provided through which the emotional responses may find expression.¹

Looking at the life of Christ, we see that "his parables were based upon life situations of the people, and they concluded with an appeal for action."²

No reception without reaction; no impression without correlative expression. Christ may well have said that. In fact, it was out of Christ's practise that world teachers have caught the method. His recorded utterances are full of words like: "Come." "Follow." "Go." "Watch." "Arise." "Walk." "Work." "Tell." "Make."³ It was always, "Hear, then do," with doing emphasized.

¹James DeForest Murch, Christian Education and the Local Church (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing House, c.1945), p. 176.

²Randolph C. Miller, Education for Christian Living (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1956), p. 21.

Harner would add:

And yet many a boy has gone through ten years of church school and church without once being given an opportunity to "escape into a wholehearted deed." All too often we say to him, in effect: "Now sit down, talk and be talked to, pray and be prayed about; we shall open to you every avenue of Christian growth except the real one of losing your life for the kingdom of God." The boy wonders why the Christian life is so dull and uninteresting, and what is meant by the strange talk in the New Testament of joy, and peace, and an abundant life. He has experienced nothing of the sort. . . . Hence lies the greatest present weakness in Christian education!⁴

The child and young person need to have their hearts warmed, but they need guidance in moving to the next step. That is following through their Christian concern into action. Young people as well as adults feel a sense of frustration if the impulse has only resulted in passing a resolution.⁵

Edge says that in leading people to have an "emotional catharsis," there is grave danger. "They have their emotions stirred so often without making an overt response that they identify this emotional stirring with having had the religious experience they discussed in class."⁶ They receive a satisfying experience by merely speaking about the experience. Emotions play a big role in religious

³Murch, op. cit., pp. 183-184.

⁴Nevin C. Harner, The Educational Work of the Church (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c.1939), pp. 252-253.

⁵Miller, op. cit., p. 231.

⁶Findley B. Edge, Teaching for Results (Nashville: Broadman Press, c.1956), pp. 17-18.

experiences, but the experience is not complete until it has expressed itself in life and action. In the church school, Church, and in the preaching service, these people come both to desire and to be satisfied with having only their emotions stirred.⁷

Action as a response to purpose

These actions must have a purpose in the life of the individual. Purpose is said to be a formative power in life. Compelling ideas must be present. Actually this calls for decision-making. Until young people are led to grapple with such matters as sin and evil in their own lives, much of their action will be purposeless. Young persons often become bored with activities which are made up to keep them busy or out of mischief. They must experience a need and feel its pull. And if something has gripped them, they will prepare to do something about it.

Church work with young people in the past has done too little exposing of them to the real problems of the real world, and has offered too little challenge to do or guidance in finding the places to take hold even now at their age as youth.⁸

The unit method

The methods, whereby purposeful activity may be

⁷Edge, op. cit., p. 17.

⁸Clarice M. Bowman, Ways Youth Learn (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1952), p. 92.

actualized, are innumerable. We might make mention of one of these because of its importance and widespread use today. This is the unit method. Each unit represents a possible area for growth in Christian faith and life. The unit presupposes action on the part of the student himself.⁹

A unit focuses on one problem which the pupil is to work at. Printed matter might confront the pupil and make him feel a need. It should also guide him to want to find a solution. The question method may be used to probe him into the problem, so that he feels it is his. Before leaving a certain unit, the pupil should be able to put into words the things which he has learned and also any growing conviction which may have resulted.¹⁰

Working with youth

Finally, in speaking of purposeful activity it is important that church leaders realize that their task is not working for youth, but rather working with them. This implies that the adults of the Church do not meet alone and plan the youth program, thus robbing the youth of participation. On the other hand, it may mean a failure on the part of adults if there is a "let youth do it all" attitude. There must be a cooperation and sharing between leaders and

⁹Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 83.

youth.¹¹

To Reach Verdicts and Decisions

In teaching towards the goal of reaching verdicts and decisions, there is always the tendency of undue emphasis upon emotion without sufficient Christian instruction. Much evangelistic preaching has made a lot of emotion, and utilizes invitations and appeals. They feel that without the invitation, the evangelistic message is incomplete and the effect of the message unknown. "The evangel of God's redeeming love deserves an immediate and wholehearted response, and the invitation calls upon men to make the response in some public manner."¹²

It is admitted that in the Scriptures, there is not found an exact example of the modern evangelistic invitation, but yet it is contended that anything which helps to carry out the principles and teachings of the Scriptures in a more effective way is Scriptural.¹³ Whitesell in particular believes that people need a definite and vital Christian experience. People brought into the Church through Baptism, the catechetical class, and the membership class are less likely to have this experience than if they have made a

¹¹Ibid., p. 38.

¹²Paris D. Whitesell, 65 Ways to Give Evangelistic Invitations (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, c.1945), p. 11.

¹³Ibid., p. 12.

response to a public evangelistic invitation. He does not insist that a public response is necessary to salvation, but rather that it will bring the Christian to a higher degree of the assurance of his salvation.¹⁴

However, evangelistic sermons and the public invitation are more specifically for the purpose of winning people to Christ.¹⁵ For the purpose of this paper, we are more exactly interested in the Christian nurture of those who have already been won for Christ. Whitesell believes that also in the area of Christian nurture, the evangelistic invitation would have its place, for:

The evangelistic invitation is an appeal to the will for decisive, wholehearted and immediate action. The influences or motives that move the will are not the same with all people. We have a right to appeal to all the various incentives that may bring action, provided the appeal is on a high moral level and is consistent with the truth and dignity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.¹⁶

Morningstar has also stressed the invitation as an important phase of Christian education. She believes that there have been an old and a new method of training children in spiritual things. The old method consisted of teaching children Bible stories, facts about the Bible and Christian behavior during the time when they were young and believing. As they become older, they are asked to receive the Lord

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 18-19.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 31.

as their personal Savior in a special service of decision. Under the old method, the invitation comes at the climax of Christian instruction.¹⁷

The new method consists in presenting the most vital of all Bible truths and giving the child an opportunity to receive his Savior. Lessons which follow will seek to teach him to live for Jesus and to become established in the Word. In the new method, the invitation has been placed at the beginning of Christian instruction.¹⁸

If by the old method, Morningstar means that Jesus Christ is never presented as the Savior from sin until the conclusion of some Christian instruction, we must agree that the old method is worthless. With such a method the source and motivation of the Christian life has been omitted. However, the new method, which she speaks of, seems to assume that a person's acceptance of Christ can be fixed to a specific time or instance. Here she is consistent with those who advocate the evangelistic invitation and response. However, it must need be that Christ is presented as Savior not at the beginning or end of Christian instruction, but continually throughout the entire process. As has been discussed in the chapter on proper motivation, Christian nurture proceeds only from the love of Christ. The love of Christ must be

¹⁷Mildred Morningstar, Reaching Children (Chicago: Moody Press, c.1944), p. 12.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 13.

manifest at all times in the task of Christian nurture.

Although a Christian may not be required to make a public response to a demand of Scriptures or the will of God, he is still involved in moral choices. Throughout the entire process of Christian nurture and growth, as long as the Christian lives, he constantly is making choices. There are conflicts of ideals and loyalties. "The choice of 'either/or' has to be made by the Christian, and to refuse to make a choice or to be blind to the existence of alternatives is more than a misunderstanding."¹⁹

Many of these alternative or controversial issues have not been faced. There is a tendency to keep them on a strictly neutral plane. They have been dealt with in vague abstractions and generalities. Christians have been taught to look at all sides of a question, but not to make up their minds and to take a stand. "Christian living today demands decisiveness. Teaching should be 'for a verdict!'"²⁰

In urging pupils to "make up their minds and take a stand," the Christian teacher must always take care to show the way of life which Christ has commended. The Christian teacher should operate only with the "demands" which please God. One of the weaknesses of the modern Church is its willingness to please men instead of God. Christians often

¹⁹Victor A. Murray, Education Into Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), p. 15.

²⁰Bowman, op. cit., p. 28.

pay heed to the demands of fellow members in the Church, and the result for the Church is a climate in which the man-pleasing spirit dwells.²¹ On the contrary, the Christian believer should see that his obedience is to Christ and the will of the Father. This means no less than full subjection to the will of God as it is found in Holy Scriptures.

To Sensitize the Conscience

Murray asks whether the conscience is a subject for religious education. He answers in the affirmative and says that we must establish the habit of children acting by their conscience. But he furthermore asks whether conscience is relative to the individual:

Is conscience then simply something subjective? What is right for me is right, and I allow other people to differ from me. But this would be no principle at all, for the situation in which every man does what is right in his own eyes is clearly one of anarchy and irresponsibility.²²

A sense of values is a rock upon which character is built.

But the attitude that one thing is as good as another and that nothing really matters has destroyed many foundations for the building up of character.²³

In the final analysis, Murray does admit to the relativity of the conscience. He concludes that the education of

²¹Carl Walter Berner, Spiritual Power For Your Congregation (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1956), p. 34.

²²Murray, op. cit., p. 133.

²³Ibid., p. 134.

the conscience is introducing the pupil to wider spheres of interests and helping them to exclude all matters of expediency from the region of absolute values. "And then the further discovery will be made that conscience can be educated by deeper insight as well as by wider knowledge, for there is a 'beyond that is also within.'"²⁴

Likewise Waterink claims that the content of conscience consists in norms which have taken possession of the conscience, but he hesitates to limit the norms of conscience to the will of God or any special revelation.²⁵ And Fickes, although admitting that a man's ideals are the result of religious instruction to a very marked degree, concludes that a man's conscience ought to function according to the norm of these ideals. The norm of a final authority in the Word of God is not mentioned.²⁶

It is the task of Christian education to provide the necessary knowledge to make right choices. It must show the values which arise from making right choices, and the harmful effect which results from making wrong ones. Not only are the choices, which we make, essential for the individual but also for the society in which we live. What exists

²⁴Ibid., p. 136.

²⁵Jan Waterink, Basic Concepts in Christian Pedagogy (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1954), pp. 84-85.

²⁶George H. Fickes, Principles of Religious Education (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, c.1937), p. 182.

today is the result of choices made in the past. And what choices are made today will effect the world of tomorrow.²⁷

The failure in many churches has been their neglect to present the criterion for judging between right and wrong. Our judgment has to a great extent been modified by the society in which we live. A person may be a good "churchman" in the broad sense of the term, but yet his attitudes and conduct may be unchristian. This confusion of adults has added to confusion among children.²⁸

Koehler stresses the importance of properly educating the conscience:

If we succeed in quickening and regulating the consciences of our pupils, we have indeed done much towards their education; for conscience will continue to exert its influence on them even when our personal influence ceases to operate.²⁹

But Koehler, in contrast to many other religious educators, gives assent to a single norm. Although a person must not be made to act against his conscience, it may be necessary to set his conscience right, so that its witness agrees with the Word of God. Since conscience is the assent to some norm, it is important that the person accepts the correct norm, the divine authority of God's Word. This is the norm by which his conscience should be regulated and controlled.

²⁷John Quincy Schisler, Christian Teaching in the Churches (New York: Abingdon Press, c.1954), p. 14.

²⁸Ibid., p. 33.

²⁹Edward W. A. Koehler, A Christian Pedagogy (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1950), p. 198.

It is also necessary that we have an "absolute" norm, if there is to be a proper distinction between right and wrong, good and evil. This norm cannot be modified by the human opinion of men, but it must be in complete accordance with the Word of God, which is the only infallible rule of conduct.³⁰

Children usually recognize very readily what is meant when the activity of the conscience is described to them, It insists indeed that man do the things he thinks is right and avoid what he things is wrong, but it does not always dependably point out what is right or wrong, . . . the conscience can be trained, . . . but also can be trained to speak wrongly. However, when only those things are made matters of conscience to which God Himself has bound us in His holy Word, and all of those, then the conscience becomes a reliable and invaluable monitor to us as we go through life. The training of the consciences of children so that they will speak faithfully and accurately in accordance with the revealed will of God is one of the most important aims of true Christian education and one of its most blessed results.³¹

To Create Self-Discipline

The creating of self-discipline might be called the transfer of outer authority into inner judgment. Spiritual and moral fiber, the ability to choose wisely and to desire correct paths of conduct must eventually come from the pupil himself. The only restraints which are lasting and effective are those that come from within. "The only commandment

³⁰Koehler, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

³¹A. Haentzschel, Learning to Know the Child (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1941), p. 64.

willingly obeyed is that which one makes for himself." This naturally could lead to relativity, but not if correct concepts and ideals are a part of one's education. These ideals are transmitted through Christian instruction. In proper instruction, they become one's own by willing adoption.³² Genuine growth results on the part of the learner, when he has been impressed with truth from without.³³

Especially in the case of the adolescent, independence is needed. While attempting to achieve freedom from parents and other adults, he still looks for security. He must be made to see that this freedom still implies responsibility.

And although a person may achieve freedom, it is a mistake to think that a pupil can create Christian character out of his own unguided experience. Authority is still present, when a person feels himself free. It is a part of Christian education to present to the pupil the truths and facts of Christianity, so that they may make their appeal to the mind of the pupil. Christian education must present these facts and convictions with all the weight of the authority of Scriptures.³⁴ "The root of all discipline is to teach the child to understand 'that you are not your own.'"³⁵

³²Fickes, op. cit., p. 183.

³³Paul Vieth, The Church and Christian Education (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, c.1947), p. 79.

³⁴Ibid., p. 80.

³⁵Waterink, op. cit., p. 72.

This then is the aim: that measures are taken which are needed to bring the pupil to self-discipline. Discipline on the part of the educator and parents often restrains and bridle in a negative sense, but this is not the exclusive use. There is a certain ideal to be reached, and discipline is also a means to attain that ideal. Its final purpose is to bring the pupil to the point where he no longer requires the discipline by others. Self-discipline will then be his guide; self-guidance according to the norms laid down in the Word of God.³⁶

The process of conditioning must be lifted to the level of self-conditioning, The conditioning is done by some one other than the person so that he is wrought upon by influences external to himself. Obviously, in the earliest stages of growth much of the conditioning process must be brought about by others, for the reason that the immature child has neither the knowledge nor the experience to condition his own experience. . . . This is vital education.³⁷

DeHovre speaks of this in the field of Roman Catholic education. Freedom is essential in his thinking, but he does not countenance the demand for the rejection of authority. He believes that the two concepts are inseparable. "We cannot educate for freedom without authority." Freedom does not imply license.³⁸

³⁶Waterink, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

³⁷William Clayton Bower, Religious Education in the Modern Church (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, c.1929), pp. 129-130.

³⁸Franz DeHovre, Catholicism in Education, (Translated from the French by Edward B. Jordan (New York: Benziger Bros., c.1954), pp. 137-138.

And here is where the role of the teacher is important. The doctrine of self-activity is often carried to extremes, but where real learning is to take place, the work and influence of the teacher cannot be minimized. Education is the product of the combined activity of the pupil and teacher, and it involves activity as well as passivity on the part of the pupil. "He must contribute to his own formation but he must also allow himself to be formed by others."³⁹

There are therefore two sides to discipline--the teacher and the pupil. Discipline is the act of becoming a disciple, of accepting authority. This would mean that a leader is to be followed. Murray directs this to those who would become teachers:

If the children are to be disciples, are you worthy to be a leader? If it be said that they are to become disciples not of the teacher but of Christ, how can that happen except the teacher himself is a disciple worthy of imitation?⁴⁰

To Present a Challenge

Many religious educators point out that one of the greatest weaknesses in the churches and Christian education is the lack of the element of challenge. Some churches have few high spiritual ideals. In reality they have a low respect of themselves and do not claim the respect of others. On the contrary, Christian demands should be exacting and

³⁹Ibid., p. 244.

⁴⁰Murray, op. cit., p. 137.

present a challenge. Berner more specifically applies this to the entrance requirements for membership in the Church. "Any church which is worth joining should be hard to join." He believes that incoming members must be affirmative in their intentions to become fit for steady growth within the Church.⁴¹

In the area of working with youth, the Church often becomes apologetic and takes on a defensive character. If the Church is to be effective, it must do away with this defensive mentality and confront the young with "the full, rigorous claim of Christian discipleship."⁴²

Other agencies of the community demand much time of the youth. The Church should not demand less of their time. "No appeal for voluntary service should be more insistent and more attractive to lay people than that of their own churches."⁴³ Very often the most capable persons in the Church have their activities in the community, while the less able find their activity in the Church. Members should be taught that anyone committed to the Lord Jesus Christ should place service in his name first.⁴⁴

⁴¹Carl Walter Berner, Spiritual Power for Your Congregation (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1956), p. 34.

⁴²James D. Smart, The Teaching Ministry of the Church (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1954), p. 130.

⁴³Vieth, op. cit., p. 207.

⁴⁴Ibid.

It is basically important that developing Christians realize the cost of Christian discipleship. Mott says that Christ never hid his scars to win a disciple.⁴⁵ One of the goals of Christian education ought to be that it directs and stimulates people to strive after the highest ideals without counting the cost. It must show that the "highest life is not built up by adding from without."⁴⁶

To Maintain Balance Between Intellect and Emotion

A matter of mind and heart

In teaching for commitment, it is necessary to understand the relationship between the intellect and the emotions. Undue stress has, at different times, been placed upon both. When religion has been confined to emotion, it has deteriorated from sentiment into sentimentality. When confined exclusively to the intellect, religion has become a substance without feeling.⁴⁷

Some look down upon emotions as if they were something harmful, or that one would regret having. This attitude of suspicion is a result of experiences where emotions have not

⁴⁵ John R. Mott, The Larger Evangelism (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c.1944), p. 97.

⁴⁶ A. J. Wm. Myers, Teaching Religion Creatively (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, c.1932), p. 80.

⁴⁷ Wesner Fallaw, The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 6.

been properly guided and controlled.⁴⁸ Many lives have been wrecked through uncontrolled impulses, but this is because they have not been taught how emotional control may be gained. The religious educator must be led to recognize the importance of emotions and then to understand their place in human nature.⁴⁹

Feeling is intimately related to religion. There has been much discussion as to what is the main root of religion in human nature. By some it has been located in the feelings and by others in the will. Doubtless it is nearer the truth to say that religion roots both in the feelings and in the will, A religion without emotion is pale and colorless, without vitality and without power. It comes far short of the ideal portrayed in the Psalms and in the Epistles, in the lives of the prophets and the apostles.⁵⁰

Intellectual one-sidedness

Christian education often becomes subservient to the intellectual element. It serves only cold propositions, methods, and programs which are purely intellectual. It may lack warmth and consider the evangelistic attempt as foolish and too deeply emotional. It tends toward a type of humanism which is void of religious experiences.⁵¹

There is progress on the intellectual plane but not on the emotional. Everything becomes intellectualized or at

⁴⁸ Haentzschel, op. cit., p. 43.

⁴⁹ Fickes, op. cit., p. 53.

⁵⁰ Wade Crawford Barclay, The Principles of Religious Teaching (New York: Methodist Book Concern, c.1920), p. 98.

⁵¹ Murch, op. cit., p. 192.

least the intellectual predominates at the expense of emotions or feeling. Emotions are in a category by themselves and are left to develop on their own. They are cultivated apart from the intellect or are not considered necessary.⁵²

A transition from the intellect to the emotions does not take place. The knowledge exists, but there is no feeling in accordance with that knowledge. There are many who have been thoroughly indoctrinated into Scripture but who remain emotionally untouched by it. The works of Christian life are done as a matter of duty. This is a mechanical Christianity instead of a living Christian character.⁵³

Emotions make religion personal

Since religion is a personal encounter, relationship, or experience with God, mere verbalization is not the desired aim. This personal religion cannot be taught. It is an experience of the heart, and it is worked in man through doctrines which he learns of God and his Savior. The knowledge is not identical with religion itself. Such knowledge may result in religion, but "religious education, then, can only mean to teach religious truths with a view to producing thereby that personal religion of the heart."⁵⁴

To produce this personal religion, emotions are necessary

⁵²Murray, op. cit., p. 100.

⁵³Haentzschel, op. cit., p. 48.

⁵⁴Kochler, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

and hold a vital place in God's plan regarding man. Fear, love, and trust are demands which are made upon man's emotions.

When man failed in his duty, it was the love of God that devised a way of salvation, and the love and pity of Jesus moved Him to make His great sacrifice for lost mankind. The full fruit of this sacrifice becomes man's own through faith--not, however, a faith that is a mere acceptance by the intellect, but one that includes sincere trust and confidence in the Savior. Such faith is an active power in man. It kindles in him true fear and love toward God and so restores, in its beginnings, man's original attitude toward his Creator.⁵⁵

Emotions control behavior

One result of the Faculty Theory has been its sharp distinction between knowing and willing, and between thought and action. There is a difference between the training of the heart and the training of the mind. Religious instruction is not confused with religious education. "There are many instances in which men become wiser without becoming better."⁵⁶

Emotion may especially be necessary in order than an individual break some evil habit and substitute for it a habit which is Christian. In the case of the irreligious and immoral, it may take a tremendous emotional change to move his will and to replace it with the Christian life.⁵⁷

Emotionalized controls of conduct are most potent in

⁵⁵Haentzschel, op. cit., p. 46.

⁵⁶DeHovre, op. cit., pp. 334-335.

⁵⁷Barclay, op. cit., p. 98.

shaping behavior, From this fact it is evident that one of the most crucial problems of our schools is the selection and teaching of desirable emotionalized controls of conduct. Units must provide experiences (self-activity) through which pupils will acquire the right emotionalized conduct - controls in attitudes, appreciations, interests, and habits of conduct.⁵⁸

Conclusion

The danger has been that intellect and emotion have often been regarded as alternatives. They may be so at different levels, but the aim is to keep them in close relationship, so that one does not predominate over the other.

The implanting of the facts about the Christian evangel is the work of religious education. However, when a truth is implanted and a standard of value accepted, emotional power is needed to fix it in life.⁵⁹

Thus instruction and the cultivation of feelings become a single process. Miller states,

Religion thus involves and expresses the whole person in all his relationships. Thought, feeling, will, reasonable belief, disciplined and directed emotion, purposive conduct; all are bound up with it.⁶⁰

We might sum up this section on "intellect and emotion" with a quote from Haentzschel:

In teaching children, it is vital that we constantly keep them reminded of the love of God, not only showing them how it illumines the teaching of the Bible and how it enfolds their own lives, but also how it

⁵⁸ Wm. A. Kramer, Religion in Lutheran Schools, Published under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c.1949), p. 45.

⁵⁹ John O. Gross, Education for Life (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, c.1948), p. 204.

⁶⁰ Miller, op. cit., p. 47.

traces out for them the path of duty. If then, by the grace of God, faith in Christ is kindled in them, this faith will guide them into the Christian life (which it alone can do) and will become in them an agency to bring all emotions into harmony with the will of God.⁶¹

⁶¹Haentzschel, op. cit., p. 51.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to discuss the important principles and factors whereby the Christian personality and character are nurtured, with the goal of teaching for a full commitment in order that the Christian believer might be fully integrated under the reign and rule of Christ. With a few exceptions, the paper has avoided the discussion of methods. Methodology is outside the scope of the present discussion, but it might be added that any methods employed will be closely associated with the principles and factors which have been set down on the foregoing pages.

The prime factor under consideration is the motivation aspect of Christian education. Christian growth and nurture must have its roots in the love of Christ. Christian nurture equals Christian sanctification, and this sanctification proceeds only from the justified Christian believer. So throughout the entire process of Christian education, the Gospel of Jesus Christ remains the source, motivation, and dynamic around which all Christian learning takes place.

During the course of the paper, the Christian learning which occurs through "atmosphere" and "example" has been stressed heavily. This has not been done to minimize Christian learning through "instruction." It is the writer's opinion that one of the greatest weaknesses in the Church is in this area of learning through the Christian character and

example of fellow Christians. When Christian lives are inconsistent with the revealed will of God, as it is found in Holy Scriptures, the result upon the growing hearts and minds of children will be a negative one. The Church and home, pastor, parents, and teachers must realize the impact which their lives play upon the forming character of developing children.

Closely related is the interaction of the Church and home as co-workers in the task of Christian education. The home is the first and foremost teacher in point of time and in the amount of influence. But inasmuch as the Church is the mediator of Christian truth through the Word of God, the work of the Church may not be lessened. It is not the Church or the home; but the Church and the home. The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod has done much in recent years to stress the necessity for closer Church-home relationships and the return of the family altar and Christian education to the home. Not until this is brought down to the level of the local church and until the local church brings it to bear upon each individual family unit, may the Church feel that it has done its task. This would involve adult education, whereby the adult is made fit for the task of teaching his children. It has been said that our job is not so much to "evangelize" our church members, as to "christianize" them. If the home units of the Church can be "christianized," then the goal for fuller commitment and integration can more readily be realized.

For the home then, as well as the Church, the Christ-centered curriculum will become the organizing principle of curriculum theory. The greatest part of the bibliography pays little attention to such a point of view. Most of the authors have advocated a theory which centers about the child or his experiences. Many of the writers have neglected Christ as the center of Christian education. A Christian education which aims for the complete nurturing of the believer's soul must be built around Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners. Although the Christ-centered curriculum centers its attention on Christ, yet the Holy Scriptures, Christian doctrine, and the experience and life situations of the pupil have the utmost significance.

Finally, in discussing necessary aims, we might conclude that purposive activity resulting from properly-motivated impulses of the regenerated Christian is indispensable in Christian integration. In addition, the Church and home must present the full challenge which the Christian life demands. This will inevitably lead the learner to the place where verdicts and decisions are made, where the Christian "takes a stand" either for or against the demands of Christ. The Christian, who has had his conscience sensitized according to the norm laid down in the Word of God, and has his intellect and emotions coordinated as a result of Christ's love and work of the Holy Spirit, will have arrived at a clearer understanding of the Christian verity that "ye are not your own."

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