

EDUCATION AND WORLD OUTREACH

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PART I - J. E. HARTMAN

ASSUMPTIONS

We must begin with the assumption that - God's purpose for this age is world-wide in scope. This is attested by our Lord's statement, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24:14) Other statements embracing "every nation," and "every creature" were also given to indicate a distributive responsibility that is universal. The outreach under consideration is the growth of the church through the adding of those who are being saved from amongst every tribe, tongue and nation.

We must also assume that the education in mind is that which seeks to develop in the student a Christian life and world view including the development of the whole personality of the individual to the glory of God.

Our purpose in this paper is to consider the relationship that Christian education, has to the world outreach in a way that will bring into focus the responsibilities that are before us.

The Witness of the Scriptures

1. The great Commission given by our Lord (Matthew 28:19, 20) has as its central assertion an educational function, "Make disciples of all nations." This is accomplished by introducing them to the power and influence of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Every person of the Godhead becomes an active agent in the development of the one so baptized into the Triune God. The continuing function of the sent servant is one of teaching obedience to the commands and authority of Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. The example of our Lord in calling disciples that they might be with him to observe and be taught is to be copied. After a period under the greatest of teachers the disciples became the commissioned apostles whose work it was to lay the foundation for the future building of the church. Please note, that in the training program designed by our Lord there was supervised field work with actual evangelism a vital part.

3. The Apostle Paul likewise set an example for us to follow in the setting up of a team concept. Paul did not travel alone but had fellow laborers who assisted performing functions each according to his gifts. There are specific examples of younger men who received their in-service training on Missionary journeys who later were given larger responsibilities of leadership.

Paul also established a center in each city for his activities with teaching as the main function. A case that can be considered typical was established in Ephesus after his rejection by the members of the synagogue, and the Jewish community. "But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of the way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus. This continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus Christ, both Jews and Greeks (Acts 19:9,10). Note the disciples were

separated, a school was formed, lectures were given, the school became a communication center for the spreading of the truth received with the end result that a measure of saturation coverage of the Gospel was realized in that province.

The pastoral letters written by Paul to Timothy furnish the guiding principles for the conduct and procedures to be followed by the Servant of Jesus Christ. They are to be considered as didactic material.

There are also direct admonitions given by Paul that are directives for educational work to be done in the church and home. II Timothy 2:2 "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Ephesians 6:4 "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The Issues Before Us

1. The Turning of Men From Darkness to Light.

Christian missionaries working the frontiers meet people in the abysmal darkness that is not only devoid of the knowledge of God but ignorance is the very essence of that darkness. To give these people the light entails the giving of the Word of God, written as well as spoken. To do this language has to be reduced to writing and then these people are taught to read their own language. The Word of God if it is to be authoritative for them as it is to the sending church must be translated into the written form. If all nations are to have the witness of the Word of God then the task today remains unfinished. A vast amount of educational work must be undertaken to bring this age to a conclusion.

2. Maintaining the Light.

The very nature of the revelation God has given of himself in the Written Word places the recipients under the obligation to constantly seek wisdom and understanding to comprehend the truths contained. The original giving of the Scriptures came to us mainly in Hebrew and Greek. These languages cannot die since they are the vehicles of the living Word. Every generation must have those who understand the Word in its historical and grammatical setting as well as the contemporary scene to which the Word is to be re-sent. Linguistics and historical studies are necessary educational disciplines to say nothing about anthropology, psychology, sociology, philosophy and other disciplines required to know and proclaim this Word today.

Every effort of advance of the Gospel has met a corresponding effort to thwart the Gospel either by direct confrontation or by diluting the message or even distorting its main elements until the saving power is dissipated. A keeping and guarding duty has been assigned to the Church. If the attack of the enemy was static, a once and done defense could be erected but such is not the case. The enemy today is striking at the very heart of the Gospel bringing attacks against the doctrines of the inspiration and infallibility of the Word of God, the divine nature as well as the human nature of Jesus of Nazareth, the condemnation of unbelievers and the everlasting reward of the just in Christ Jesus. The apologetics and defense of the faith require perceptive and careful analyses of the false teachings. Men must be trained to proclaim the truth that will keep the light of the Gospel clear and brilliant in the midst of darkness.

A literate and yet simple presentation of the Word of God is needed for a literate age. The message of the Gospel remains the same but the sinful needs of man's heart and mind comes to expression in a way that corresponds to his environmental and educational background. It stands to reason that all classes from the newly literate in an elementary mission school to the University student whose level of understanding is on a vastly higher level must have the truth in terms of his own living. Also the "good works" for all must be developed intelligently and positively.

3. The Continuity of Church Leadership.

Leadership in the Church must arise from within the church itself. Today the church faces a crisis in this very area. The laborers are few while the harvest beckons. Can it be that the nurture and admonition of the Lord is negated in the training of the children of the people of God by an impressive and more influential secular system of education? Can a child in the plastic stages of growth develop a positive Christian faith by the knowledge of an existence that has no relationship to God? Is it possible for a young person to receive and develop the essential Christian virtues required of leadership in an educational system devoid of all Spiritual values? Will a prospective leader trained in a secular college or university be tempted to employ carnal methods to achieve goals that have become something less than the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus?

4. The Tension existing between the Christian and his culture.

The Course of every culture runs counter to the pattern of the kingdom of God. The dominant spirit in the unregenerate individual and society collectively is one of disobedience to the law of God. The adjustment of the Christian to this environment can only be made through the spiritual resources of the new life imparted from God. The accomodation is not made by withdrawal from as many contacts and conflicts with society. The redeemed man must not be a victim of his circumstances but reign with Christ in life now. His prayer is "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." His role is that of salt in a corrupt culture and light in a sin darkened world. Thus as a man he is in the world and must be a man amongst men fulfilling the role of God's ordaining commending God's wisdom and grace in his whole demeanor. The Christian is a Twentieth Century man as much as any man while looking for a city whose builder and maker is God.

Affirmations to be made

1. The Commission of our Lord must be the order of the day for all of us. The main function of evangelistic teaching must be given its proper place in church activity. Sunday Schools, Christian Day Schools and Christian Schools of higher education must not be considered as auxiliary enterprises. With the proper understanding of the main function of the church the resources of the church must be organized to support this primary work.

2. A greater emphasis must be given to the making of disciples and to teaching rather than to going. Proper teaching will inevitably lead to going but going does not assure proper teaching. Extension and outreach spring from the educational function of the church rather than educational work arising out of the going process.

3. We must carry out a more effective program of education for the children of the people of God. Again to do less than God requires brings us into disobedience.

4. Existing agencies now committed to Christian education in the church must be required to state clearly objectives that are in accord with the Scriptures. Positive action must be taken to carry out the stewardship committed to us that results in planning, organization and mobilization to realize results.

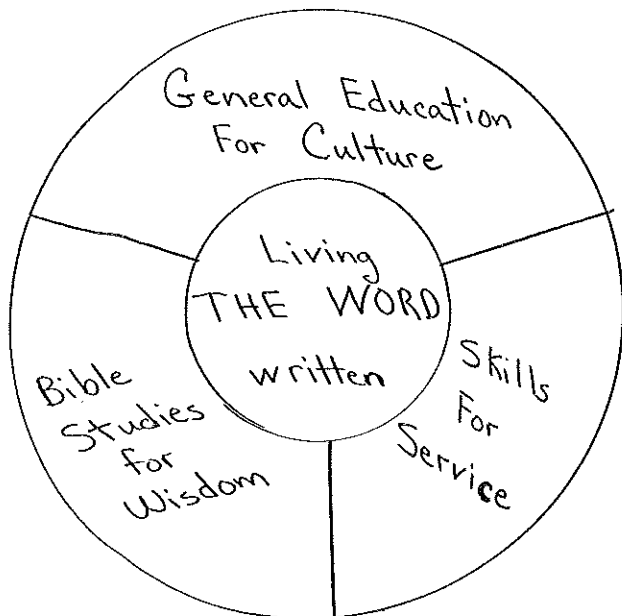
5. Christian young people must be faced with the responsibilities of life stewardship rather than the so-called freedom options of life. The glory of God, the fate of the souls of man, the individual's accountability before God are issues that must be squarely faced. The compensations of grace must be seen as those that far out-value any other earthly goal or acquisition.

6. Greater attention must be given to the liberal arts within the framework of a recognition of Biblical revelation. As Christians we must seek the wisdom which Christ alone can give while giving all diligence to be complete, efficient, and productive workman in the station assigned. Excellence requires self-denial and self-discipline to acquire the knowledge of general education.

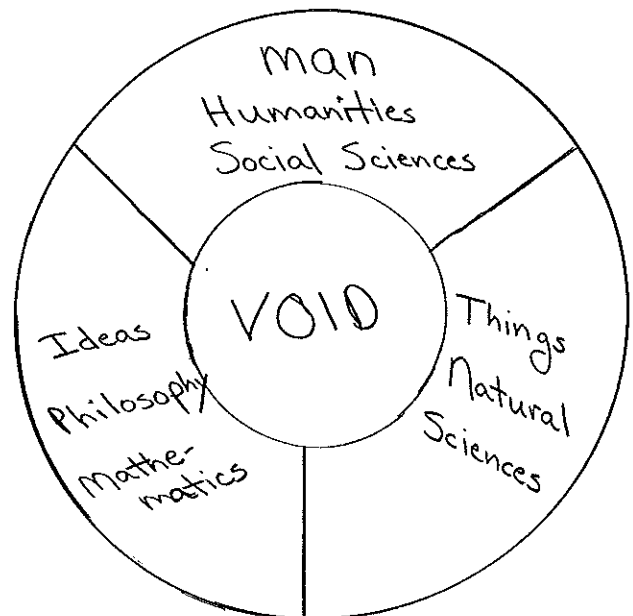
"Basically, we might consider general education for our purposes as the body of knowledge which it is generally assumed is known by the educated man. F. Campion Ward, editor of the book, The Idea and Practice of General Education, mentions that general education "is education in those things which are of general significance to the student, that is, not merely of significance as doctor, lawyer, businessman, engineer, economist or labor leader (and we might add minister, missionary, Christian educator) but of significance to him as a citizen and as a human being." Thus we find as Algo Henderson has put it "General education is an element that should be common to all learning in a democratic society." What is significant must be acquired to make adjustments to life, to be accredited as individuals and to communicate the truth.

7. Every Christian ought to develop convictions regarding the faith once delivered unto the saints by processes of thought, meditations and reflections upon the revealed Word and the revealed world. This is an educational process that must continue so every one may have a cogent reason for the hope that is within him.

Below is a comparison of two educational viewpoints:



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



SECULAR EDUCATION

PART II - RUSSELL T. ALLEN

A. EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG AT PRESENT

In our particular fellowship of churches we seek to educate the Young in the ways of God by providing:

1. Limited home training consisting of a devotional family period which is usually of short duration if held at all.
(Family Altars)

Also some teaching of a quiet-time for children when they initiate their own study of the Bible.

2. Church training which consists of the following:
 - (a) Sunday Schools - Approximately 30 minutes of instruction a week by mostly unskilled teachers with, in certain cases, inadequate teaching aids. Some release-time classes from Public Schools.
 - (b) Youth Organizations - Such as Youth Fellowship, Pioneer Girls and Boys Brigade. They seek, from our observation, to inculcate some teaching of spiritual truths along with developing the social life of the young person.
3. Denominational Projects
 - (a) Advanced by the Youth Fellowship General Committee consisting of once a year retreats, and from time to time, youth leadership training sessions.
 - (b) Berean Bible School for the Post-High Graduates. Too few of our high school graduates ever find their way to Berean.
4. Christian Elementary and High Schools - Some few Christians take advantage of this opportunity.

Taking the picture as a whole, the training of our young is not adequate to meet the demands of our day nor does it give a satisfactory Christian education to most of our young people.

B. POSSIBLE SOLUTION

1. Various of our churches already have or are planning on expanded facilities for further Christian Education. Some have Christian Educational units built on to there present properties. These facilities stand idle most of the day-times of the week. PROPOSITION--- Start Parish Schools to train our young in a Christ-centered liberal education, and in our particular theological distinctives. (Examples of such schools -- Missouri Synod Lutheran Schools; Reformed Episcopal Parish Schools; Mennonite Schools.)

2. Also the founding of a Bible Fellowship Publishing House to supply Sunday School materials and DVBS materials for the local churches. This would be a great step of faith but it appears to us to be one of necessary steps IF we sense from God that He has called the Bible Fellowship Church to minister in a unique way as part of His Body. If we are not sure of our purpose or reason for existence, then we should seek merger with other conservative groups of like faith.
3. Upgrading the Berean Bible School and somehow finding a way to promote the Integrity of the School. This could be done by:
 - (a) Providing more adequate facilities.
 - (b) Offering degrees after full accreditation.
 - (c) Paying the faculty a living wage. The average wage of a Berean professor is generally so low they could become eligible for a Poverty Program.
 - (d) Realizing that Berean Bible School is a MISSIONARY enterprise on an equal footing in importance with schools and missionaries that we support on the so-called "mission field." It never ceases to amaze us, that when an appeal is given to give to missionaries who are establishing or working in Christian Schools in foreign fields, the need is usually met somehow or the other. Yet here in our missionary field at home, we are willing to let Christian Education go begging. We believe the Berean Staff are Missionary Statesman and Women at Home. There can be no denying that Acts 1:8 still stands "And ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in JERUSALEM, and in Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. How long can the dedicated staff at Berean hold the Fort?"

CONCLUSION --- We believe the most pressing need of the Bible Fellowship Churches in regards to Outreach is the indoctrination of the Young in truly Biblical Christian Education. Lives are molded at an early age and in the tender years we set our course. May God enlighten us to the need of the hour!

PART III -- DONALD R. KNAUER

- I. Rethinking educational relevance of our churches as the broader base for education and world outreach.
 - A. The local church
 1. Sunday school effectiveness or stagnation.
 2. Vacation Bible School trends toward one week school.
 3. Adult education.
 4. New member instruction.
 - B. Need - to reform the church's role in education will make heavy demands on personal devotion, and will call for sacrificial expenditure of time and money.

II. Becoming aware of the critical hour Christian higher education is passing through.

A. The financial problem of the Christian college

1. Harassments

- a. Galloping inflation of costs
- b. Rise of the community college
- c. Gigantic intervention of the federal government
- d. Lack of qualified faculty available to low salaried small colleges

2. Solutions to financial burden

- a. Go to our constituency and attempt to broaden the base of our constituency by wider publicity.
- b. Must strive to operate within income (less faculty with higher salaries)
- c. Federal aid - pros and cons

B. The program of curriculum and finances

1. A call to cooperative effort in educational ventures to offset duplication and competition
2. The need for involvement with our society by our Christian colleges: Expand contacts with non-Christian schools (athletic programs, concerts, art exhibits, lectures, notable speakers, social gatherings, exchange of faculty members, foreign language clubs)
3. Pioneer - extension and continuation educational programs
- sharing guest professors

III. Some areas to evaluate and develop

A. The formation of the Board of Directors of Berean Bible School could be strengthened by the authorization for the board to be permitted to nominate potential board members after discussion of their interest and an evaluation of their abilities.

B. Formation of sub-committees to study areas of:

Financial aid

Accreditation - establish goals in terms of finance, faculty, facilities

Promotion

Philosophy and reasons for existence

Inter-school cooperative educational programs