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The Significance of the Principles of Christian Education in the Ministry of John Wesley

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
IN THE MINISTRY OF JOHN WESLEY

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Religious Education

by
John William Cox
April 1964

APPROVED BY

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CHAPTER I
THE INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE INTRODUCTION

Evangelical churches are evidencing a new emphasis upon Christian education. There appear to be differences of opinion within the denomination of which the writer is a minister, as to the adoption and practice of Christian education. In fact, there seems to be a general lack of knowledge of what Christian education is, especially on the local church level.

Since this denomination holds firmly to the teaching of John Wesley regarding the doctrine of experience, the writer was prompted to investigate whether John Wesley used the principles of Christian education in his ministry.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. To what extent are the principles of Christian education evident in the ministry of John Wesley?

Justification of the study. The twentieth century has witnessed a revived interest in John Wesley's work, and especially in his theology. There are numerous books and articles presenting criticisms and appraisals of the Wesleyan teaching. But very little has been written, at least to the writer's knowledge, of Wesley's educational principles or method. This seems unusual, since Wesley was noted for his practical and educational work.

Therefore, since Wesley's theology is highly esteemed, and since his own ministry was so effective, a study of his methods of communication

should prove valuable. If Wesley employed educational principles that are being neglected by contemporary holiness groups; then it is self-evident that it would be profitable for them to reassess their Christian education program.

Limitations of the study. Since this is a historical research, it would be difficult to accurately evaluate Wesley's use of educational principles. This study will compare Wesley's principles of Christian education, with contemporary principles of Christian education, to point out, (1) that Wesley used the principles of Christian education, (2) what the principles were, and (3) how similar his principles were to those advocated by contemporary Christian educators.

II. THE METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The method followed was the documentary or historical research method. Three types of data were collected: secular and church history of eighteenth century England, books and periodicals in the field of contemporary Christian education, John Wesley's works, and books specifically related to his ministry.

The historical data, after evaluation, was presented to disclose the social history of Wesley's time, noting and comparing conditions preceding and following his ministry. The information on Christian education formulated an outline which could serve as a rule or pattern in developing a program of Christian education. The works of John Wesley were sources for the construction of his outline of principles used in Christian education.

III. THE STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION

The study is organized in the following manner: Chapter II is a review of the historical literature; Chapter III is an outline of contemporary Christian education; Chapter IV is the structure of Wesley's Christian education principles; while Chapter V develops the conclusions and brings out the emphasis of the study.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT OF JOHN WESLEY

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THE HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT OF JOHN WESLEY

The significance of the principles of Christian education employed by John Wesley stand out noticeably as his ministry is considered within the religious and social framework of eighteenth century England. To comprehend this structure, it is helpful to note briefly, the general changes that occurred between the medieval and modern periods in Europe, as well as the changes in England during the eighteenth century. Although England is separated in a geographical sense from the mainland of Europe, it is not isolated from European history. The changes in social history which occurred between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries on continental Europe, are evident in England also.

I. INNOVATIONS IN EUROPEAN HISTORY

In the course of European history, the discovery of new lands in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries aroused Europe from the medieval doldrums and set in motion a chain of revolutionary ideas and practices. This expansion of the European horizon was the prelude to a number of developments which collectively may be termed the Commercial Revolution.¹

Commercial changes. The expansion of trade and commerce demanded three main things: first, new business methods; second, the widespread use

¹T. Walter Wallbank and Alastair M. Taylor, Civilization Past and Present (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1956), p. 217.

of capital to support and finance business enterprises; and third, new techniques in industry and agriculture.² In business methods, the two major developments were the use of insurance for the protection of goods and property, and the stock exchange.³ Closely allied to these methods was the use of accumulated capital to promote business and secure profit.⁴ Beginning with the late seventeenth century, the evolutionary change from the domestic system to the factory system became evident. The use of machinery gradually replaced handcraft in the manufacturing of goods. These innovations in manufacturing were facilitated by major improvements in transportation. Better roads, expansion of the canal systems, the invention of the railroad, and improvement of the steamship, enabled the increasing quantities of raw materials and finished products to be transported to and from the factories. The demand for more and better food, by an increasing population necessitated improvements in tools, crops, stock breeding and soil experiments.⁵

Intellectual changes. Simultaneous with the Commercial Revolution with its many changes in the nature and techniques of European trade and commerce, was the Intellectual Revolution with its equally influential changes in the realm of science, philosophy, religion, and the arts. Just as the discovery of new lands ushered in a new era of trade and commerce, so the scientific discoveries brought about a new trend in thought. Up through the medieval period, philosophy was servant to theology. Specula-

²Ibid., p. 235.

³Ibid., p. 233.

⁴Ibid., p. 235.

⁵Ibid.

tion centered in the relation between faith and reason. But with the entrance of scientific ideas and accomplishments, reason replaced faith and became the criterion for all human interests and activities.⁶

This intellectual transposition, in the latter part of the seventeenth century through the eighteenth century, historians call the period of Enlightenment. During this epoch, reason was esteemed above all else, and intellectuals had no use for emotionalism, myth and supernaturalism. Naturally, this became a time of re-evaluation of all aspects of society. It might be said that the Enlightenment was a period of inventory. This tendency carried over to religion, where it reached its culmination by 1750. The intellectuals of the eighteenth century, in view of scientific advancements, could not accept traditional Christianity. Religion, they maintained, must accord to reason. Philosophers of the Enlightenment offered Deism as a solution to this problem. God, to the Deist, was only a "first cause," or "scientific principle," therefore, traditional dogma must be replaced by natural religion.⁷ The influence and consequences of Deism will be dealt with later in the paper.

This résumé of the transition from the medieval period to the modern period, although very broad, sufficiently points up the fact that the outstanding feature was change. The traditional patterns of life and thought were being uprooted and new patterns were being developed. It appears to have been a time of experimentation, of trial and error.

II. INNOVATIONS IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND

⁶Ibid., pp. 217-255.

⁷Ibid.

Social history of eighteenth century England reveals a concentration of the transitional events previously surveyed. The effects of the Commercial and Intellectual revolutions become more evident as the period of Enlightenment reaches its climax in this century. English life experienced changing patterns in four major areas: political, commercial, intellectual, and religious.

Political change. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 initiated a trend toward the development of modern politics because it established the basic principles and philosophy of a new type of government to supersede absolutism.⁸ This consisted of political parties with their platforms and campaign propaganda, elections, and politicians who were dependent on the public for their offices. The philosophy behind this machinery was the idea that the government was responsible to the people. While these foundational, democratic ideas permitted the development of constitutional government in England, they did not immediately eliminate many social and economic abuses, because the nation was still under the control of a wealthy minority of merchants and gentry.⁹ Although there existed a form of democratic government far in advance of other European nations; due to corruption in politics, the common people were still under the oppressive designs of an upper class. Consequently, while political science advanced, corruption in politics prevented any beneficial results to the masses.¹⁰

Commercial change. The second area of change occurred in the commercial life of the nation. Here again, as in the political, technical

⁸Ibid., p. 283.

⁹Ibid., pp. 283-287.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 288

advancement was made, but the immediate effect produced a hardship upon the laboring class rather than an improvement in their status. This change in the commercial picture of England centers mostly in what is termed the Industrial Revolution. Modern historians are prone to consider this a misnomer, in the sense that the change was gradual, and so was more of an Industrial Evolution. New ideas, new methods, and new machinery were not adopted quickly or readily, but gradually, as they proved their worth in meeting the demands of the time.¹¹ Nevertheless, a pattern of change did persist, and the domestic system yielded to the factory system. The population shift verifies this fact. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, three-fourths of the people lived in rural areas. The close of the century found the largest percentage of the population congregated in towns and cities devoted to manufacturing.¹²

Concurrent with the innovations in industry, was the Agrarian Revolution. These two movements, Industrial and Agrarian, while coexistent, were reciprocal in effecting progressive development. Increase of production in manufactured goods brought the demand for more raw materials. The increase of urban populations required more food.¹³ In addition, the demand for food inflated prices, making improved farming a profitable business.¹⁴ The English landlords, for the sake of agricultural progress and capitalistic

¹¹Robert Ergang, Europe From the Renaissance to Waterloo (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1954), p. 556.

¹²Ibid.

¹³J. L. and Barbara Hammond, The Rise of Modern Industry (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1926), p. 88.

¹⁴Ibid.

profit, forced the peasant off the land.¹⁵ The method used to accomplish this business was called the Enclosure Movement. The land held in common by a community was divided and fenced. Legislation to execute this procedure, entitled Enclosure Acts, began early in the eighteenth century and gained momentum with the succeeding years. It is estimated that from 1740 to 1788, forty thousand farms were absorbed by the great proprietors.¹⁶ As a result, agricultural production did improve in quantity and quality, but the peasant cultivators were forced to leave the land,¹⁷ and the medieval peasant village with its peasant economy disappeared.¹⁸ There emerged instead, three distinct agricultural classes: the great landed proprietors who leased their lands for high rentals, the large farmers who rented the lands to operate on a capitalistic profit-making basis, and the laborers who worked for wages.¹⁹

Many social evils accompanied the initial stages of the Industrial Revolution because the predominant motive was profit-making. All else became subservient to the profit-making impetus.²⁰ The chasm between the rich and poor widened perceptibly.²¹ Landowners, factory owners, and investors, prospered at the expense of the laboring class. Men, women, and children as young as four years of age, were regarded as things to be used

¹⁵Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁶Ergang, op. cit., pp. 568-569.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Hammond, op. cit., p. 87.

¹⁹Ergang, op. cit., p. 569.

²⁰Hammond, op. cit., pp. 211-212, 232.

²¹Ergang, op. cit., p. 565.

in the production of goods and subjected to slave-like conditions.²² Working conditions were brutal, as factories lacked adequate ventilation, heating, sanitary facilities and safety devices.²³ Long working hours, twelve to eighteen hours per day, and low pay aggravated these conditions. Pauper children were brought in cartloads to the cotton factories. Many children died from the severe treatment they received.²⁴

The situation at the mining sites was even worse. The miners lived like savages. Even though the underground labor was exceedingly strenuous and dangerous, women and children were employed here too. Women crawled along the passages hauling coal carts, while six-year old children sat in darkness to open and close the gates for the carts.²⁵

Living conditions were deplorable. After working all day in the factories or mines, these poor wretches of humanity had only slum dwellings in which to find a few brief hours of rest. As is the case so often among people with such depressing circumstances, they lived in the depths of immorality. Promiscuity and prostitution were commonplace.²⁶

The social result of the commercial revolution for the peasant class was enslavement.²⁷ These were a people without hope. The church had forgotten them and the industrialist exploited them; they could not see any

²²Élie Halévy, A History of the English People in 1815, trans. E. I. Watkin and D. A. Barker (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1924), pp. 246-247; and Hammond, op. cit., p. 195.

²³Louis L. Snyder, "Industrial Revolution," Collier's Encyclopedia (New York: P. F. Collier & Son Corporation, 1957), X, 576.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 576-577.

²⁶Halévy, loc. cit.

²⁷Hammond, op. cit., pp. 195, 232.

relief from the miseries of this life, and had no hope for the life to come.²⁸

Intellectual change. The transition in the intellectual pattern of eighteenth century England is actually pivotal for the other areas of change: the political, commercial, and religious. It is the intellectual atmosphere that distinguishes this era. The eighteenth century, as previously mentioned, is termed the Enlightenment, or the Age of Reason.²⁹ The major premise of this Age was the autonomy of reason. The rule of reason was applied to philosophy, religion, literature, the arts, the sciences, and politics.³⁰ Society of that period exhibited a mental outlook all its own, having been freed from the superstitions and traditions of the past, and being optimistic of the future. One authority writes,

In England it was an age of aristocracy and liberty; of the rule of law and the absence of reform, of individual initiative and institutional decay; of latitudinarianism above and Wesleyanism below. . . .³¹

Rationalism from the continent expressed itself in England in the form of Empiricism. John Locke, the founder of this philosophy proposed that knowledge came only by sensory experience as opposed to clear-cut reasoning. His notable followers, Bishop Berkely and David Hume carried the idea to extremes and the result was skepticism.³² Rationalism began in the

²⁸Maximin Piette, John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism, trans. J. B. Howard (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1937), p. 113.

²⁹Vergilius Ferm (ed.), An Encyclopedia of Religion (New York: The Philosophic Library, 1943), p. 250.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹G. M. Trevelyan, English Social History (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), p. 339.

³²Wallbank and Taylor, op. cit., p. 241.

late seventeenth century and continued into the eighteenth century.³³ But regardless of what method rational philosophy followed, human reason was the final authority.³⁴ Moreover, as time passed, this appeal to reason permeated the thinking of the masses.³⁵ The prevailing consensus was "confidence in man's mind."³⁶

There had been some notable advances in the natural sciences, mathematics, and the arts, which may have warranted a degree of self-confidence. Newton had added to the work of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo in effecting the shift from a teleological to a mathematical way of examining the laws of nature.³⁷ Robert Boyle (1627-1691), Joseph Priestly (1733-1804), and Henry Cavendish (1743-1794), discovered some fundamental laws in chemistry. William Gilbert (1540-1603) helped establish the science of electricity. William Harvey (1587-1657), with his classic study on the circulation of the blood made a worthy contribution in the field of medicine. In the area of literature, England could boast such names as Pope, Swift, Defoe, and Fielding.³⁸ Outstanding artists: Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Hogarth were widely acclaimed.³⁹ These achievements in science and the arts testify to the intellectual proficiency of England at this time.

³³Ferm, op. cit., p. 221.

³⁴Arthur Cushman McGiffert, The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1915), p. 15.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), p. 1003.

³⁷Ferm, op. cit., p. 204. ³⁸Wallbank and Taylor, op. cit., p. 246.

³⁹Op. cit., p. 252.

Religious change. Rationalism in religious thought expressed itself in Deism and religious skepticism.⁴⁰ When the rule of reason was applied to Christian dogma, many vital and traditional doctrines were set aside.⁴¹ What remained of orthodox Christianity in the Church of England could have been taught by the disciples of Socrates or Confucius.⁴² There was no place for revelation, the incarnation, or divine grace.⁴³ Deism believed in one God, the creator of the Universe, but He was detached from the world and was making no revelation to His creation. Man's only reliable source of knowledge was the light of nature which is reason.⁴⁴ Therefore, religious beliefs that could not be comprehended by reason must be discarded.⁴⁵

England gave birth to Deism and also experienced its debilitating corollary on religious life. Deism exerted its primary influence in refined circles, producing a skeptical attitude of mind, and an utter contempt for religion.⁴⁶ At the same time, Deism produced an optimistic outlook, as it propounded liberation from superstition and reliance on pure reason.⁴⁷ Philosophers like Blackstone, Gibbons, and Burke, believed the state of English society had reached near perfection and that the status quo should be maintained.⁴⁸ This self-satisfied, self-complacent attitude of the upper

⁴⁰Latourette, op. cit., p. 827.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 985.

⁴²William E. H. Lecky, A History of England in the 18th Century (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1878), II, p. 568.

⁴³Latourette, loc. cit.

⁴⁴Ferm, op. cit., p. 221.

⁴⁵Latourette, loc. cit.

⁴⁶Piette, op. cit., p. 112.

⁴⁷Latourette, loc. cit.

⁴⁸Trevelyan, op. cit., pp. 340-341.

class is a characteristic result of Deism.⁴⁹ It finally receded into logical abstractions unrelated to fact, and rested on the optimistic formula, "Whatever is, is right."⁵⁰

Apparently, after the fierce theological disputes of the seventeenth century, Englishmen desired civil tranquility. Consequently, there developed a general desire for the reasonable or rationally revealed.⁵¹ Championing the reasonable engendered a contempt for any strong undisciplined or irrational type of enthusiasm or emotional display of religious fervor.⁵² This religious indifference or laxity in the Established Church (the Church of England) resulted in three principle defects: the discouragement of all forms of zeal, flagrant neglect of the poor in the factory and mining towns, and the presentation of philosophic, rationalistic messages to uneducated parishoners.⁵³

The spirit of the age had so engulfed the Church that the clergy as well as the theology was paralyzed. Clergymen spent more time in searching out sinecures and purchasing benefices than in performing the duties of parish priest. It was common practice for a country gentleman to place his son or son-in-law in charge of a rectory near his manor. The archbishops and bishops were all chosen according to political preferment.⁵⁴ The Church

⁴⁹Leslie Stephen, English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century (London: Duckworth and Co., 1904), pp. 102, 106.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 102-105.

⁵¹Ergang, op. cit., p. 517.

⁵²Ibid., p. 571.

⁵³George Macaulay Trevelyan, History of England (New York: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1926), p. 519.

⁵⁴Halévy, op. cit., pp. 343-359.

of eighteenth century England was merely part of the civil order, lacking standards, authority, or conscience of its own.⁵⁵ One historian called the Established Church "apathetic, skeptical, lifeless."⁵⁶ It offered no restraint to the materialistic philosophy that almost swept England off balance.⁵⁷

Results of change. A review of the four major areas of change in eighteenth century England reveals two factors common to each. Each area contained the potential for the making of a better society, and in each area there was something that had an adverse effect upon society. In politics, although England was ahead of other European countries in political science, the ruling class used their positions to promote material progress instead of human welfare.⁵⁸ The commercial and industrial aspects of English life likewise contained beneficial elements for society, yet the all-consuming drive for capital gain enslaved the masses of mankind instead of improving their lot.⁵⁹ Furthermore, the intellectual character of this period, while it did free man from many superstitions, traditions, and the intolerance of the medieval age, undercut the moral foundations of society because of its devotion to the liberty of reason. When applied to religion, God was given a secondary position and the moralizing influence of the divine upon the human was lost. As a result, the church and the clergy offered only a life-

⁵⁵Hammond, op. cit., p. 212.

⁵⁶Halévy, op. cit., p. 359.

⁵⁷Hammond, loc. cit.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 212-214; and Ergang, op. cit., pp. 569-570.

⁵⁹Hammond, op. cit., pp. 217, 232.

less formalism to a society in dire need of spiritual reality.⁶⁰

History depicts the first half of the eighteenth century in England as a period of unparalleled social retrogression.⁶¹ The level of morality was low in every class and every area of the country. Grossness of conduct was seen in all strata of society.⁶² Light literature was coarse, pornographic, and sensual, and all classes indulged in its use.⁶³ Even a rationalist such as Leslie Stephen, who tries to minimize the existing evils and to point up the intellectual progress, is quite explicit in describing the evidence of decay in English life.⁶⁴ From the tone of history up to 1750, every aspect of English life revealed the sway of sin.

III. INNOVATIONS INITIATED BY JOHN WESLEY

After 1750, many of the conditions previously described were still present; yet a definite amendment in the tone of society began to take place. The national conscience of England became troubled. There appeared a new sense of sobriety, morality, earnestness, and philanthropy. The reform movement which began in the latter half of the eighteenth century and reached its full momentum in the nineteenth century can be credited primarily to the Wesleyan revival.⁶⁵

Humanitarian reform. Methodism definitely proved to be a factor in

⁶⁰J. Wesley Bready, This Freedom--Whence? (New York: American Tract Society, 1944), p. 104; and Piette, op. cit., p. 109.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 71.

⁶²Piette, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

⁶³Bready, op. cit., pp. 79-82.

⁶⁴Stephen, op. cit., pp. 141-144.

⁶⁵Halévy, op. cit., p. 372.

the great Humanitarian movement.⁶⁶ Unquestionably, it effected a moral revolution of national proportions in England.⁶⁷ It has been suggested that without the spiritual and educational stimulus provided by the Methodist organizations, the masses of the peasants could not have been changed.⁶⁸

Wesley is regarded as a pioneer in the movement for abolition of negro slavery. In his writings and preaching, he took an emphatic stand opposing slavery. At the outset of his ministry, England appeared indifferent to the evils of the slave-traffic. When he died, nearly every periodical in the nation supported abolition. The Methodist society staunchly backed the efforts of political leaders to abolish the slave trade. Their unified voice was an important factor in the abolition of slavery.⁶⁹

Several other aspects of society felt the corrective influence of Methodism. John Wesley made England conscious of her social obligation to the poor, the prisoners, and the sick.⁷⁰

Political reform. Wesley's influence on political reform was the indirect result of his social reform activities.⁷¹ The elite of the working class and the capable middle class had been deeply influenced by the Evangelical movement.⁷² The demand for parliamentary reform came through these temperate, industrious and religious people, and resulted in some permanent

⁶⁶Ergang, op. cit., p. 573.

⁶⁷Lecky, op. cit., p. 652.

⁶⁸Bready, op. cit., p. 95.

⁶⁹Maldwyn Edwards, John Wesley and the Eighteenth Century (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1933), Chap. VIII.

⁷⁰Ibid., Chap. X.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 147.

⁷²Lecky, op. cit., p. 652; and Halévy, op. cit., p. 371.

institutions.⁷³ Glaring abuses such as bribery and corruption in politics, the forcing of men into the army, the plundering of wrecked vessels, and smuggling, were ended as a direct result of the Wesleyan movement.⁷⁴

Religious reform. Wesley's aim was not moral reform per se, but reform came as a consequence of his ministry.⁷⁵ The true source of his reform was religious.⁷⁶ His paramount purpose and desire was to bring men into a vital relationship with God. This, he believed, was the true solution to the problems of drunkenness, ignorance, vice, misery, and poverty.⁷⁷ These evils were the result of sin, and only holiness of heart and life could effect a cure.⁷⁸ For this reason, he made a strong appeal for religious experience.⁷⁹ He revived existing Christian dogma advocating freedom of conscience, instead of intellectual freedom as promulgated by the Deists.⁸⁰

The secret of Wesley's success is simply that his message satisfied strong and enduring wants, which popular theology could not do. Wesley called forth a number of religious doctrines that had been wholly neglected by the Established Church. These were vital and cardinal doctrines such as original sin, the vicarious atonement of Christ, the new birth, saving faith,

⁷³Bready, op. cit., p. 73.

⁷⁴Edwards, op. cit., pp. 158-164.

⁷⁵Francis J. McConnell, John Wesley (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1939), p. 72.

⁷⁶Edwards, op. cit., p. 202.

⁷⁷Bready, op. cit., pp. 115-120.

⁷⁸The Works of John Wesley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d.]), VI, pp. 54-65.

⁷⁹Piette, op. cit., p. 199.

⁸⁰Bready, loc. cit.

and the influence of the Holy Spirit on man's soul. These doctrines are basic to the conversion experience.⁸¹ This emphasis on experience is considered Wesley's signal contribution to his age.⁸² Methodism profoundly changed the old religious order, revitalizing the spiritual character of all Protestant denominations.⁸³

Instrument of reform. John Wesley had good reason for his emphasis on religious experience. It was such an encounter with God that had given him the satisfaction of soul he had searched for so diligently. His Aldersgate experience gave him the assurance and power he had lacked in his earlier ministry.⁸⁴ Regarding this encounter, a prominent historian says, "The conviction which then flashed upon one of the most powerful and most active intellects in England is the true source of English Methodism."⁸⁵

With his conversion experience, there came an awareness of the need of his fellowmen. He believed God could meet that need by restoring His divine image even in the most degraded souls.⁸⁶ Fortified with inner assurance, and motivated by divine love, he went forth to minister to the unchurched masses in the mining and factory towns.

⁸¹Lecky, op. cit., p. 593.

⁸²Skevington A. Wood, "Lessons From Wesley's Experience," Christianity Today, VII, No. 15, (April 26, 1963), 4-6.

⁸³Halévy, op. cit., p. 359.

⁸⁴Norman V. Hope, "Aldersgate: An Epoch in British History," Christianity Today, VII, No. 15, (April 26, 1963), 3-4.

⁸⁵Lecky, op. cit., p. 607. ⁸⁶Bready, op. cit., pp. 115-120.

CHAPTER III

THE STRUCTURE OF CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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THE STRUCTURE OF CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The aim of the previous chapter was to give the historical setting in which John Wesley ministered. Circumstances preceding and following 1750 were presented to provide a background, as well as an appreciation, for the educational program developed by Wesley. The present chapter will develop an outline of contemporary Christian education principles, which can serve as a guide and a standard in constructing an outline of Wesley's educational principles. The outline will include the four main areas of Christian education, which are: theology, philosophy, curriculum, and method.

The outline will be developed from the evangelical viewpoint. While the sources consulted are not always in agreement with this view, the principles involved are generally acceptable. The reason for this is that the foundations of Christian education are found in the nature and condition of man, and are in accordance with the natural laws of learning, rather than stemming from a particular theological substantive.¹ Therefore, several sources will be evaluated relating to the areas to be considered, and the prevailing emphasis will be recognized as indicative of contemporary thought in Christian education. However, only the detail and explanatory matter necessary to make an intelligible outline will be included.

I. THE DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

At this juncture, a definition of Christian education is strategic to

¹Paul H. Vieth, The Church and Christian Education (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1947), p. 52.

provide direction for the outline. The definition, although concise, does indicate the authority, the aims, the content, and the methods, of Christian education. The prevailing idea in the contemporary movement of Christian education is "discipleship." Heim suggests that the ultimate value of Christian education is discipleship. He also defines Christian education as "the guided activity by which persons live and grow in the Christian faith life."² Person defends one of Vieth's definitions, that Christian education is "the process by which persons are confronted with and controlled by the Christian gospel." He points out that this definition is Christ-centered, provides for modification of human nature, and presents the dynamic (the transforming power of Jesus Christ) necessary to effect this change.³ Vieth offers another, more fully developed definition.

Christian education consists of those activities whose purpose is the increase of the Christian faith and commitment to discipleship. Its basic content is the Christian gospel, and its method is guided by an understanding of the pupil and how he learns as he confronts the compulsion of the gospel in a multitude of complex human relationships.⁴

James D. Smart likewise emphasizes discipleship when he says,

We teach so that through our teaching God may work in the hearts of those whom we teach to make of them disciples wholly committed to his gospel, with an understanding of it, and with a personal faith that will enable them to bear convincing witness to it in word and action in the midst of an unbelieving world.⁵

²Ralph D. Heim, Leading a Sunday Church School (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1950), p. 39.

³Peter p. Person, An Introduction to Christian Education (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958), p. 17.

⁴Paul H. Vieth, The Church School (Philadelphia: Christian Education Press, 1957), p. 23.

⁵James D. Smart, The Teaching Ministry of the Church (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), p. 107.

Possibly one of the most definitive statements is the one recorded by Lotz, which was drawn up by the Chinese delegates to the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council in 1928.

Religious education in the Christian sense includes all efforts and processes which help to bring children and adults into a vital and saving experience of God revealed in Christ; to quicken the sense of God as a living reality, so that communion with Him in prayer and worship becomes a natural habit and principle of life; to enable them to interpret the meaning of their growing experience of life in the light of ultimate values; to establish attitudes and habits of Christ-like living in common life and in all human relations; and to enlarge and deepen the understanding of the historic facts on which Christianity rests and of the rich content of Christian experience, belief, and doctrine.⁶

A careful comparison of these definitions reveals discipleship as the common aim, the content is the gospel, the authority is God revealed in Christ, and the method is dynamic activity. The apparent emphasis here, is the Christ-centered theory of Christian education. The aim of this theory is to fit men to live in harmony with the will of God; the method is to lead the pupil to know and to do the will of Christ as it is revealed in the Scriptures.

II. THE THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

It is not necessary for the purpose of this study to give a systematic résumé of doctrinal teaching which would serve as the authoritative, fundamental content upon which to build an education program. The assumption is that all of the doctrines pertinent to the Christian faith would be included and taught in a Christian education program. But contemporary writers in the

⁶Philip H. Lotz (ed.), Orientation in Religious Education (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950), p. 94.

field are evidencing some concern over the emphasis of theology in Christian education. They believe overstress has been placed on theology as a substance or content to be transmitted from teacher to pupil, rather than a process or active discipline necessary to aid the pupil in finding a satisfactory relationship with God.⁷ In view of this problem, two aspects of the nature of theology which are foundational to Christian education will be discussed.

The true nature of revelation. Dr. Wiley defines Christian theology in the following manner:

By Christian theology . . . is meant the science of the Christian religion, or the science which ascertains, justifies, and systematizes all attainable truth concerning God and His relation, through Jesus Christ, to the universe and especially to mankind.⁸

From the substantive aspect, the systematic structure of theology would include the main tenets of the Christian dogma: the doctrine of God, the doctrine of the Son, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of creation, of revelation, of man, of sin, of atonement and redemption, of eschatology, and of the Church. These doctrines in turn are derived from the documentary records of God's revelation of Himself in Christ Jesus.⁹ This, for general purposes, is the content of theology.

Now, the problem that contemporary educators point out is that some fail to give theological content its full meaning or expression in Christian

⁷Donald J. Butler, Religious Education (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1962), pp. 122-123.

⁸Orton H. Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1952), I, 15.

⁹Ibid., p. 167.

education. Two extremes appear evident in the practice of Christian education. One is to stress method and program, and use just enough theology to make it religious. The other extreme is to place the stress on the content of theology, to the neglect of method and personal application. That is, the purpose of education to this latter group would be the defense or preservation of dogma, rather than the use of it as a means to lead persons into a right relationship with God. Many people have been exposed to enough Scriptural truth to enable them to live deeply spiritual lives, yet they have not actively assimilated the truth sufficiently to effect a change in their lives.¹⁰ A proper balance between these two extremes must be maintained, if Christian education is to accomplish its purpose.

The formal definition of theology could be condensed to the idea that Christian theology is the scientific and systematic treatment of the revelation of God; the true source of this revelation being the Holy Scriptures.¹¹ Therefore, in the light of what has been said, Christian education must not be limited to merely presenting and preserving a written revelation, a stereotyped form of theology; rather, it should convey the idea that revelation is more than just information about God, it is revealing God Himself.¹² Most basic to the theological content of Christian education is that God's revelation of Himself to man, in the person of Jesus Christ, was God penetrating into human life at man's own level. The recognition of this fact brings with it a certainty, a certainty most evident in the New Testament

¹⁰Lois E. LeBar, Education That is Christian (Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1958), p. 205.

¹¹Wiley, loc. cit.

¹²Smart, op. cit., p. 25.

believers. Furthermore, inherent within certainty is the knowledge of God, His purpose, His plan and His power.¹³ Phillips expresses more on this truth by saying that when Jesus Christ is accepted as ". . . the planned focusing of God in history, our faith becomes a certainty"; and although the whole of God is not known, what sort of Person God is, is learned, as well as what kind of plan God is attempting to work out, and what coöperative action He expects of His people.¹⁴ It is this intimate, engrossing knowledge of God that must be maintained as the primary, theological emphasis in Christian education. Butler provides another expression of the same truth, when he writes, "This content is theology of past and present, true enough, but its primary intentions are that God may speak to us now and that we may theologize in the present."¹⁵ It follows, therefore, that the theological content of Christian education, while it embodies the main tenets of the Christian dogma, must not be considered as the end of Christian education, but one of the main instruments to be used in leading men to a personal encounter with God.

The vital concept of communication. The second aspect of the theology of Christian education is the vital concept of communication. This aspect is related to the first in such a way as to lend it support. They are closely related because two natural questions arise out of the first idea, the idea that God's revelation of Himself was for the supreme purpose of effecting relationship with man. The questions are these: (1) Why has God

¹³J. B. Phillips, Making Men Whole (revised edition; London: Fontana Books, 1955), pp. 33-35.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 41-42.

¹⁵Butler, op. cit., p. 133.

revealed Himself? (2) Why is He still desirous of communicating Himself to man through the medium of revelation?

A careful study of Christian theology brings out conclusively, that "All the perfections of God as manifested in His moral government may be solved into two--His holiness and His love."¹⁶ These, in their essence and relation, may be understood if viewed as characteristics of personality. Personality distinguishes itself from all other existence in what is known as self-grasp or self-affirmation.¹⁷ When the ethical nature of God is viewed from the standpoint of self-affirmation, the concept of divine holiness is perceived; if viewed from the standpoint of self-impartation or self-communication, the concept of divine love is perceived.¹⁸ These two elements, "As essence . . . constitute the moral nature of God; as attributes they are the revelation of this nature through the economy of divine grace."¹⁹

Moral or ethical attributes cannot be comprehended by finite reason alone, but require a common experience.²⁰ They can only be understood with the subjective nature of man. However, man having fallen into sin lacks the subjective basis for the perception of God's moral and spiritual character. The subjective basis, according to scripture, is purity, for only the pure in heart see God.²¹ Therefore, man, in order to know God in His deepest and truest sense must become a partaker of a purer nature, a divine nature. The accomplishment of this, is through the mediatorship of Jesus Christ and

¹⁶Wiley, op. cit., p. 366. ¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 367. ¹⁹Ibid., p. 370. ²⁰Ibid., p. 365.

²¹Ibid., pp. 365-370.

the mystical contact of the Holy Spirit with the spirit of man.²² God's holiness demands this. God's holiness manifests itself in a love of righteousness and a hatred of evil. That is, the self-affirmation of God's personality is constant. All that He does must be in accord with His nature of holiness, which is somewhat like a controlling factor in His makeup. United with holiness and equally the essence of God, is Divine love.²³

Holiness and love in God are related in much the same manner as integrity and generosity in man. Holiness demands not only a nature, but a nature consistent with itself. Since that nature is in its outgoings always love, then holiness in God requires that He always act out of pure love.²⁴

The point that needs to be lifted out of the preceding statements, is that while holiness characterizes the expression of God to man, love demands that the expression be communicated. There are three essential principles in divine love--self-communication, fellowship, and a desire to possess the object loved.²⁵ Therefore, the reason God has revealed Himself and continues to communicate Himself to man is that of holy love, for "God is love"²⁶ Consequently, God, in accordance with His holiness and love, devised a plan to meet the demands of each. The apostle Paul explains it in this manner:

From first to last this has been the work of God. He has reconciled us men to himself through Christ, and he has enlisted us in this service of reconciliation. What I mean is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, no longer holding men's misdeeds against them, and that he has entrusted us with the message of reconciliation.²⁷

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 381.

²⁴Ibid., p. 382.

²⁵Wiley, op. cit., p. 379.

²⁶I John 4:16, N. E. B.

²⁷II Corinthians 5:18-19, N. E. B.

The apostle John agrees with this when he says, "It is by this that we know what love is: that Christ laid down his life for us. And we in turn are bound to lay down our lives for our brothers."²⁸ The astonishing part of God's love is not only that He came down to man's level to reveal and to redeem and thus establish a subjective basis whereby man could know Him; but that the responsibility for the continuance of this ministry of reconciliation is placed directly upon redeemed man. Jesus told His disciples, ". . . As the Father sent me, so I send you."²⁹ This is the vital concept of communication, as He loved lost mankind, so are his followers to love. ". . . Love must not be a matter of words or talk: it must be genuine and show itself in action."³⁰

The point that commands attention in all this, is that the initiating power behind God's communicative, reconciliatory performance was love. Love was His method and His resource. The theology of Christian education must keep this concept, as this is the key to the whole plan and purpose of Christianity.

Somehow Christians must recapture on a grand scale this basic certainty that God is love. Unless they do, unless they feel it and know it and show it and live it, it is unlikely that the surrounding world burdened by the apparent contradictions and all the ills and accidents of this mortal life, will ever grasp the fundamental fact of all creation.³¹

The summary. The assumption has been that the complete scope of theology be maintained and taught. However, the true nature of revelation, and the vital concept of love need special emphasis in order to keep the

²⁸I John 3:16, N. E. B.

²⁹John 20:21, N. E. B.

³⁰I John 3:18, N. E. B.

³¹Phillips, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

theology of Christian education a dynamic, soul-saving, God-encountering experience, and not merely a body of facts to be transmitted from teacher to pupil.

III. THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A formal statement of philosophy of Christian education is practically non-existent in most churches. Yet each church has a philosophy. Whether it is stated or not, the guiding principles of a church constitute a philosophy. Broadly speaking, an attempt to think consistently about life in its entirety is philosophy.³²

There have been, and are, philosophies of Christian education drawn up by educators such as H. H. Horne, Walter Athearn, George Coe, Paul Vieth and others, as well as by organizations such as the National Association of Evangelicals, and the Religious Education Association.³³ Nevertheless, some Christian educators are concerned over the failure of ministers and Christian education workers to maintain a unified approach to the task of the church.³⁴ "The absence of a unified approach or ideology results in a lack of direction for the people."³⁵ This is the primary purpose of a philosophy of Christian education, to provide a universal framework of intellectual reference for the practical work of Christian education. "It interprets the meaning of Christian Education in the light of a world-view."³⁶

³²Person, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

³³Ibid., p. 43.

³⁴Butler, op. cit., p. 133.

³⁵Ibid., p. 134.

³⁶Herman H. Horne, The Philosophy of Christian Education (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1937), p. 158.

However, since there is a reticence on the part of conservative Christian workers to use philosophy, some clarification of objectives and limitations may help to make it more palatable to them. The plan of this study is to develop a philosophy of Christian education in harmony with evangelical theology.

The Value and Place of Philosophy

Philosophy, for the evangelical believer, must be kept subservient to theology, due to the nature of each. "Philosophy derives its nature and structure from the ways in which the human mind works."³⁷ Theology derives its nature and structure from divine revelation.³⁸ While the Christian educator must place theology in a fundamental position, by no means must philosophy be considered irrelevant to him. True, these two disciplines have different starting points, theology from revelation and philosophy from questions of the human mind, but they "converge at many points in the subject matter with which they deal."³⁹ But philosophy, to truly serve Christian education, must be considered as a means to an end, a tool to aid in clarifying theological objectives. It must not dictate to, or determine theology.⁴⁰ When philosophy is employed as a servant to theology it helps to keep the objectives clear and sharply defined. Unbiased, and objective philosophical examination, will expose the true foundation of belief; it will provide an understanding of human thought, its categories and various patterns of organization; it may do much to refine religious belief,

³⁷Butler, op. cit., p. 125.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid., p. 128.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 125.

revealing any inconsistencies.⁴¹

Philosophy also holds a reciprocal relationship with education. "Philosophy yields a comprehensive understanding of reality, a world view, which when applied to educational practice lends direction and methodology."⁴² On the other hand, the experience of the educator provides facts which are considered in philosophic judgments.⁴³ Philosophy is theoretical, while education is practical. This relationship is vital, for ". . . there can be no practice without theory and no theory without practice, for thought merges into action and action emerges out of thought."⁴⁴

Accordingly, since philosophy and religion are related, and philosophy and education are related, then it is logical to assume that Christian education could benefit from a well formulated philosophy of Christian education based on reason as well as Scripture. Not that scripture is not sufficient, or that reason will conflict with scripture, but that those who do not follow scripture may be guided in their thinking also.⁴⁵ Educational philosophy uses the same method as general philosophy, basing its judgments on data gained from experience. An adequate philosophy of Christian education must answer three main questions: (1) What is Christian education? (2) For what purpose is Christian education? (3) How can Christian education aims be realized?⁴⁶

⁴¹Donald J. Butler, Four Philosophies and Their Practice in Education and Religion (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1951), pp. 9-11.

⁴²Ibid., p. 12.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 14.

⁴⁵Horne, op. cit., p. 157.

⁴⁶Stella Henderson, Introduction to Philosophy of Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 237.

The What

The answer to what Christian education is, is found in the definitions of Christian education recorded earlier in this chapter.⁴⁷ But in brief reiteration, Christian education includes all the efforts and processes which help bring children and adults into a vital, saving experience of God revealed in Christ. A more complete explanation will be supplied as the answers to the two remaining questions are discussed.

The Why

The reply to the why of Christian education will come from responsible thought concerning the theory of value, the theory of reality, and the theory of knowledge. The theory of knowledge, or epistemology is primary in the development of these theories, since philosophy seeks ultimate reality starting from the human mind.

Theory of knowledge. Science presupposes that since the universe is known in part by man, the universe is intelligible. "But to be intelligible presupposes an intelligence."⁴⁸ In other words, as man contemplates the universe and his relation to it, he is aware that he is a self, and as a self "is an interpreter in an interpretable world."⁴⁹ The recognition of his intelligence or ability to interpret in his world leads to the conclusion that man's intelligence is derived from a "self-existent Intelligence."⁵⁰ The ontological argument is not reached from a rational basis

⁴⁷Supra, pp. 23-25.

⁴⁸Horne, op. cit., p. 159.

⁴⁹Butler, Four Philosophies, pp. 536-539.

⁵⁰Horne, op. cit., p. 160.

as much as it is from experiential. Those frontiers of experience are as follows:

. . . where perceptual quality points to the creator of that quality; where intelligent responses to man's intelligence reflects Cosmic Intelligence; and where the fact of selves in communion calls for a World Self as the foundation for that spiritual fellowship.⁵¹

The conclusions reached from such argument are: that there must be an Infinite Intelligence because it is the only adequate explanation of man's intelligence; second, it is the only adequate explanation of the order, system, and intelligibility of the universe; and third, it is the only adequate explanation of mystical experiences when they are genuine and real.⁵²

This is the point in the theory of knowledge of Christian education, where philosophy and theology converge. Philosophical analysis will make man aware of a supreme intelligence and even convince him that God is, yet the vindication of his faith is beyond man. All that general revelation can do is provide the knowledge that God is, and that at least He is Spirit. From this point on, God must speak to man.⁵³ This, the Christian faith believes God has done, and is doing. God is communicating truth through three media: the Bible as the inspired word of God, His Son Jesus who became immediate to man through the Incarnation, and the Holy Spirit as He speaks through the body of believers, the Church.⁵⁴ The subject of revelation has been dealt with previously and need not be reiterated.⁵⁵ However, it is of value to notice the relation of epistemology and theology; rather than conflict, they compliment each other at this point.

⁵¹Butler, Four Philosophies, p. 267. ⁵²Horne, op. cit., p. 162.

⁵³Butler, Four Philosophies, p. 544. ⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 544-548.

⁵⁵Supra, pp. 26-28.

Theory of reality. The theory of reality, obviously, is inseparable from the theory of knowledge. Both are of equal importance, but in the order of logic, epistemology is first.⁵⁶ Due to the magnitude of ultimate reality, man is presumptuous even to attempt a formulation of adequate representation. This fact discloses two dangers to guard against in such an attempt. Man must admit his finite limits in his comprehension of reality. He must also recognize that any formulation he constructs, whether explicit or implicit, must never be considered reality. Formulation of reality is not reality.⁵⁷

The basis of metaphysical consideration is, what is it to exist? or, what is existence?⁵⁸ There are two conclusions to this question: (1) To exist is to occupy time and space as do sensate objects, (2) To propose that existence and Spirit are synonomous.⁵⁹ The problem with these deductions is that two meanings are equated for the meaning of existence. Objects and entities which occupy time and space in the physical world and which are purely temporal, are said to exist. On the other hand, God and the spiritual realm which are recognized as enduring, abiding and changeless are likewise said to exist. Strictly or technically speaking, the word exist should only be used in reference to the enduring, abiding, and changeless quality. With this more precise use of the word, things such as time or space, or events whether physical, historical or psychological, are actualities rather than realities. These things represent existence and depend on true existence. There is only one generic existence which qualifies to having such existence, and that is God. "Only a God who in essence is Spirit or Person

⁵⁶Butler, Four Philosophies, p. 549.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 25.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 549-550.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 550.

could be a world ground for the specific psychological, spiritual, and personal events we confront as actualities in our world."⁶⁰ Only God, as the enduring, abiding, and changeless One can qualify as true existence. Therefore, to designate some essence as the absolute, the unchanging content of reality, Person or spirit rather than substance, or energy, or law, must be chosen.⁶¹ Here, in the theory of reality as in the theory of knowledge, theology and philosophy converge. The reasoning process will lead to the recognition that ultimate reality exists in a Supreme Person or Spirit but must rely on the medium of revelation to explain the nature of this Spirit, and His relation to man.⁶²

One further aspect of the theology of reality has to do with man, his essential nature and his moral condition. Man is more than animal, not only because of his soul, but by the complexity of his composition. "He must be defined as the whole that he is, a spirit or person or self whose normal and ultimate end is fellowship with God in the ultimate society of the many bound into the One."⁶³ The self of man is more substantial and inclusive than just the body, although this is an integral aspect of the whole self. As a spiritual being, man is unique in the variety of capacities, talents, interests, likes and dislikes which are assembled in his make-up, and so arranged that he is the one and only individual that he is.⁶⁴ Primary among these capacities is the will, the capacity to initiate, to set in motion, to perceive patterns, conceive ends, and then rearrange the pattern

⁶⁰Butler, Four Philosophies, p. 551.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 550-551.

⁶³Ibid., p. 558.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 552-557.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 559.

so as to create a new objective or end. Every individual contains the embryo at least of a unified self.⁶⁵

Man's moral condition is summed up well in this statement: "Fundamentally, man is made for fellowship with God, and accordingly, man does not find true equilibrium in stable goodness, either individually or socially, unless he is in relation to God and in harmony with His purpose."⁶⁶ Three aspects of this moral condition explain more fully the meaning of the quotation. First, ultimate goodness is only possessed when man is rightly related to God. Second, man's freedom of choice means he may determine his own end. Man's primary need, in view of that freedom, is to be converted from his own self goal to that of God's will. Third, man cannot realize the goodness God intends for him apart from God's divine help. It is evident from this that true reality for man is a spiritual relation with God.⁶⁷

Theory of value. The final theory to be discussed, the theory of value, is automatically related to one's epistemology and metaphysics. Since ultimate reality exists independent of man, and true existence is God, and the good life for man hinges on his relationship to God, then the source of value for man individually and socially is God, and to be rightly related to Him.⁶⁸

Theory applied. After this brief inquiry into the why of Christian education, touching the three theories relevant to a philosophy of education, an application of results is necessary. From the theory of knowledge a

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 560.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 560-562.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 569.

conclusion was reached that a self-existent Intelligence does exist, as; (1) the only adequate explanation of man's intelligence; (2) the only adequate explanation of the order, system, and intelligibility of the universe; and (3) the only adequate explanation of real mystical experiences. For the process of education, this means that openness to the truth and a willingness to accept revelation are necessary. Although the experiential, rational method reveals the fact of a Supreme Intelligence or God-idea, His true identity, and relation to man must come from Him, because, if such a God is, He most certainly is able to reveal Himself.⁶⁹

The theory of reality appears to be an extension of the theory of knowledge. It would attempt a formulation of what qualities a Supreme Intelligence or God should have. The area of metaphysics by nature is more explicit than epistemology. In the case of Christian education, the theistic argument satisfies the claim of ultimate reality. This argument recognizes revelation of God as its source. The work of education, in view of this, is to open the possibility of a relation with God, and to orient toward a life which is eternal as well as a life of temporary relationships.⁷⁰

The value theory concludes that if God is ultimate reality and man's true self is found in harmony with God, then true value experience for man is some kind of effectual relation to God. Education, in such a value context should be no less social, but it will definitely recognize the fact that man's value experience is vitally dependent on theological concerns as well as social. It will take into consideration man's potential to partake of the goodness of God, which he needs to enable him to realize true value

⁶⁹Butler, Four Philosophies, p. 529.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 525.

experiences.

The How

The how of Christian education leads directly into the next areas yet to be discussed. The third question involved in a philosophy of education was, "How can these aims be realized?" The only way these aims will be realized is through the educative process which in turn involves curriculum, method, and agencies. But in this section of philosophy, the how of education will be a theoretical basis, rather than a presentation of an actual program. The theoretical basis will be a paraphrase of material on how Idealism operates in achieving its goals. While all exponents of idealism are not favorable to Christianity, the fundamental tenets of idealism are sympathetic to it and can provide a structure for intellectualizing religious faith.⁷¹ For this reason, a framework for the theory of the how of Christian education will be built on the idealistic pattern, and will be set up in outline form to better facilitate reference to it.

Christian education, a social institution. First, Christian education must be an institution of society, not only because of natural necessity, but of spiritual necessity. As an institution of society it provides the setting through which God somehow speaks to man. In this setting man gains insight into the value of himself as well as the nature of the Divine.⁷² Second, education must exist in a social setting, because man is a socius. That is, if man is an individuated form of society, then the setting for his education should be in relation to others. This requires education to be an

⁷¹Butler, Four Philosophies, p. 263.

⁷²Ibid., p. 223.

institutional affair.⁷³ Conclusively, education, to be Christian and social must be primarily within the church.⁷⁴

The pupil as a self. First, the pupil is a self, a spiritual being, with an individual personality. Second, the pupil is in the process of becoming. Due to man's moral nature and the actuality of evil, recognition must be made of the pupil's potential, what he may become as he encounters God.⁷⁵

The educative process. The exponent of idealist philosophy

. . . is first of all a metaphysical idealist and secondarily a moral and social idealist. The ultimately real, he says, is Spirit; and this ultimately real Spirit is absolutely good. Individual children of man as actually found in the classroom may be far from the goodness of God in moral achievement. And present society may fall short in resembling the coming City of God. But since ultimate reality is ultimate, and since present man and his society are transitory, education must be conformed to the ultimate, which is God, rather than to present man and present society, which are uncertain and changing.⁷⁶

There are several factors involved in the educative process and all must operate effectively if the objectives are to be reached. The first of these is the teacher. The teacher is prominent, not because he is better or superior to the pupil, but because he is the determining factor in the educative process. There are several reasons for his importance. He is primary in determining the student's opportunity for learning and growing. He sets the character of the learning environment. The teacher is, perhaps the most important influence in the student's learning experience. He organizes the subject matter and is the main channel of this information to the pupil.

⁷³Ibid., p. 224.

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 223-224.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 226-231.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 239.

The teacher conceives the objectives and accomodates them to immediate learning experiences.⁷⁷ The second factor is imitation. The fact that children imitate adults and even that adults tend to imitate their ideals, presents a means of leading people into the right way.⁷⁸ The third factor is attention. Interest, effort, and discipline are psychological media that are involved in the laws of attention. By interest is meant the degree of attention a pupil has in a given task, so that he is not conscious of any effort being expended. Effort, on the other hand, is conscious and voluntary exertion on the part of the student to complete or do a task which does not capture his full interest. Discipline is extraneous action on the part of the teacher to stimulate interest or effort on the part of the pupil.⁷⁹ The fourth factor is self-activity. While the teacher is primary in the educative process, he still cannot learn for the pupil. The teacher's task is merely to set the stage or envelope the pupil with learning experiences. The pupil must learn for himself. Therefore, self-activity is an important part of the educative process.⁸⁰ The fifth factor is the curriculum. H. H. Horne, in his graphic style, states that the way to develop a curriculum

. . . is to conceive clearly the ideal character of man and the characteristics of an ideal society, as guaranteed by one's philosophy of life, and then select those experiences, activities, life-situations, and studies that according to one's best judgment, best contribute to those ideal ends.⁸¹

The sixth and final factor is the method. "The idealist prefers that an

⁷⁷Butler, Four Philosophies, p. 240.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 243-247.

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 247-250.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 251.

⁸¹Herman H. Horne, This New Education (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1931), p. 90.

informal dialectic be in process in the classroom most of the time."⁸²

Keep before the student alternative thought and actions which he may choose, rather than confronting him with specific directions and thoughts. Three particular teaching methods lend themselves to this type of program, the questioning and discussion method, the lecture method and the project method. The idea is these methods is to present truth in such a way that the student learns by making decisions and acting upon ideas presented, rather than by coercion.⁸³

The Summary

The emphasis in theology was that the revelation which is the source of theology, is the living divulgence of God Himself. Moreover, His nature being love compels Him to communicate Himself to man. However, due to the blinding effect of sin, all men have not, and are not, receiving this transforming communication. It is the central task of Christian education to help man receive the message of hope. The burden of philosophy, in view of this, is to provide a better understanding of man and his needs. Then, in the light of this understanding, to objectively appraise the Christian education program to see whether it is accomplishing its task or not. Finally, it must set up a program in accordance with these findings.

IV. THE CURRICULUM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Technically speaking, the two preceding areas considered in Christian education could be termed the theoretical divisions, while the remaining

⁸²Butler, Four Philosophies, p. 259.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 258-262.

two areas are involved more with the practices that arise out of the theories. The area to be discussed next is the curriculum.

The concept of curriculum. Christian educators express unanimously that the definition of curriculum of Christian education has changed in recent times to a broader and more inclusive concept. Previously, curriculum was limited to the idea of content or materials used in the education program. Contemporarily, the experience and activities of the student are recognized as an essential element of curriculum.⁸⁴ "In the broadest sense of the term all life is the curriculum."⁸⁵ In keeping with the theological and philosophical criteria proposed, the total experiences of life do have an educative effect upon a person and it is recognized that the individual is in a constant process of change. Yet this is not sufficiently specific for a curriculum of Christian education. A curriculum is planned to attain certain objectives and to realize certain purposes of Christian education. "It possesses order and structure, movement and direction."⁸⁶ Within the curriculum are the implements to perform its work, these are curriculum materials and are not to be considered synonymous with curriculum. The external materials include items like printed matter, pictures, maps, and audio-visual aids. The internal materials include church workers, preachers, teachers, and counsellors, as well as situations and events.⁸⁷

⁸⁴Butler, Religious Education, p. 263.

⁸⁵Vieth, The Church and Christian Education, p. 134.

⁸⁶A Guide for Curriculum in Christian Education, Prepared by the Special Committee on the Curriculum Guide, Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., (Chicago: Office of Publication and Distribution, 1955), p. 25.

⁸⁷Ibid.

No one definition of curriculum is adequate to meet the exact objectives of every group, nor to account for the variation in resources. But generally speaking, the curriculum of Christian education includes all those activities, experiences, and lesson materials used by the church for the achievement of its aims in Christian education.⁸⁸ Actually, each church or group needs to define its own curriculum. For this reason, principles which could aid any church in formulating a curriculum would be more practical than mere definitions.

The following principles are directive in the formulation of a curriculum for Christian education. In the first place, the curriculum must harmonize with the theology indicated. Therefore, it has to be Christian in aim and content. This means the curriculum should cultivate a response to the gospel of Jesus Christ, by confronting the individual in all of life's vital relationships with the truths of the gospel, and make it possible for him to respond in faith, hope, and love.⁸⁹ Furthermore, the curriculum must be basically related to the Scriptures, using them as its primary source of truth about God, about man, and about the world.⁹⁰ These truths will be strongly supported with wide use of the total Christian heritage of history and doctrine. Finally, the curriculum should guide the learner into a meaningful relationship to the church and participation in its program.⁹¹

Second, as the curriculum endeavors to guide the learner in the relationships of life, it will take cognizance of the needs of growing

⁸⁸Vieth, The Church and Christian Education, p. 135.

⁸⁹A Guide for Curriculum, p. 30.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 31.

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 32-33.

persons. These needs are: (1) the sense of security, (2) the sense of belonging, (3) clear moral guidance, (4) spiritual motivation, (5) a knowledge of Christian doctrines, and (6) experience in Christian action.⁹²

Each of these needs will vary with the individual and with the age level.

Accordingly, the curriculum tries to accomodate the materials to the need as well as the degree of maturity.⁹³

This suggests a third aspect of the curriculum. It must take into account the laws of growth. Situations will be set up and resources provided to encourage the pupil's response to God as revealed in Christ, as well as growth in Christian faith. The idea behind this is to relate the truth of the gospel to real life experiences of the individual or individuals being taught, recognizing the variations and patterns of growth and development.⁹⁴

The fourth responsibility of a good curriculum is to provide guidance in and through home experiences. Particular attention should be given to redeeming the home for purposes of communicating truth.⁹⁵

Fifth, the curriculum, when it seeks to work in and through real life experiences, will involve itself in guidance for community outreach. It will endeavor to interpret facts of present day society, define Christian goals for society, and present practical ways to solve community problems.⁹⁶

The sixth obligation of the curriculum of Christian education is to make use of cultural heritage, showing the hand of God upon the affairs of man through history.⁹⁷

⁹²Ibid., pp. 34-37.

⁹³Ibid., p. 34.

⁹⁴Ibid., pp.38-39.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 42.

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 42-43.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 44.

Seventh, to be effective, the curriculum will need to possess comprehensiveness, balance, and sequence. These are the standards of measurement or qualities that give the curriculum form and structure. Comprehensiveness refers to the inclusion of all areas of experience that need attention, as well as to all the areas of Bible knowledge significant for the guidance of each age group.⁹⁸ Balance refers to the apportionment of time and emphasis that should be given each element.⁹⁹ Sequence refers to the form of organization, that is, the order of placement of each element in the curriculum to facilitate learning.¹⁰⁰ Finally, the curriculum of Christian education will provide materials that are practical as well as attractive.¹⁰¹

The curriculum objectives. Secular education has what it calls its Cardinal Aims of Education.¹⁰² These are worthy aims, but not valid for the aims of Christian education, since spiritual objectives are not included in secular aims. Persons has listed a seven point set of objectives for Christian education, from a conservative, evangelical viewpoint.

GOD 1. To develop in every child, youth, and adult, a consciousness of God; to develop an active faith in Him as a reality in human experience and to foster a sense of personal relationship to Him.

JESUS CHRIST 2. To develop in every person a growing faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and to lead him to a personal acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.

HOLY SPIRIT 3. To develop in each person an awareness of the active presence of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.

BIBLE 4. To develop in all persons a belief in the Bible as the inspired Word of God and as the perfect guide to Christian life and conduct.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 45.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁰¹Ibid., pp. 48-51.

¹⁰²Person, op. cit., p. 68.

CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER 5. To develop an increasing understanding of Christ's life and teachings which will result in continuous growth toward Christlike character.

CHRISTIAN HOME 6. To develop in all persons an understanding of the importance of establishing and maintaining a Christian home, and to live in the home according to the ideals and standards of Christ.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH 7. To guide individuals into an ever deepening communion with Christ and his followers through active participation in the Christian church.¹⁰³

The curriculum resources. The thought has been presented that curriculum involves more than content. Nevertheless, content is an integral part and should not be placed secondarily to experience and activity. The content of curriculum is the truth that is to be lived out. The activity of curriculum is utilized to fix truth more firmly in hearts and minds of pupils, and to demonstrate its relation to everyday life. For this reason, the resources or content of curriculum are prerequisite to experience and activity.¹⁰⁴

There is always place for more and better material as sources for Christian education. However, there are excellent sources waiting to be employed. Though a wide variety of materials exists, by no means should equal time or value be given each source. Variety should not be used merely for the sake of variety. Only those sources should be used which will facilitate the realization of the objectives of the total church program.¹⁰⁵

A wealth of content is stored in the rarely tapped reservoir of cumulative past experience. Church history, when used with discrimination

¹⁰³Person, op. cit., p. 71. ¹⁰⁴LeBar, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

¹⁰⁵Harry C. Munro, Christian Education in Your Church (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1933), p. 69.

lends support to the doctrines of the church, as well as providing exemplary Christian characters.¹⁰⁶

The Bible, undoubtedly is the source book for curriculum building, and is the primary and fundamental authority for Christian education material.¹⁰⁷ It is imperative that the growing person gain an understanding of the Bible's scope and purpose, and a personal appreciation for its inspiring influence.¹⁰⁸

Music is interwoven into every fiber of society. It has been, and is, a dominant influence in the Christian church. There is fine music of every kind available. It is rich in theological content, and if properly used, will communicate the truth effectively.¹⁰⁹

While great care must be exercised that imagery or idolatry never be given a toe-hold in the church, still there is educational value in art. Pictures of various kinds are meaningful and impressive, when used advisedly. The retention of content is greater via the eye than the ear. This fact favors the use of religious art in the Christian program.¹¹⁰

There is a vast quantity of literature available today and it wields tremendous influence over twentieth century society. People will read. Perhaps some do not read much, but they do read some. The potential and the richness of this source for curriculum content is inestimable, and deserves more than casual treatment. Good books of every kind and covering a wide variety of topics both secular and sacred should be available to people of

¹⁰⁶ Person, op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 73.

¹⁰⁸ A Guide for Curriculum, pp. 31-32.

¹⁰⁹ Person, op. cit., p. 74.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 76.

the church. But especially should books be made accessible which teach the truth which is the basis of the curriculum.

Published curriculum materials are another source for curriculum content, and due to their nature, require separate discussion. Curriculum builders should be aware of the kinds of materials available, how to evaluate them and how to choose them. Curriculum literature is classified in three ways: (1) according to age-level concerns, (2) according to sponsorship, and (3) according to intention or aim. The first category includes the Uniform Lessons, the Closely Graded Series, and the Group-Graded Series. These lessons are primarily Sunday School materials. The Uniform Series, which is the oldest and most widely used, covers the entire Bible, alternating between Old and New Testaments, and running a six year cycle. The Uniform program provides that all age levels of the Sunday School study the same lesson on a given Sunday. The assumption is that adaptations of this one uniform lesson will be made to accomodate the different age levels.¹¹¹

The Closely Graded Series is the opposite of the Uniform Series and was originally a reaction to it. This system provides each age level from four years of age through high school with a separate lesson, designed especially for the perceptive abilities and interest span of each age.¹¹²

The Group-Graded series is a modification of the Closely Graded idea. The Group-Graded series designs lessons according to department age level. For example, the kindergarten department, ages four and five, runs a two year cycle. The advantages and disadvantages of each type should be consid-

¹¹¹Butler, Religious Education, p. 265.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 266.

ered before one is adopted.¹¹³ Christian supply stores and publishing houses furnish information regarding each series upon request.

The second classification of literature is according to sponsorship, and here again three types are available: the denominational, the coöperative curricular, and the nondenominational materials. These, for the most part, publish the three types of lessons already described, but with this difference; the denominational materials emphasize the particular theological and doctrinal viewpoint of the denomination. The coöperative curricular effort is in the overall planning and outlining and printing of the materials, but each of the coöperating denominations does its own writing, emphasizing its own doctrines. The nondenominational materials are published by commercial institutions who try to be competitive in price. The latter are not recognized as practical for most churches.¹¹⁴

The third classification, according to intention or aim, likewise has three types: (1) the content-centered curriculum, (2) the life-centered curriculum, and (3) the unit of study type of curriculum. The material in the content-centered curriculum corresponds to the transmission learning theory. The contents are something to be committed to memory or mentally absorbed, without experiencing the truth taught.¹¹⁵ The life-centered curriculum was a definite result of pragmatic educational philosophy and progressive educational practice. The material in this type centers around life problems. Then, in accordance with the problem, the solution could come from the Bible or from some principle of Christian faith.¹¹⁶ The

¹¹³Ibid., p. 267.

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 268-269.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 270.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 271.

unit of study type of curriculum endeavors to help people study the scriptures in units rather than in small weekly packages. This allows several Sundays, if necessary, to deal with one phase of truth.¹¹⁷

In addition to the aforementioned Sunday School materials, there are Vacation Bible School materials, Weekday Church School materials, and Youth Fellowship materials.¹¹⁸

Before choosing materials for the curriculum, it must be carefully evaluated in light of the characteristics of the church involved. This three point criteria for a general appraisal of materials is useful:

1. Fitness of materials to appeal strongly to pupils of the age for which the lesson is intended.
2. Fitness of the materials to meet the needs of the pupils as defined by child psychologists and sociologists (age levels considered).
3. Fitness to meet the specific objectives of the particular church (or other group) for which the materials have been prepared.¹¹⁹

The third resource for curriculum content is found in several indirect but definitely related influences. Some of these appear both as content sources and as activities or experiences of the curriculum as they provide both. Christian persons are a living source of curriculum content. A person with a consistent Christian testimony, revealing a life of faith, is a dynamic source of truth. Related to, and inherent in this source, is Christian fellowship, for as pupils fellowship with other Christians they are further exposed to living truths of the gospel. Another source of content is evangelism. This element, like fellowship, is both a content and activity

¹¹⁷Butler, Religious Education, p. 272.

¹¹⁸Vieth, The Church School, p. 75; and A Guide for Curriculum, p. 126.

¹¹⁹Person, op. cit., p. 69.

experience, because in true evangelism, not only is a person exposed to truth, but he must relate truth to himself. A final source of content is guidance. Teachers, preachers, counsellors, and leaders must have the content of truth in order to be effective in the work of counselling children, young people, and adults. In this way they become media of the truth.¹²⁰

The curriculum activities and experiences. The curriculum, to be in accordance with the theological and philosophical emphasis proposed, needs to provide adequate opportunity for the pupil to see and participate in Christian experience and action. As has been indicated, a proper balance between content and experience should be maintained.¹²¹

The primary experience activity of the church is worship. The impulse to worship is a natural expression of the human spirit and yet it is a learned experience.¹²² Protestant evangelical churches are especially weak in the worship experience. The average man in the pew does not know how to worship, he lacks the discipline of concentration. For this reason, he has never learned how to worship.¹²³ Christian education should plan and lead the child from its earliest years into meaningful participation in worship.¹²⁴

The curriculum must present other activities through which the truths of Christianity can be learned. Work in the church, and service to social needs outside the church, the practice of stewardship, church membership, all these present opportunities to teach and train students in the things

¹²⁰Vieth, The Church School, pp. 69-72.

¹²¹A Guide for Curriculum, p. 47.

¹²²Vieth, The Church School, p. 105.

¹²³Person, op. cit., p. 74.

¹²⁴Smart, op. cit., p. 120.

which are involved in living out the Christian gospel.¹²⁵

The curriculum organization and agencies. The program of Christian education functions through organization. A workable and working organization is as necessary in the church as it is in business. God has evidenced by creation and the written word that He is a God of order.¹²⁶ The apostle Paul admonished the Corinthians to keep the program of the church decently and orderly.¹²⁷ Organization is simply good management, or the orderly arrangement of teaching situations in which the Holy Spirit may operate, and the teacher can most effectively work. It should never become an end in itself, only the means to the end of making disciples.¹²⁸

There are some valid principles to guide organization, but there is not one fixed pattern. Each group must decide what it needs to make it productive. Simplicity is the first principle. The organization should be kept as simple as possible. A new department or a new agency should not be set up until there is a need for it and until there are prepared workers to assume the leadership. The second principle is flexibility. Periodical evaluation of the organization should be made in light of changing conditions. If some area of the organization is not making a contribution, it should either be deleted or modified. Finally, organization should be democratic, that is, as many persons should be included as the organization can

¹²⁵Munro, op. cit., pp. 93-113.

¹²⁶Lois E. LeBar, Children in the Bible School (Los Angeles: Fleming H. Revell, 1952), p. 64.

¹²⁷I Corinthians 14:40, N. E. B.

¹²⁸LeBar, Children in the Bible School, p. 65.

effectively use, and the entire group involved in program planning.¹²⁹

Administration in the church is just as essential as the teaching and preaching. The organization, the budget, the buildings and equipment, and maintenance, not only make the work of the church possible, they can be an expression of the inner spiritual life of its members.¹³⁰

Finally, the curriculum of Christian education must be built around the church as its focal point.¹³¹ Within the church there are several agencies, each performing a task that points to the one chief aim of discipleship. There are many agencies within the church, the most common ones being: the Sunday School, the Weekday School, the Vacation Bible School, Youth Fellowship, Mission Bands, Choirs, Men's and Women's Groups, and many others. The point is not to employ as many of these as possible, but as many as are needed to promote the work, and to achieve the ends of Christian education. Moreover, nothing less than the whole church educating, and educating constantly, is sufficient to realize the objectives of curriculum in Christian education.¹³²

V. THE METHOD OR PROCESS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Method holds such a key position in the curriculum it deserves special attention. A curriculum may be well constructed and provide every element necessary for an effective program, but if the wrong method is practiced, the entire curriculum is weakened. The method must be in harmony with the philosophy of Christian education. The prevailing philosophy

¹²⁹Ibid., pp. 64-66.

¹³⁰Vieth, The Church School, p. 14.

¹³¹Smart, op. cit., p. 108.

¹³²Ibid., pp. 113-115.

throughout the paper emphasizes the individual as a self, a distinct personality, and his need of being rightly related to God in order to attain the ultimate in life. The curriculum provides the tools, and the method is to use those tools in the most effective way in order to achieve the desired objectives.¹³³ Method is primarily concerned with the laws of teaching and learning.¹³⁴

What is teaching? "Teaching, in its simplest sense, is the communication of experience."¹³⁵ Teaching is a process which has natural fixed laws, and in which definite forces are employed to produce definite results.¹³⁶ These basic principles or laws of teaching and learning are not man-made. Man discovers them like other scientific principles.¹³⁷ Moreover, teaching is not the manipulation of these fixed laws to make people learn; rather, it is the discovery of how people learn, and then the creating of conditions in which learning may occur.¹³⁸

Fischer has developed a simple but comprehensive statement defining teaching:

1. It is a testimony of what the teacher has already learned.
2. The presentation of a new idea, guiding the student toward knowing something he has never known before.
3. It is making a new truth clear by relating it to a known truth.
4. It is stimulating a pupil to think in the light of his own needs.

¹³³Paul H. Vieth, Teaching for Christian Living (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1929), p. 96.

¹³⁴Person, op. cit., p. 82.

¹³⁵John Milton Gregory, The Seven Laws of Teaching (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 2.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 1. ¹³⁷Person, op. cit., p. 81. ¹³⁸Ibid., p. 82.

5. It is leading a pupil to know Scripture through personal application rather than by memorization alone.
6. It is to provide for the pupil experience in which he finds success and satisfaction.
7. It is to help the pupil to make the right choice without the presence of the teacher.
8. It means to work with the Holy Spirit to make fruitful that which the teacher plants.¹³⁹

These eight points intimate the dual responsibility of teacher and learner in the teaching and learning process.

Gregory explains this dual responsibility by reducing the teaching--learning process into seven laws. These laws are basic and practical.

1. A teacher must be one who KNOWS the lesson or truth or art to be taught.
2. A learner is one who ATTENDS with interest to the lesson.
3. The language used as a MEDIUM between teacher and learner must be COMMON to both.
4. The lesson to be mastered must be explicable in the terms of truth already known by the learner--the UNKNOWN must be explained by means of the KNOWN.
5. Teaching is AROUSING and USING the pupil's mind to grasp the desired thought or to master the desired art.
6. Learning is THINKING into one's own UNDERSTANDING a new idea or truth or working into HABIT a new art or skill.
7. The test and proof of teaching done--the finishing and fastening process--must be a REVIEWING, RETHINKING, REKNOWING, REPRODUCING, and APPLYING of the material that has been taught, the knowledge and ideals and arts that have been communicated.¹⁴⁰

The teaching--learning process. The preceding ideas have actually defined the teaching--learning process, but further clarification or interpretation of these ideas in light of Christian education is necessary. Basic in the teaching--learning process, is awareness of the component parts of what is termed a teaching situation. The teaching situation involves:

¹³⁹H. A. Fischer, Method in Teaching (Butler: The Higley Press), p. 6.

¹⁴⁰Gregory, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

(1) teacher; (2) pupil or pupils; (3) environment, which may be a classroom, church, laboratory, home, or even some location out of doors; (4) curriculum in its narrowest sense, the subject taught; (5) the aim, or what the teacher would accomplish in the life of the pupil; and (6) the method, or process.¹⁴¹ It is this sixth point, the method or process, which is the burden of this area of Christian education.

Learning is a transferring process. The teacher not only declares truth, but he guides into truth. The teacher must constantly be aware that his work is not telling the truth he himself has learned, but it is guiding his pupil through the experiences necessary for the pupil to learn or experience the truth.¹⁴² Consequently, learning must take place in relation to the normal everyday experiences of life. Since the classroom is an artificial environment, the teacher must bridge the gap between the classroom environment and everyday life.¹⁴³ The learning process is also a growth in spiritual life, and so the teacher must constantly be reminded that the task is never ending. Leading the pupil into the experience of the new birth is initial, and may require the expenditure of much time, prayer, patience, and persistence. But this is only the start. Growth in grace needs a greater emphasis in the churches these days. The apostle Paul supports this thought, that when the truth of Christ is truly learned, there

¹⁴¹Herman H. Horne, Jesus the Master Teacher (New York: Association Press, 1920), pp. 1-2.

¹⁴²LeBar, Education That is Christian, p. 136.

¹⁴³Findley B. Edge, Teaching for Results (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1956), p. 40.

will be a transformation of life and a living out of Christian principles.¹⁴⁴
 So growth comes from within and proceeds outwardly, and actual learning will be verified in the everyday actions. Therefore, learning is an inner process and a continuous process.

The point that contemporary Christian educators are stressing is that learning is an active process. This means that the transference of learning will be accomplished more effectively by letting the pupils discover the truths. Pupils must not just be spectators but participators in the learning game of life. The ability of the teacher to guide his pupils into an experience of the truth is a key issue in successful teaching.¹⁴⁵

Edge has set up a practical formula for the application of principles of learning. These principles will facilitate the process of learning.

Learning must start where the pupil is.¹⁴⁶

.....

The teacher must know the members of his class intimately enough to know their level of understanding and their present attitudes in the area being studied and he must teach them in light of and in terms of their present understanding and development.¹⁴⁷

Learning is based on interest.¹⁴⁸

.....

Since learning is based upon interest, the teacher, in preparing his lessons, must make careful plans for arousing the curiosity and stimulating the interest of the class at the beginning of the lesson,

¹⁴⁴Ephesians 4:17-24, N. E. B.

¹⁴⁵LeBar, Education That is Christian, pp. 138-168.

¹⁴⁶Edge, op. cit., p. 42.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 43.

realizing that there is little need for him to continue with it until such interest has been secured.¹⁴⁹

Learning is based on need.¹⁵⁰

.....

In preparing the lesson, the teacher should identify specifically the needs of the class members which may be met by that particular lesson. The materials should then be arranged and the lesson taught in such a way that those needs will be met.¹⁵¹

Learning takes place through activity.¹⁵²

.....

The teacher, in preparing the lesson must make plans to stimulate purposeful activity on the part of the class members. This activity may be mental, emotional, or physical. It may take place both in and outside the class session. We learn best through experience; therefore, whenever possible lead the class in desirable Christian experience.¹⁵³

We learn through identification.¹⁵⁴

.....

The Christian teacher should seek to embody the ideals of Christ in such an attractive and winsome way that his life will both be worthy of and inspire imitation.¹⁵⁵

Employment of these principles will necessitate five main steps.

First, the pupil must be exposed to Biblical truth. Second, the exposure must be repeated as often as necessary to fix truth. Usually pupils of all ages require several applications of the same truth before it becomes fixed. Third, the pupil must be made to understand what the Biblical truth will mean to their lives. They must know what the enactment of Jesus' teaching will mean in terms of daily activities. Fourth, in trying to teach for

¹⁴⁹Edge, op. cit., p. 45.

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁵²Ibid.

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁵⁴Ibid.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 50.

Christian discipleship, conviction is a central and necessary factor. This can only be accomplished by the Holy Spirit. Fifth, and the last step in the learning process, is application. Application in this sense is not general, but a specific planning, with the pupils deciding what they intend to do about the truth they have learned. In other words, how they can put Christianity in action.¹⁵⁶

Within the teaching--learning process there is a principle which has been alluded to but which has not been brought out explicitly. This is motivation. The key to the success of the teaching-learning process is proper motivation. "The pupil is interested and engages in effort only as he has a purpose of motive; consequently adequate and proper motivation is the key to effective learning."¹⁵⁷ For this reason the teacher must discover what needs or interests his pupils have, and use these as motives to learning. That is why the teacher must know his pupils.¹⁵⁸

To learn effectively, the pupil must engage in work that is meaningful to him; it must satisfy needs that he as an individual experiences; it must gratify hunger for learning that he has felt; it must solve problems that he has met in actual life; it must answer questions that his experiences have raised in his mind; it must awake to life ideals that are inoperative; it must touch springs of action resident in a being who has within himself the power of purposive choice to reach goals set by a supreme Personality so that he may realize the end of his own existence as a spiritual personality.¹⁵⁹

Methods of teaching. There are several methods of teaching which a teacher may choose to use. The prescribed theological, and philosophical

¹⁵⁶Edge, op. cit., pp. 32-39.

¹⁵⁷C. B. Eavey, Principles of Teaching for Christian Teachers (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1940), p. 184.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 203.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 204.

viewpoint does not confine the teacher in this area. Evangelical educators approve of several methods: the study method, the lecture method, the recitation method, the problem--project method, and the manual arts projects method.¹⁶⁰ These, of course, may be supplemented with audio-visual aids of several kinds.¹⁶¹ It is not the purpose of this paper to describe these several methods with their merits and weaknesses, as there are excellent books which do this adequately. The concern here is the principle of choosing a method or methods for a teaching situation.

There are five factors suggested by Christian educators to guide the teacher in his selection of method. First is the ability and interest of the teacher. The teacher should be aware of his capabilities as well as his limitations, and choose the methods he can effectively handle.¹⁶² Second, the method should be in accord with the lesson materials provided. Usually, a lesson is designed with a particular method or methods in mind.¹⁶³ Third, the method needs to be selected in view of the age level of the pupils to be taught. For example, the story method or handwork method is best for small children, while the lecture or discussion method is more suitable for adults.¹⁶⁴ Fourth, the method must harmonize with the objectives of the course. The objectives referred to in this instance are not just the general objectives of Christian education, nor the immediate aims of the lesson, but rather, the aims for a group of lessons.¹⁶⁵ Fifth, the method will have to be chosen in view of the physical equipment available and the environment of

¹⁶⁰Person, op. cit., pp. 85-88.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 84.

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

¹⁶¹Ibid., pp. 89-93.

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

the situation. Obviously, a filmstrip presentation is not the method to be used in a room where other classes are also in session. Moreover, a teacher could not use a filmstrip if a projector were not available. These examples clearly indicate how method must be chosen in view of physical factors.

"Good teaching is characterized by the use of the method that is best for the attainment of the specific goal in mind. There can be no teaching without some kind of method."¹⁶⁶

The summary. There are many more factors that hinge on these principles, such as lesson planning, securing carry-over, testing, teaching standards, and others. What has been presented are the necessary, working principles involved in the method of Christian education. While reference to the content to be taught has not been made, the assumption is that the theological content of Christian education would be the primary subject matter. The principles involved in helping children and adults experience or learn the truth which Christian education desires to communicate, is the concern of method. Teaching has natural fixed laws and employs definite forces as do other sciences. The teacher, to effectively communicate, must learn these laws and how to use them, in order to accomplish his task.

VI. THE CONCLUSION

In developing the structure of Christian education, an effort has been made to expose the relation and inter-relation of four main areas of Christian education, namely: theology, philosophy, curriculum, and method.

¹⁶⁶Eavey, op. cit., p. 235.

Each of these areas in turn, was developed to reveal the contemporary emphasis. This helped not only to define the limits of the research, but also to make the material relevant to the present age.

The central objective of Christian education is to make children and adults disciples of Jesus Christ. Discipleship includes the conversion of the individual to Jesus Christ, as well as nurture and growth in the faith subsequent to conversion. The theological resources or content on which the idea of discipleship is founded is the revelation of God, in the person of Jesus Christ, in the Scriptures, and in the Church, the body of believers. The main drive of theology is that revelation is not just information about God, but a vital encounter with God, effected by the exercise of faith in His Son Jesus Christ, and His vicarious sacrifice. Moreover, the philosophy of Christian education supports the truth of revelation in pointing out, from the standpoint of reason, that there is a Supreme Intelligence, and ultimate reality for man is a right relation to this One. Philosophy also, from its accumulated facts regarding the experiences of man, presents the theoretical plan whereby the truth may be communicated in the best possible way to help man achieve a true value experience.

Given the theological content and the theoretical plan of communication, the next step is to outline a curriculum in harmony with these two areas. The curriculum, primarily, is organization to produce an environment conducive to learning. Consequently, the curriculum of Christian education will be a program designed to fully respect both the truth to be communicated and the nature of man's learning mechanism. Thus, the method of Christian education is indispensable as it exposes the principles or laws controlling the teaching--learning process. Method is involved in the actual communica-

tive process.

Finally, the fact that these areas of Christian education are inseparably related and are built one upon the other, emphasizes the idea that Christian education cannot be effective if one area is used to the exclusion of the others.

CHAPTER IV

WESLEY'S PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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Keeping in mind the historical setting for John Wesley's ministry as presented in Chapter II, and using the structure of contemporary Christian education developed in Chapter III as a standard and guide, Chapter IV will be devoted to outlining the principles of Christian education employed by John Wesley. Though the pattern of the contemporary structure of Christian education will be maintained, an effort will be made to objectively expose the principles as Wesley used them.

The plan to include and deal only with the prevalent themes and emphases will be followed in discovering Wesley's principles, as it was in contemporary Christian education. Furthermore, it will not be the purpose of this paper to critically evaluate Wesley's methods, but, in keeping with the thesis problem, to point out that education principles were evident in Wesley's ministry. They were evident to the extent that his whole ministry exemplified a unified approach; an organized program of propagating the gospel of full salvation. Even though some of his methods with children are ridiculed¹ and considered untenable in the twentieth century, basic principles of education were significantly employed.

I. WESLEY'S DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A perusal of Wesley's writings discloses Wesley's awareness of the

¹Maldwyn Edwards, John Wesley and the Eighteenth Century (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1933), pp. 129-137.

universal depravity of mankind. His outcry against sin was the salient point throughout his ministry. His treatise on Original Sin was one of his longest articles, which gives some indication of the importance this doctrine held in his thinking.² Moreover, the sin problem stands out conspicuously as a prevalent theme throughout his sermons and writings.³ The only solution, in Wesley's mind, for human depravity and its consequences, was redemption or deliverance from the bondage of sin. He was cognizant of the universal bondage of mankind, but particularly concerned with England. He considered the sinfulness of the Englishman on a level with the heathen.⁴ For this reason, his consuming passion was ". . . to lead sinners to inward and outward salvation, and to deliver English life from the inroads of vice and irreligion and start it on the way to righteousness and holiness."⁵

Wesley, although primarily a revivalist or evangelist, uniquely combined evangelism and education to achieve his goal. Education was not a result of his revival efforts, it was an integral part of his program.⁶ He explains the reason for his interest in education in his sermon "On the Education of Children," where he likens education to a physician; as the

²William R. Cannon, The Theology of John Wesley (New York: Abingdon—Cokesbury Press, 1946), p. 191.

³Works, V, pp. 492-668. All references to Wesley's Works, indicate The Works of John Wesley (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House). This set of 14 volumes is reproduced from the authorized edition which was edited by Thomas Jackson, and published by the Wesleyan Conference Office in London, England, in 1872.

⁴Works, V, p. 514.

⁵John W. Prince, Wesley on Religious Education (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1926), pp. 9-10.

⁶Ibid.

physician restores health, so education is to restore to man his original rational perfection.⁷ Wesley endorses Mr. Law in his idealistic view of education and quotes him as saying,

Now, as Christianity has, as it were, new [sic] created the moral and religious world, and set everything that is reasonable, wise, holy and desirable in its true point of light; so one would expect the education of children should be as much mended by Christianity, as the doctrines of religion are.

As it has introduced a new state of things, and so fully informed us of the nature of man, and the end of his creation; as it has fixed all our goods and evils, taught us the means of purifying our souls, of pleasing God, and being happy eternally; one might naturally suppose that every Christian country abounded with schools, not only for teaching a few questions and answers of catechism, but for the forming, training, and practising children in such a course of life as the sublimest doctrines of Christianity require.

.....

And is it not reasonable to suppose that a Christian education should have no other end but to teach them how to think, and judge, and act according to the strictest rules of Christianity?⁸

Nevertheless, although Wesley accepts this idea and considers it the ground for education of children, he is quick to add that the actual healing is accomplished by God. The education is merely administered by man.⁹

Wesley expressed the same idea in his aims for the Kingswood school:

. . . our first point was to answer the design of Christian education, by forming their minds, through the help of God, to wisdom and holiness, by instilling the principles of true religion, speculative and practical, and training them up in the ancient way, that they might be rational, scriptural Christians.¹⁰

In Wesley's style of writing, this is his definition of Christian education. He obviously felt that Christian education could make a vital

⁷Works, VII, p. 87.

⁸Ibid., pp. 87-88.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Works, XIII, p. 293.

contribution in healing the sickness of sin. His ideas become more lucid as the structure of his program is developed. These quotations suffice to point out the component parts of a definition of Christian education, namely, the aim, the content, the authority, and the method. His aim was to teach the pupil how to think, to judge, and act, according to the strictest rules of Christianity. The content was Christian dogma. The authority was the God of the Scriptures. The method was forming, training, and practicing, that is, forming the minds of the pupils with God's help, into the way of wisdom and holiness, and teaching or instilling in the pupil true religion, and training them to practice the true religion.

Using this definition as a whetstone to inquiry, the remainder of this chapter will endeavor to fit into an integrated pattern the principles of Christian education as found in the areas of theology, philosophy, curriculum, and method.

II. WESLEY'S THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The area of theology in Wesley's structure of Christian education is definitely foundational. His theology occupies the controlling interest in his life, his preaching, and his writings. However, the same method will be observed in this chapter as in Chapter III. Not all of Wesley's theology will be reviewed, but only the major themes and emphases that are directly related to the ministry of Christian education.

The Three Cardinal Doctrines

Wesley plainly declares that the three main Scriptural doctrines which distinguish his ministry are, "original sin," "justification by faith,"

and "holiness" subsequent to justification.¹¹ He illustrates them in this way.

Our main doctrines, which include all the rest, are three,—that of repentance, of faith, and of holiness. The first of these we account, as it were the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself.¹²

Therefore, in an appraisal of Wesley's work, these three doctrines are fundamental.

Students of Wesley readily agree that he was a preacher rather than a philosopher or systematic theologian. For this reason he has been criticized for inconsistency in his theology. Wesley is recognized for his practical rather than speculative work.¹³

After his conversion he was acutely sensitive to the overwhelming evidence of sin among his fellow men; the drunkenness, vice, misery, and poverty.¹⁴ These corrupt conditions, he held, were the result of original sin,¹⁵ as every man born into the world since Adam's transgression is entirely void of the life of God, and exhibits satanic characteristics instead of the divine image.¹⁶ However, Wesley believed that the Spirit of God was able to restore even the most degraded souls to the divine image. Accordingly, he did not develop a new philosophy or theology, but labored with a consuming passion, utilizing the common doctrines of Christianity to make men vitally conscious of God's transforming power.¹⁷ In line with this,

¹¹Works, VIII, p. 472.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Prince, op. cit., p. 11.

¹⁴J. Wesley Bready, This Freedom--Whence? (New York: American Tract Society, 1944), pp. 115-120.

¹⁵Works, IX, p. 235.

¹⁶Works, VI, p. 68.

¹⁷Bready, loc. cit.

his development of the three cardinal doctrines is from the practical rather than the speculative aspect.

His sermon on original sin exemplifies his teaching on the doctrine of sin. Using Scripture as his support, he draws a parallel between the corrupt social conditions of eighteenth century England and the state of society prior to the flood. The heart of the message is that man, according to Scripture, is full of evil, is void of all good. He is fallen and his soul is totally corrupted. This condition is not only outward, but inward as well.¹⁸ The sinful condition of man is due entirely to the consequence of the fall of man in Adam. He explains,

Man did disobey God. He "ate of the tree, of which God commanded him, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it." And in that day he was condemned by the righteous judgment of God. Then also the sentence whereof he was warned before, began to take place upon him. For the moment he tasted that fruit, he died. His soul died, was separated from God; separate from whom the soul has no more life than the body has when separate from the soul.¹⁹

In addition to spiritual death, he suffered the loss of the knowledge of God. He lost the image of God.²⁰

The logical solution to the sin question is salvation from sin, the restoration of man to his pre-fallen state. Here Wesley rests on the Pauline doctrine of justification through the second Adam, Jesus Christ.²¹ Faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ is the basis for justification before God.²² Justification, or the New Birth, is the experience through which God works in the soul to bring it into the life of righteousness. The result is creation of new life in Christ Jesus, when the soul is "renewed

¹⁸Works, VI, p. 63.

¹⁹Works, V, p. 54.

²⁰Works, VI, p. 67.

²¹Works, V, p. 56.

²²Works, V, p. 62.

after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness."²³ He describes the experience in this manner:

In that instant we are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit: There is a real as well as a relative change. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel "the love of God, shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us;" producing love to all mankind, and more especially to the children of God.²⁴

The justified experience, however, is not complete redemption. He suggests that one may feel his sin is gone, but experience has proven this to be untrue.²⁵ Full salvation, or restoration of sinful man, requires the second aspect of redeeming grace. This work begins at the time of justification and proceeds in a gradual fashion. It is a progression "from grace to grace" as the newborn believer continues to grow, and as he zealously follows the Spirit's leading, he goes on to an experience of entire sanctification. This work of divine grace, Wesley considers full, or complete salvation since it delivers from all sins such as pride, self-will, anger, and unbelief.²⁶ He prefers to term this a state of perfection, or perfect love. "It is love excluding sin; love filling the heart, taking up the whole capacity of the soul."²⁷ Furthermore, while the work of grace preceding entire sanctification is gradual, he is disposed to think of entire sanctification as an instantaneous experience.²⁸

The Doctrines Related to Experience

The distinguishing feature of these doctrines in Wesley's ministry was his stress on the subjective experience of these scriptural truths.

²³Works, VI, p. 71.

²⁴Works, VI, p. 45.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Works, VI, p. 46.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Works, VI, p. 53.

There are some interesting comments outside of Wesley's writings regarding this phenomenon. Piette, a Roman Catholic priest, and one who tried to minimize, if not disqualify Wesley's Aldersgate experience,²⁹ clearly asserts that Wesley made a strong appeal to religious experience especially in the climax of the New Birth.³⁰ Lecky, a classic historian, recognizes this fact also, claiming that Methodism owed its success to its ability to satisfy some of the strong enduring wants of human nature. It did this by reviving a number of doctrines that had remained dormant for a number of years. These vital doctrines were: the utter depravity of human nature, the lost condition of every man born into the world, the vicarious atonement of Christ, the new birth, faith, and the constant action of the Divine Spirit upon the human soul.³¹ Even authorities of the present day pay tribute to Wesley's contribution to the Christian church in setting experience to the foreground of Christian theology.³² Turner draws attention to this particular emphasis when he explains the reason for Wesley's appeal to the heart and conscience. He says, "He spoke in the glow of a great subjective experience, a spiritual discovery which he and many of his hearers shared."³³ Wesley, in his discourse "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," characteristically

²⁹Maximin Piette, John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism, trans. J. B. Howard (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1937), p. 306.

³⁰Ibid., p. 199.

³¹William E. H. Lecky, A History of England in the 18th Century (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1878), II, p. 593.

³²Norman V. Hope, "Aldersgate: An Epoch in British History," Christianity Today, VII, No. 15, (April 26, 1963), 5.

³³George A. Turner, The More Excellent Way (Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1952), pp. 196-197.

exhibits the practical, experiential nature of his ministry, when, in response to an inquirer he writes:

I replied, "I do preach to as many as desire to hear, every night and morning. You ask, what would I do with them: I would make them virtuous and happy, easy in themselves and useful to others. Whither would I lead them? To heaven; to God the Judge, the lover of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. What religion do I preach? The religion of love; the law of kindness brought to light by the gospel. What is this good for? To make them like God; lovers of all; contented in their lives; and crying out at their death, in calm assurance, 'O grave, where is thy victory! Thanks be unto God who giveth me victory, through my Lord Jesus Christ.'"³⁴

The inevitable question at this juncture is, what is Wesley's thought regarding the experience? What is the experience inherent in these three Scriptural doctrines?

The aspect of God's love. There are four terms closely related and involved in Wesley's treatment of salvation, they are: grace and love, repentance and faith. The first two are expressions of God to man, the other two are functional within man. Grace and love are the expressions of God to man, first of all convincing him of sin and bringing him to repentance. Then God's grace enables him, or provides the faith which is conditional for justification. Wesley describes the process of man's salvation in this manner. The earliest desire to please God and the slightest conviction of guilt before God he terms "preventive grace." This is God's grace in creating self-knowledge of guilt and awareness of God's displeasure. When the sense of guilt grows to the point of desiring a release from it, he terms this convincing grace" or repentance. The next step, providing an individual responds to God's grace, is God providing saving grace or faith which is

³⁴Works, VIII, p. 8.

necessary for salvation.³⁵

Therefore, God's grace operates within man, convicting him of sin, bringing him to repentance, and providing the gift of faith in order for him to receive forgiveness of sin. The reason God extends His grace to man, or the motivating factor behind His action, is love.³⁶ Wesley asserts repeatedly the idea that God's love initiates man's response.³⁷ This statement exemplifies the others on this point.

How came you then to love him at first? Was it not because you knew that he loved you? Did you, could you, love God at all, till you tasted and saw that he was gracious; that he was merciful to you a sinner? What avails then controversy, or strife of words? Out of thy own mouth! You own you had no love to God till you was [sic] sensible of his love to you. And whatever expressions any sinner who loves God uses, to denote God's love to him, you will always upon examination find, that they directly or indirectly imply forgiveness. Pardoning love is still at the root of all.³⁸

The aspect of man's love. Wesley's theology of experience culminates in what he considers true or actual religion. His remedy for sin, by way of review, is the restoration of man to the divine image he possessed prior to the fall of Adam. God, in love, extended grace to man, grace in conviction for sin, grace in saving faith, grace in forgiveness and grace in placing His love within man's heart. This is all for the one purpose of restoring to man the divine image, the expression of which image is love. Therefore, actual religion is living a life of love, love to God and love to man.³⁹ In describing what it is to be born of God he says, "It is, so to love God, who

³⁵Works, VI, p. 509; cf. V, p. 62.

³⁶Works, VIII, pp. 8, 22.

³⁷Works, VII, pp. 47, 269, 495; and V, pp. 221, 463.

³⁸Works, VIII, p. 24.

³⁹Works, VIII, p. 8-9.

hath thus loved you, as you never did love any creature. . . ." Such love overflows in love for others, modifies actions and conversation, and results in continued obedience to God's Scriptural commands.⁴⁰ The entire Christian life should be one continuous labor of love.⁴¹

This aspect of love is considered the normal characteristic of all Christians, but those who are especially called to minister should possess a greater degree of love. Wesley is most emphatic at this point. Without the enduement of Godly love for lost mankind, a minister cannot hope to have a fruitful ministry.⁴² The standard of love is none other than that set by Christ, as He walked in love, so are His followers to walk in love.⁴³

Wesley ably sums up the case for his theology, presenting the basis and the scope, when he says:

We see, on every side, either men of no religion at all, or men of a lifeless, formal religion. We are grieved at the sight; and should greatly rejoice, if by any means we might convince some that there is a better religion to be attained,—a religion worthy of God that gave it. And this we conceive to be no other than love; the love of God and of all mankind; the loving God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, as having first loved us, as the fountain of all the good we have received, and of all we ever hope to enjoy; and the loving every soul which God hath made, every man on earth, as our own soul.

.

This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the neverfailing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men.⁴⁴

The Summary

There are four things that stand out in Wesley's theology that are

⁴⁰Works, V, p. 221.

⁴¹Works, VIII, p. 9; and V, p. 221.

⁴²Works, X, pp. 486-487.

⁴³Works, XII, p. 445.

⁴⁴Works, VIII, p. 3.

relevant to his program of Christian education. First, his theology was centralized in three cardinal doctrines: original sin, justification by faith, and holiness of life. Second, the strong emphasis of these doctrines was experience. These truths were to be applied and experienced by every individual, to effect a transformation of heart and life. Third, the means of salvation as provided by God and the revelation of Himself are expressions of God's great love for man. Fourth, God's love commands a response of love from man. The climax of experience is perfect love to God that results in continuous obedience to God, and continuous service to man.

III. WESLEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Wesley, in a letter to the Reverend Mr. Law, took him to task for what he regarded as Mr. Law's unscriptural philosophy. In the opening paragraph Wesley reiterates his intention not to add philosophy to religion.⁴⁵ But philosophy by its very nature is impossible to set aside. For this reason, although Wesley does not often specifically refer to philosophy, nor declare his philosophy, he definitely had some guiding principles for his life and work.

Wesley's Theory of Knowledge

Possibly due to his practical outlook, Wesley was quite explicit regarding his theory of knowledge.⁴⁶ He did not believe that ideas are innate, but that knowledge comes through sensation. With the natural senses and unaided reason, man is able to attain some degree of knowledge.⁴⁷ But

⁴⁵Works, IX, pp. 466-467.

⁴⁶Turner, op. cit., p. 182.

⁴⁷Works, VI, p. 354.

a knowledge of God and divine truth must come by revelation, and Scripture is the prime source of revelation.⁴⁸

Wesley maintained that the desire for knowledge is a universal principle in man. Although this desire for knowledge is insatiable, it is limited, limited especially in its comprehension of God. Man's unaided reason is not adequate to satisfy his desire for knowledge, particularly knowledge of God.⁴⁹ Consequently, man's reason requires assistance by the Holy Spirit to understand the being and attributes of God, the true meaning of repentance and faith, the new birth, and inward and outward holiness.⁵⁰ Moreover, he declares this divine assistance is a gift of God. It is the gift of faith which provides the evidence and the conviction of the reality of those invisible things.

Let reason do all that reason can: Employ it as far as it will go. But, at the same time, acknowledge it is utterly incapable of giving either faith, or hope, or love; and consequently, of producing either real virtue, or substantial happiness. Expect these from a higher source even from the Father of the spirits of all flesh.

.....

He alone can give that faith, which is "the evidence" and conviction of things not seen."⁵¹

Wesley's theory of knowledge would suggest he believed in the person as an intelligible self, with an urge to find the ultimate in reality. However, man's intelligence, while it makes him aware of a Supreme Intelligence, (God), does not disclose this Supreme One. This One, (God), must reveal himself to man. Man's reason is useful when diligently employed in searching

⁴⁸Turner, loc. cit.

⁴⁹Works, VI, p. 338.

⁵⁰Works, VI, pp. 354-355.

⁵¹Works, VI, p. 360.

for God, but requires divine enabling or a relationship of the human intelligence with the Supreme Intelligence. This fact is important in reaching his objective, of man experiencing inward and outward holiness.

Wesley's Theory of Reality

The urge or desire of knowledge as a universal principle in man, Wesley suggests, keeps man searching for the ultimate in knowledge, or the ". . . source of all knowledge and all excellence, the all-wise and all-gracious Creator."⁵² This constitutes Wesley's theory of reality. While he suggests to the clergy that they should be able to understand metaphysics, at least the general principles, and be able to arrange their "ideas under proper heads," he does not explicitly outline his own metaphysical system. "There is one God, so there is one religion and one happiness for all men."⁵³ For Wesley the case is closed.

The nature of man. Wesley did express some thoughts on the nature of man, which is a phase of the theory of reality. In his sermon entitled, "What is Man?" he endeavors to identify the true self, as well as a property of self. He considers the true self of man a "self-moving," "thinking principle," with passions and affection, possessing eternal quality. This is the soul which is united with the body during its earthly existence. Moreover, this true self possesses a property which he terms liberty. This is a distinct property of the soul and is not to be confounded with the will. "It is a power of self-determination."⁵⁴ This power of self-determination

⁵²Works, VI, p. 337.

⁵³Works, VII, p. 264.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 228.

extends over the words and actions generally, and enables the individual to choose whether to speak or not to speak, to act or not to act.

And although I have not an absolute power over my own mind, because of the corruption of my own nature; yet, through the grace of God assisting me, I have power to choose and do good, as well as evil. I am free to choose whom I will serve; and if I choose the better part, to continue therein even unto death.⁵⁵

Wesley's Theory of Value

Wesley's theory of value is as conclusive as his theory of reality. Man's supreme happiness, or supreme value for man is to be in harmony with God. He says, "You are made to be happy in God."⁵⁶

And what art thou, even in thy present state? An everlasting spirit going to God. For what end then did he create thee, but to dwell with him, above this perishable world, to know him, to love him, to do his will, to enjoy him for ever and ever?⁵⁷

Perhaps the closest that Wesley comes to declaring a complete statement of philosophy is his statement regarding the fundamentals of the religion he preached. Eternal reason is the essential nature of things. The essential nature of things is the relation that subsists between the nature of God and the nature of man. This relationship is foundational to his religion and it is first agreeable to the nature of God since it begins in knowing him; it continues in loving him and all mankind; it ends in serving him, doing his will and obeying him. Moreover, this religion is suited to the nature of man, as it begins in man knowing himself, knowing his true sinful condition; it goes on to point out the remedy for his condition, that is to make him wise, virtuous and happy; it completes all, by restoring the

⁵⁵Works, VII, pp. 228-229.

⁵⁶Works, VII, p. 267.

⁵⁷Works, VIII, p. 18.

due relation between God and man.⁵⁸

Therefore, true value for Wesley was holiness, because happiness and holiness were inseparably connected. These were thought of as subjective experiences. Happiness did not come just because of a holy relation to God, but also because a holy relation to God produced love and good works to ones fellow men, which in turn produced true happiness.⁵⁹

The Summary

From the foregoing information, a concise but complete philosophy of Christian education becomes clear. God is ultimate reality. The desire for knowledge of the ultimate is innate in man. But that knowledge is realized only through divinely enabled senses, or divinely enlightened senses. This divine enabling does not compel man to choose God, but merely endues his power of self-determination with the capacity to choose good as well as evil. Without this enduement, he can only choose the evil.⁶⁰ True value then, is to choose the good, to exercise the gift of faith, to place ones self at the disposal of God, and to walk in newness of life, possessing and exhibiting not only inward, but outward, holiness, which in turn produces happiness.

Wesley's philosophy of education then coincides with his theology of education. His philosophy is his way of reasoning why he believes in and propagates the "three grand doctrines of scripture," repentance, justification by faith, and holiness of heart and life also by faith. These doctrines

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 12.

⁵⁹Works, VI, p. 237.

⁶⁰Works, VII, pp. 228-229.

hold the key to true value for man. Through the experience of salvation, man is able to realize true value, as true value is to know God and to be rightly related to Him. Only by faith is man able to achieve meaningful and purposeful life.

IV. WESLEY'S CURRICULUM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Wesley did not outline or describe his curriculum of Christian education as such. However, by following the outline of the guiding principles for curriculum detailed in Chapter III, a comparable curriculum pattern is evident in Wesley's ministry. These principles state that the curriculum is a planned program to attain specific objectives and realize certain purposes in Christian education. It should possess order and structure, movement and direction. Within curriculum are the implements to perform its work. These are curriculum materials, and are a part of curriculum but not synonymous with curriculum. The curriculum materials are of two kinds: internal and external. The external materials include such items as printed matter, maps, pictures, and audio-visual aids. Internal materials include church workers, preachers, teachers, counsellors, as well as situations and events.⁶¹

Wesley's curriculum objectives. An inspection of Wesley's writings reveals that he did have specific objectives and purposes. The definition of Christian education used earlier in this chapter verifies the aims or

⁶¹A Guide for Curriculum in Christian Education. Prepared by the Special Committee on the Curriculum Guide, Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. (Chicago: Office of Publication and Distribution, 1955), p. 25.

objectives basic to Wesley's curriculum.⁶² Prince sums up Wesley's objectives in the following manner:

The goal of all work with children at home, in the schools, and in the Methodist societies is to make them pious, to lead to personal religion, and to insure salvation. . . . The purpose of religious education is to instill in children true religion, holiness, and the love of God and mankind, and to train them in the image of God.⁶³

Wesley's goal and purpose in Christian education obviously stressed the religious aspect. He believed in preparing children for both this world and the next, and felt that a strong emphasis on religious experience accomplished this dual purpose the best.⁶⁴

An examination of Wesley's history of the Methodist movement reveals that his objectives with regard to the education of children are central also with adults.⁶⁵ Wesley recognized the necessity of ministering to the entire person. His organizational pattern reveals that an effort was made to minister to the physical and social needs of the individual as well as the spiritual.⁶⁶

Wesley's curriculum resources. Closely related to objectives is the content or resource material. Wesley held to the divinely inspired Scriptures as his chief authority and source.⁶⁷ Some theologians criticize Wesley's use of Scripture, nevertheless, he relied on Scripture, used Scripture, and taught the Scriptures.⁶⁸ As he said himself,

⁶²Supra, p. 70.

⁶³Prince, op. cit., p. 87.

⁶⁴Nehemiah Curnock (ed.), The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M. (London: The Epworth Press, 1909), VII, p. 222; and Works, XIII, p. 283.

⁶⁵Works, VIII, pp. 248-268.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 263-267.

⁶⁷Works, XI, p. 484; and VI, p. 354.

⁶⁸Turner, op. cit., p. 204.

From the very beginning, from the time that four young men united together, each of them was homo unius libri,--"a man of one book." God taught them all, to make his "word a lantern unto their feet, and a light in all their paths." They had one, and only one, rule of judgment, with regard to all their tempers, words, and actions; namely, the oracles of God. They were one and all determined to be Bible-Christians.⁶⁹

A further evidence of the value and place he gave to Scripture is seen in the urgent plea he made to his ministers, to know the Scriptures thoroughly.⁷⁰ The study of Scripture was commensurate with prayer and partaking of the Lord's Supper as means of grace, or channels of divine grace.⁷¹

However, Wesley did not retain the Bible as the exclusive textbook. He advocated that other books be read as well, since he desired his people to have an understanding "in every branch of useful learning."⁷² This agreed with his dual objective of fitting people for this life and the next. His description of the courses and schedule at Kingswood School, indicate the balance between the religious and secular materials.⁷³ His "Plain Account of Kingswood School," shows how a strong emphasis of Christian morality permeated all of the subjects taught.⁷⁴ The textbooks and courses at Kingswood were not the curriculum materials for all Methodists, but the same principles persisted throughout.⁷⁵

In order to provide study materials for the schools as well as the societies, Wesley became a prolific writer. He put forth an enormous amount

⁶⁹Works, VII, p. 203.

⁷⁰Works, X, p. 490.

⁷¹Works, V, p. 192. ⁷²Works, VIII, pp. 314-315; and XIII, p. 283.

⁷³Works, XIII, pp. 283-289. ⁷⁴Works, XIII, p. 295.

⁷⁵Francis J. McConnell, John Wesley (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1939), p. 119.

of low-priced literature in the sixty years of his ministry.⁷⁶ He wrote on a variety of themes, endeavoring to put weighty subjects within the grasp of his poorly educated people.⁷⁷ He placed before his followers secular material within a religious context so as to educate them, and to give to the individual Methodist a basic knowledge of life around him. This effort was not without success because the Methodists became a society of readers of the best books.⁷⁸ A survey of the list of Wesley's works gives some indication of the number of articles, tracts, and books he wrote, as well as the variety of themes.⁷⁹ Piette lists the total number of pieces as three hundred and ninety one.⁸⁰

One interesting innovation introduced by the Wesley's was the production of a number of hymns to be sung to tunes, rather than the traditional metrical version of the Psalms.⁸¹ These hymns played a major part in the worship service, class-meetings, and other public assemblies, as well as being a real source of blessing to the individual members.⁸² These hymns enabled the ordinary Methodist member to express in excellent verse, truths which the Wesley's proclaimed from the pulpit.⁸³

The teaching materials that Wesley produced provided another source

⁷⁶Piette, op. cit., p. 20.

⁷⁷McConnell, loc. cit.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 120-121.

⁷⁹Works, XIV, pp. 199, 346.

⁸⁰Piette, op. cit., p. 202.

⁸¹G. M. Trevelyan, English Social History (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), p. 362.

⁸²Henry Carter, The Methodist Heritage (New York: Abingdon--Cokesbury Press, 1951), pp. 103, 105.

⁸³Ibid.

of curriculum content. In connection with the children, he frequently mentions his tract entitled "Instructions for Children," which he apparently felt was most valuable.⁸⁴ This particular tract was used in the schools as well as in the homes of Methodists.⁸⁵ He also mentions the "Lessons for Children."⁸⁶ These were a collection of choice Scriptures with brief explanatory notes.⁸⁷ In addition, he compiled a collection of prayers for children to use morning and evening each day of the week,⁸⁸ as well as a collection of hymns.⁸⁹ The aforementioned works appear to be the chief source materials for religious instruction, both in the schools and homes. The schools had additional textbooks that were used for the other subjects taught.⁹⁰

For the use of the societies in general, besides the Bible, he suggested "The Rules of the Society," "Instructions for Children," the fourth volume of his "Sermons," "Method of Family Prayer" by Philip Henry,⁹¹ Thomas a Kempis's Imitation of Christ, and "Primitive Physic."⁹² The value and use he attached to literature is suggested in his letter to a Mr. Richard Rodda, a conference worker.⁹³ He wrote:

You should take particular care that your Circuit be never without an assortment of all the valuable books, especially the Appeals, the Sermons, Kempis, and "The Primitive Physic," which no family should be without. Send for these, and, according to the rule of Conference, take them into your own keeping. You are found to be remarkably diligent in spreading the books: let none rob you of the glory. If you can spread the Magazine,

⁸⁴Works, XI, p. 339.

⁸⁵Works, VIII, p. 305; and XIII, p. 283.

⁸⁶Works, VIII, p. 316.

⁸⁷Works, II, p. 39.

⁸⁸Works, XI, pp. 259-272.

⁸⁹Works, XIV, p. 336.

⁹⁰Works, XIII, pp. 283-284.

⁹¹Works, VIII, p. 315.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Curnock, op. cit., VIII, p. 337.

it will do you good: The letters therein contain the marrow of Christianity.⁹⁴

Wesley's curriculum activities. From the preceding paragraphs it is obvious that Wesley had a prescribed, authoritative content in his curriculum. But the transference of this content from preacher or teacher to member, did not satisfy his objective entirely.⁹⁵ Religious experience, the new birth, the deliverance from depravity of sin, and Christlikeness, was his goal. The teaching content was merely the tool to effect this experience. Therefore, activity was encouraged that would nurture a Christian experience.⁹⁶

In the "General Rules of the United Societies,"⁹⁷ and in the "Directions Given to the Band-Societies,"⁹⁸ three categories of activities are recommended, they are: (1) avoid doing evil of every kind, (2) do good of every kind, and (3) attend all the ordinances of God.⁹⁹ The first category describes some of the social practices to be avoided, such as buying or selling on Sunday, the drinking of alcoholic beverages, wearing of superfluous ornaments, and the use of tobacco. The second category suggests Christian ethics to be observed, for example: the giving of tithes, reproving of sin in others, and being examples of self-discipline in the Christian walk. The third category lists the ordinances to be attended regularly, these include: worship, partaking of the Lord's Supper, fellowship with other believers in the bands and classes, reading and meditating, prayer and

⁹⁴Works, XII, p. 510. ⁹⁵Works, VIII, p. 249. ⁹⁶Ibid., p. 270.

⁹⁷Works, VIII, pp. 270-271. ⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 273-274.

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 270-271.

fasting.¹⁰⁰

Additional activities were provided for the class leaders, the stewards, and the visitors of the sick. The class leader was to visit each one in his class once a week, to inquire into the welfare of their souls, and advise, reprove, comfort, and exhort. He also collected gifts for the expenses of the society, and met with the assistant and the steward once a week.¹⁰¹ The stewards were to manage the temporal affairs of the society, to receive the contributions, pay out the expenditures, keep exact records and send the relief to the poor. The visitors of the sick were to do as their title suggests, give comfort and encouragement to the physically sick.¹⁰² These activities helped the Methodists to express theology in the everyday experiences of life.

Wesley's curriculum organization. Tied in closely with the activities of the curriculum was the organizational pattern. Wesley has received wide acclaim from historians for his exceptional organizational ability. Halévy attributes the rapid growth of Methodism to its superior organization.¹⁰³ Trevelyan claims John Wesley's genius was in his ability as an organizer as much as in his revivalist preaching.¹⁰⁴ Lecky believes the permanence of the Methodist movement was due to John Wesley's organizing skill.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰Works, VIII, pp. 273-274.

¹⁰¹Works, III, p. 426.

¹⁰²Works, VIII, p. 263.

¹⁰³Elie Halévy, A History of the English People in 1815, trans. E. I. Watkin and D. A. Barker (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1924), pp. 246-247; and Hammond, op. cit., p. 195.

¹⁰⁴Trevelyan, op. cit., p. 362.

¹⁰⁵Lecky, op. cit., p. 624.

According to Wesley, the organization began and developed in response to a need. The progression was natural. The organization suited the need of the people in his group, rather than the group having to conform to the structure of an organization.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, he was always ready to make any change in the organization if it failed to make the desired contribution. As he wrote:

That with regard to these little prudential helps we are continually changing one thing after another, is not a weakness or fault, as you imagine, but a peculiar advantage which we enjoy. By this means we declare them all to be merely prudential, not essential, not of divine institution. We prevent, so far as in us lies, their growing formal or dead. We are always open to instruction; willing to be wiser every day than we were before, and to change whatever we can change for the better.¹⁰⁷

He explains that the organization began as the result of a request from his converts. They desired to be stronger Christians, and found that meeting together in prayer and in exhortation benefited them. Therefore, an organization was formed for this express purpose. Due to the familiarity of the term in London, for similar organizations, the inconspicuous name "Society" was chosen.¹⁰⁸ The Society in London began and progressed according to the desire of the individuals within the group.¹⁰⁹ As the Society grew, a problem arose which pointed out the necessity of keeping closer contact with the members. For this reason they divided the society into classes of twelve people, with one serving as a leader. The designated leader kept contact with each member of his class once a week, and inquired into their welfare and ministered to the individual needs whether spiritual or physical.¹¹⁰ In like fashion, the quarterly meeting developed. This arrangement permitted

¹⁰⁶Works, VIII, pp. 250-252.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 254.

¹⁰⁸Works, VIII, p. 250.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 253.

Wesley to meet all the people once every three months.¹¹¹ The smaller bands of the local society were formed for the purpose of confession one to the other, and for prayer one for another. There appeared to be benefit from this activity.¹¹²

The final organizational pattern which evolved was a strongly centralized system, built around John Wesley. Starting from the bottom of the ladder, the lowest rung was the local society. Within the local society were the classes and the bands. A number of societies constituted a circuit, which was the true unit of the organization.¹¹³ Several circuits made up a district and the totality of the districts was the connexion, presided over by John Wesley.¹¹⁴ It is significant, and bears reiteration, that this organizational framework built up gradually, in response to a need. "John Wesley's organizing genius met each challenging requirement as it arose."¹¹⁵ At the termination of his ministry, over one hundred and twenty thousand members were united in a closely knit, functional organization.¹¹⁶

The summary. In recapitulation, it is observable that Wesley did have a curriculum of Christian education that corresponded to the principles of curriculum outlined in Chapter III. He had specific objectives that he was endeavoring to reach; that of making people pious or holy through a personal religious experience. He had curriculum materials, both internal and external. The internal materials were the subjects he taught, the books,

¹¹¹Works, VIII, p. 258.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Halévy, op. cit., p. 361.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Carter, op. cit., p. 91.

¹¹⁶Bready, op. cit., p. 99.

tracts, and aids to prayer and study. The external materials were the preachers, class leaders, stewards, and visitors of the sick, as well as the individual members who were to be active within the curriculum also. Moreover, there was an organization that definitely possessed movement and direction in reaching out to specific goals.

V. WESLEY'S METHOD OR PROCESS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Wesley did not express his teaching methods in exactly the same terms that contemporary educators use. He did, however, leave on record some definite statements regarding teaching, or instruction, as he called it.¹¹⁷ The procedure of using the structural pattern of Chapter III will be maintained in this section also. Accordingly, the definition of teaching, the process of teaching and learning, and methods of teaching, will be discussed in the light of John Wesley's ideas.

Wesley's ideal teaching situation. In Wesley's sermon dealing with family religion, he sets forth his main ideas on educational method.¹¹⁸ He considered family religion "the grand desideratum" for Methodists.¹¹⁹ His introductory remarks clearly indicate that his method relates to his theology and philosophy.¹²⁰ Wesley's theology required children as well as adults to experience a relationship with God through faith.¹²¹ To Wesley, the life of holiness, of love to God and man, is the life of true happiness.¹²² This

¹¹⁷Works, VII, p. 81.

¹¹⁸Prince, op. cit., p. 122.

¹¹⁹Works, III, p. 270.

¹²⁰Works, VII, p. 77.

¹²¹Ibid., pp. 77-79.

¹²²Ibid., p. 85.

was his goal, and to reach that goal he upholds teaching or training in the family as the most effective way.¹²³ Moreover, Wesley's method breaks down into a twofold task, one of discipline, and the other of teaching.¹²⁴ He advocates in the first place the restraining from outward sin, by advice, persuasion, reproof, and as a last resort for ones own children, correction. But all restraint is to be applied in love and void of overdue display of passion.¹²⁵ Second, he recommends supplementing restraint by instruction. Every person should have instruction in salvation, by means of public instruction, ordinances of the church, and private reading, meditation and prayer.¹²⁶

Wesley's definition of teaching. Although Wesley advocated teaching, he did not define teaching per se. But his explanation on how to teach discloses his own understanding of teaching principles. For the purpose of pointing out these principles in the form of a definition, Gregory's seven laws of teaching will be used as a criterion.

The first law states that the teacher must know the lesson or truth to be taught.¹²⁷ Wesley recognized the principle. In the preface to "Instructions for Children," Wesley admonishes parents and school masters on the use of the book. One of the points he makes in referring to the "great truths" is, "Let them be deeply engraven in your own hearts, and you will spare no pains in teaching them to others."¹²⁸ He expresses the same idea

¹²³Ibid., p. 77.

¹²⁴Ibid., pp. 79-81.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 80.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 81.

¹²⁷John M. Gregory, The Seven Laws of Teaching (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 5.

¹²⁸Works, XIV, p. 218.

in his tract, "A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children," when he explains why some children who are taught in the religious schools fail to exhibit Christian character. One reason is that those who undertake to educate children do not know what true religion is.¹²⁹ His inference is that it is not possible to teach that which is not known. The same idea is implied in the sermon "On Family Religion." This sermon hinges on the presumption that the head of a household, having experienced redemption, has the best opportunity to promote and preserve the truth.¹³⁰ These three references uphold Wesley's recognition of the first law.

The second law says that the learner attends to the lesson with interest.¹³¹ This refers to the problem of motivation or attention.¹³² In his account of Fletcher's life, Wesley reveals his awareness of the attention problem. He says, "In the instructing of children, one great difficulty is to draw and fix their attention. He [Fletcher] had a singular gift for doing this, by making advantage of any incident that offered."¹³³ He tells of another incident where one of the teachers used an occasion immediately after a funeral to exhort them about preparing for death. The children apparently were strongly motivated and many responded in repentance and faith.¹³⁴

Another way of getting attention, he believed, was by constant prayer to God to open the eyes of their understanding and illuminate their minds to the truth, for, "whenever the Holy Ghost teaches, there is no delay in learning."¹³⁵ These occasions exemplify what Gregory refers to as passive

¹²⁹Works, XIII, p. 475.

¹³⁰Works, VII, pp. 76-86.

¹³¹Gregory, loc. cit.

¹³²Ibid., p. 24.

¹³³Works, XI, p. 334.

¹³⁴Works, III, p. 414.

¹³⁵Works, VII, p. 82.

attention; attention that is effortless on the part of the learner.¹³⁶ But Wesley also understood the need for active attention; attention gained by effort of will on the part of the learner. His instruction on restraining or breaking the individual's will, falls into this area. He says, "A wise parent, on the other hand, should begin to break their will the first moment it appears. In the whole art of Christian education there is nothing more important than this."¹³⁷ His entire sermon "On the Education of Children" deals with the problem of discipline and the will, which indicates how important it was for the individual to conquer his will and be able to give his attention to the worthwhile matters.

Wesley combines the third and fourth laws of Gregory when he says, "Use such words as little children may understand, just as they use themselves. Carefully observe the few ideas which they have already, and endeavor to graft what you say upon them."¹³⁸ Gregory's third law observes that the language used must be common to both teacher and learner.¹³⁹ The fourth law declares that the unknown truth must be explained in terms of the known.¹⁴⁰

Wesley also covers the fifth and sixth laws in one statement. These laws suggest that teaching must arouse and use the pupil's mind to grasp the thought; and that learning is merely the learner using his own mind to grasp the truth, or reproducing in his own mind the truth learned.¹⁴¹ Wesley states the same laws in this fashion:

¹³⁶Gregory, op. cit., p. 26.

¹³⁸Ibid., pp. 81-82.

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹³⁷Works, VII, p. 92.

¹³⁹Gregory, op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁴¹Ibid., pp. 73-101.

Above all, let them not read or say one line without understanding and minding what they say. Try them over and over; stop them short, almost in every sentence; and ask them, "What was it you said last? Read it again: What do you mean by that?" So that, if it be possible, they may pass by nothing, till it has taken some hold upon them. By this means they will learn to think, as they learn to read: They will grow wiser and better every day.¹⁴²

Gregory's seventh law contends that the perfecting of the learning experience or the fixing of the knowledge will be done by reviewing the material communicated.¹⁴³ Wesley touches on this law as well. In the preface of his "Lessons for Children," he intreats his followers:

I cannot but earnestly intreat you to take good heed how you teach these deep things of God. Beware of that common, but accursed way of making children parrots, instead of Christians. Labour that, as far as is possible, they may understand every single sentence which they read. Therefore, do not make haste. Regard not how much, but how well, to how good purpose they read. Turn each sentence every way; propose it in every good light; and question them continually on every point; If by any means they may not only read, but inwardly digest, the words of eternal life.¹⁴⁴

Again, in his sermon "On Family Religion," he suggests daily, repetitive, teaching of the truths.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, he insists, "Never leave off, never intermit your labour of love, till you see the fruit of it."¹⁴⁶

The preceding comparison exhibits the fact that Wesley employed the same principles advanced by Gregory. In view of this, Wesley's definition of teaching would be comparable to Gregory's, expressly, "teaching in its simplest sense, is the communication of experience."¹⁴⁷ Also, "teaching is a process which has natural fixed laws in which definite forces are employed to produce definite results."¹⁴⁸ In Wesley's case, religious experience was

¹⁴²Works, XIV, p. 218.

¹⁴³Gregory, op. cit., p. 107.

¹⁴⁴Works, XIV, p. 217.

¹⁴⁵Works, VII, p. 82.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷Gregory, op. cit., p. 2.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 1.

primary in preparing man for both this world and the next. His recognition of the value of principles of education in achieving this aim is revealed in his tract on educating children.

But does it follow, that we ought not to instil true religion into the minds of children as early as possible: Or, rather, that we should do it with all diligence from the very time that reason dawns, laying line upon line, precept upon precept, as soon and as fast as they are able to bear it? By all means. Scripture, reason, and experience jointly testify that, in as much as the corruption of nature is earlier than our instructions can be, we should take all pains to care to counteract this corruption as early as possible. The bias of nature is set the wrong way: Education is designed to set it right. This, by the grace of God, is to turn the bias from self-will, pride, anger, revenge, and the love of the world, to resignation, lowliness, meekness, and the love of God.¹⁴⁹

Wesley's teaching--learning process. The teaching--learning process was explained in Chapter III as a five-step plan: exposure, repetition, understanding, conviction, and application. Wesley covers these steps in a four-step program. He advises that children should be instructed early, plainly, frequently, and patiently.¹⁵⁰ His idea was that children should be exposed to the truth just as soon as they evidenced any reasoning ability, which was when they began to talk.¹⁵¹ Truths must be presented to them in such a way that they could receive them. For this reason, he suggested that truths be explained or presented in words and ideas familiar to them.¹⁵² Then at the same time, that silent prayer be offered to the Lord for the Holy Spirit's illuminating touch upon the children's understanding.¹⁵³ Furthermore, the truths must be taught frequently. If possible, he

¹⁴⁹Works, XIII, p. 476.

¹⁵⁰Works, VII, p. 81.

¹⁵¹Works, VII, p. 81.

¹⁵²Ibid.

¹⁵³Ibid.

recommended a daily application of truth.¹⁵⁴ Finally, perseverance in teaching the truths must be maintained until the desired goal is reached.¹⁵⁵

Wesley illustrates his understanding of the learning process in his sermon, "On Family Religion."

Bid the child look up; and ask, "What do you see there?" "The sun." "See how bright it is! Feel how warm it shines upon your hand! Look, how it makes the grass and the flowers to grow, and the trees and every thing look green! But God, though you cannot see him, is above the sky, and is a deal brighter than the sun! It is he, it is God that made the sun, and you, and me, and everything. It is he that makes the grass and the flowers to grow; that makes the trees green, and the fruit to come upon them! Think what he can do! He can do whatever he pleases. He can strike you or me dead in a moment! But he loves you; he loves you to do good. He loves to make you happy. Should not you then love him? You love me, because I love you and do you good. But it is God that makes me love you. Therefore, you should love him. And he will teach you how to love him."¹⁵⁶

The five principles of the learning process taken from Findley B. Edge and listed in Chapter III,¹⁵⁷ are obvious in this example. First, Wesley started where the child was, using words and ideas the child was capable of grasping. Second, he based his lesson on a topic interesting to children. Children are usually interested in things of nature, they are curious about their world.¹⁵⁸ Third, he touched upon the needs of children, the need of love, of happiness, and of security. He assured them that these elements could be found in God, if they love Him. Fourth, he involved them in the activity of thinking and relating. He led them on step by step. He presented the idea of the sun, then of God--greater than the sun, God who

¹⁵⁴Works, VII, p. 81.

¹⁵⁵Ibid.

¹⁵⁶Ibid.

¹⁵⁷Findley B. Edge, Teaching for Results (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1956), pp. 42-50; and Supra, pp. 60-61.

¹⁵⁸Lois E. LeBar, Children in the Bible School (Los Angeles: Fleming H. Revell, 1952), pp. 195-199.

created all things, a God of great power--able to strike us dead, but One who loves children. Finally, he identified this great God of love and power with himself. Notice, he said that they love him, because he is good to them, but that God makes him do this, therefore, they should love God. In this example, Wesley is seen to have employed the five chief principles of the teaching--learning process.

Wesley's methods in teaching. A perusal of Wesley's works reveals his use of a variety of methods in communicating the truth. Even though his people did not possess much formal education, he used the lecture method to good advantage.¹⁵⁹ The sermon was his most popular method. It is claimed that he preached over forty thousand sermons in his lifetime.¹⁶⁰ He left one hundred fifty one of these in print.¹⁶¹ Another method he used, particularly in conference sessions, was the question and answer method.¹⁶² He employed this method to expose the teaching of Roman Catholicism.¹⁶³ One other method he practiced, and insisted that his preachers do likewise, was the discussion method.¹⁶⁴

It is interesting to note in conjunction with the variety of methods Wesley used, that he exercised a principle of contemporary educators, namely, the creating of conditions which make it possible for the pupil to learn,

¹⁵⁹Works, II, pp. 388-389.

¹⁶⁰Gilchrist J. Lawson, Deeper Experiences of Famous Christians (Anderson, Indiana: The Warner Press, 1911), p. 170.

¹⁶¹McConnell, op. cit., p. 96.

¹⁶²Works, VIII, pp. 275-338.

¹⁶³Works, X, pp. 86-128.

¹⁶⁴Works, VIII, p. 305.

since the learner must learn for himself.¹⁶⁵ There were two methods that Wesley used which illustrate his awareness of the principle; these were, personal letters, and private counselling sessions. According to John Telford, Wesley wrote a total of 2,670 letters, between the years 1721 and 1791.¹⁶⁶ His letters proved to be an effective means of communicating spiritual truth, love, advice, encouragement, fatherly counsel, comfort, and words of wisdom.¹⁶⁷ Leslie Stephen says of Wesley, that he,

. . . shows remarkable literary power; but we feel that his writings are means to a direct practical end, rather than valuable in themselves, either in form or substance. It would be difficult to find any letters more direct, forcible, and pithy in expression. He goes straight to the mark, without one superfluous flourish.¹⁶⁸

Wesley confirmed that this was his intention when he wrote:

When I speak or write to you, I have you before my eyes; but generally speaking, I do not think of myself at all. I see you aiming at glory and immortality, and say just what I hope may direct your goings in the way and prevent your being weary or faint in your mind.¹⁶⁹

Obviously, letters of such force directed to individuals would be a most effective method of facilitating a learning experience.

The second method referred to was the private counselling session, or personal witnessing. Wesley's awareness of the aforementioned principle is shown as he explained the organizational development of the Societies. As

¹⁶⁵Peter P. Person, An Introduction to Christian Education (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958), p. 82.

¹⁶⁶John Telford (ed.), The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley (standard edition, London: The Epworth Press, 1931), I, p. xiii.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., pp. xiii-xxviii.

¹⁶⁸Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Putnam & Sons, 1876), II, p. 409.

¹⁶⁹Telford, op. cit., p. xxii.

the Societies grew in number, he could not meet with them all, so the people united themselves together, "that they might help each other work out their own salvation."¹⁷⁰ Those within the Societies who practiced this, fared so much better spiritually, that he divided them into classes of twelve. One of these, as a leader, was to visit each member of his class once a week to inquire into the spiritual welfare of each individual.¹⁷¹ However, in course of time, these agencies became weak, and the method he suggested to revitalize the classes was the personal counselling method. The value he attached to this method is evident from his words which follow:

For what avails public preaching alone, though we could preach like angels? We must, yea, every travelling Preacher must, instruct them from house to house.

.....

But as great as this labour of private instruction is, it is absolutely necessary. For after all our preaching, many of our people are almost as ignorant as if they had never heard the gospel. . . . I have found by experience, that one of these has learned more from one hour's close discourse, than from ten years' public preaching.¹⁷²

He continued by outlining the counselling procedure.

1. After a few loving words spoken to all in the house, to take each person singly into another room, where you may deal closely with him about his sin, and misery, and duty. . . .
2. Hear what the children have learned by heart.
3. Choose some of the weightier points, and try if they understand them. As, "Do you believe you have sin in you? What does sin deserve? What remedy has God provided for guilty, helpless sinners?"
4. Often with the question suggest the answer. . . .
5. Where you perceive they do not understand the stress of your question, lead them into it by other questions. . . .
6. If you perceive them troubled, that they cannot answer, step in yourself and take the burden off them; answering the question yourself. . . .
7. When you have tried their knowledge, proceed to instruct them

¹⁷⁰Works, VIII, p. 250.

¹⁷¹Ibid., pp. 253-254.

¹⁷²Ibid., pp. 302-303.

according to their several capacities. . . .

8. Next inquire into his state, whether convinced or unconvinced, converted or unconverted. . . .

9. If unconverted, labour with all your power to bring his heart to a sense of his condition. . . .¹⁷³

This indicates how thoroughly Wesley insisted on the individual grasping the truth for himself, and how he tried to establish learning conditions. The preacher was not only to relate the truth but to ascertain by private conversation, that every member of the household experienced or learned the truth.

Wesley suggested one further method in helping the individual to learn. In a letter to Thomas Rankin, he recommended the use of tracts and books, as they had proven valuable. This is the method he submitted.

Carry one sort of books with you the first time you go the round, another sort the second time; and so on. Preach on the subject at each place; and after preaching encourage the congregation to buy and read the tract.¹⁷⁴

The summary. By way of summation, it was noted that Wesley believed religious education should commence in the home. This involved a two-fold task, discipline and teaching. His definition of teaching, by the process of comparison, corresponded to Gregory's definition, that teaching is a process of natural fixed laws in which definite forces are employed to produce definite results. Moreover, Wesley used a four-step teaching--learning process, which involved teaching to be given early in life, presented plainly, frequently, and patiently. Regarding methods, Wesley used the lecture method, the sermon method, question and answer method, discussion method, letters, and counselling.

Wesley's teaching method is significant in that it exhibited nine

¹⁷³Works, VIII, pp. 305-306.

¹⁷⁴Works, XII, p. 320.

elements which constitute good teaching method.¹⁷⁵ (1) His teaching method was practical. The lessons were of use to the students. (2) He involved the students in purposeful activity. (4) He gave the students opportunity to participate by expressing themselves. (5) He endeavored to stimulate the pupils' thinking by having them qualify their answers. (6) The truth he conveyed was related to the everyday experiences of the pupils' lives. (7) On occasion, he utilized some form of visual aid to demonstrate the message. (8) He used repetition to insure understanding. (9) The student was given some form of exercise or opportunity to practice the lesson.

VI. THE CONCLUSION

The exposition of John Wesley's principles of Christian education has been developed to parallel the pattern established in Chapter III. The aim has been to expose the principles and their inter-relation within four main areas; namely, theology, philosophy, curriculum, and method. Only those emphases fundamental to his education program were incorporated.

Wesley's prime objective was to make children and adults possessors and practicers of true Christianity. His theology could be summed up in three main Scriptural doctrines: original sin, justification by faith, and holiness, both inward and outward. The essence of these doctrines culminated in the restoration of the divine image to recipients of God's grace. Divine love he believed to be the motivating quality of God's personality which extended grace to fallen man. God's love provoked a response of love from man, love to God and to his fellow men. Love was a constituent element of

¹⁷⁵H. A. Fischer, Method in Teaching (Butler: The Higley Press), pp. 72-74.

Wesley's theology.

Wesley's philosophy simply provided logical ground for his theology. He did not speculate as to what ultimate reality could be. For Wesley, the ultimate was God. True value for man in this context was to know God, and God could be known through a subjective experience, and enlightened reason. This experience enabled man to be holy. Holiness, inward and outward, produced true happiness.

Wesley's curriculum of Christian education correlated his theology and philosophy into a functional plan. There is a religious and reasonable tone throughout. In order to meet the demand of a dual objective, the objective of preparation for temporal as well as eternal life, he maintained a balance between Scriptural and secular material in the curriculum content. He made wide use of the printed page. Secular matter, such as history and literature, was given religious interpretation. Even music was used to communicate the truth. Moreover, the activities and the organization were of such a nature as to unite religious experience with everyday activity. The agencies of organization helped produce a self-disciplined, responsible, Christian people, who were conscious of their own spiritual standing, and aware of the needs of others.

Finally, the curriculum method incorporated the elements necessary to effectively communicate the truth to his people. He apparently recognized the principles involved in the teaching--learning process, and endeavored to create an environment conducive to a learning experience. Wesley was very much aware of the need of every individual to learn for himself.

CHAPTER V

THE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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In order to point out the significance and the extent of Christian education principles in John Wesley's ministry, two criteria needed to be established. The first was to form a basis for determining the value of his ministry, and the second, to establish a comprehensible standard of Christian education whereby Wesley's principles could be detected. The value of John Wesley's ministry is evident in eighteenth century English history. The historical review in Chapter II revealed the moral decline up to the time of the Methodist Movement, and the moral improvement following its inception. His ministry was definitely a factor in transforming the tone of English society and in initiating the great reform movement. The second criterion was to establish a standard of Christian education according to contemporary authorities and couched in contemporary terminology. Chapter III presented such a standard in a structural form, so as to expose the four predominant areas of Christian education and their relation to each other. This structure became the standard for a parallel structure in Chapter IV, of John Wesley's Christian education. Then, by observational comparison the extent and significance of Christian education in his ministry could be discerned. In both structures, only the major themes were dealt with, and speculation as to the value and use of principles was deliberately avoided.

I. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The historical survey of eighteenth century England revealed the environment in which John Wesley ministered. The first half of the century

was characterized by change, political corruption, social retrogression, poverty, brutality, immorality, rationalism, Deism, and latitudinarianism. The great changes brought on by the Commercial and Intellectual Revolutions, in their initial stages had an adverse effect upon society in general.

The materialistic stress of the Commercial Revolution allowed most inhuman practices to go unnoticed. Everything was subservient to profit-making. The rationalistic, intellectual atmosphere caused the average Englishman to look with optimistic complacency upon the social retrogression. The masses of factory workers and miners lived in sin and ignorance, while the aristocracy lived in debauchery and refinement. The Established Church, involved in political intrigue, and complacent under the spell of Deism, offered no modifying or counteracting influence.

The task of initiating revival and reform fell to John Wesley. Following his Aldersgate experience, under the anointing of God, he launched forth on his great mission of carrying the gospel to the lower and middle class people of England. The lives of these people were filled with sin, misery, and ignorance, and empty of hope, happiness, and peace. These were the problems Wesley believed could be solved by the gospel of Jesus Christ. He believed God's grace could restore the divine image even to the vilest sinner.

The structure of contemporary Christian education, developed from the prevalent principles and ideas of today, which are relevant to evangelical Christianity, produced some interesting findings. The making of disciples was the prevalent objective. The theological content supporting this objective was founded in the revelation of God to man through Scripture, Jesus Christ, and the Church. The true nature of revelation was not merely a

mental knowledge about God, but a subjective, God-encountering experience. The vital concept behind this experience was love, the love of God for man. The initiating power behind God's communicative, reconciliatory performance was love. Furthermore, divine love must be the motivating factor of Christian education.

The philosophy of Christian education, from the standpoint of reason and human experience upholds the theology. Philosophical analysis confirms the idea of the existence of God, but revelation must reveal the true nature of God. Moreover, man is a spiritual being whose normal and ultimate end is fellowship with God. Therefore, true value for man is to be rightly related to God. However, man is not able to realize this relationship without divine help, he needs to be converted from his own self-goal to that of God's will. The educational theory in such a context suggests the necessity of being open to truth and revelation. The responsibility of Christian education is to make possible the reception of the truth. In view of this, Christian education should be in a social setting, and should understand the educative process with its factors.

The curriculum of Christian education is a planned program to attain the objective of making disciples of Jesus Christ. To do this, it must possess order and structure, movement and direction. The curriculum must maintain proper balance between content and activity. Likewise, it must be cognizant of the truth to be communicated in relation to the nature of man's learning mechanism. Curriculum method, which deals with the laws of teaching and learning, is a key aspect.

The overall structure of Christian education shows the inter-relation and inter-dependence of the four major areas; namely, the theology, philos-

ophy , curriculum, and method.

Wesley's structure of Christian education revealed that he had definite objectives, and a planned program to meet those objectives. His aim was to make children and adults recipients of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. His theological content centered in three main Scriptural doctrines: repentance, justification, and holiness. These doctrines were the progressive manifestation of God's grace in redeeming sinful man. God's love compelled Him to extend grace to man. Moreover, God shed abroad His love into the heart of redeemed man, enabling him to love God and his fellow man. Perfect love to God was the ultimate objective. Such a state of grace freed man from the power of sin and restored the divine image to his nature.

Wesley's philosophy merely supported his theology. God was ultimate. True value for man was in knowing God. God could be known through a subjective experience and enlightened reason. Such an experience or knowledge of God enabled man to choose the good, to exercise the gift of faith, to place himself at the disposal of God, and to possess and exhibit inward as well as outward holiness.

Wesley's curriculum of Christian education kept his theology predominant as content. However, he balanced it with sufficient secular learning to meet the dual aspect of his objective of preparation for temporal and eternal life. He used both internal and external materials. The internal materials included preachers, class leaders, stewards, visitors of the sick and every true Methodist member. The activities adhered closely to the everyday lives of the people. In that way the theological truth was made practical and meaningful. Moreover, his organizational pattern was so designed that it kept the people in close communication with the leaders.

Wesley's method or process employed the laws of the teaching--learning process. He tried to set the stage for a learning experience.

II. RESEARCH COMPARISONS

A comparison between the parallel structures of Christian education is necessary in order to discern the significance of Christian education in Wesley's ministry. This comparison is made on the assumption that the structure of contemporary Christian education is an accurate and understandable criterion.

The first point of comparison was in the structural form. The observation can be made that it was possible to draw up an outline of John Wesley's principles of Christian education comparable to the contemporary outline. As the table of contents reveals, the outline matches almost point for point. This shows that Wesley used enough education principles to draw up a comprehensive outline.

The next point of comparison is in the emphases relevant to the respective educational outlines. The objectives of each were identical. Contemporary Christian educators consider discipleship as the prime objective. This, no doubt, is a term with broad meaning, but for the evangelical it means bringing children and adults into a redemptive experience, as well as helping them grow in grace. Wesley's objective, though expressed differently, meant the same thing. The thought of instilling true religion and training in true religion, corresponds to discipleship.

The major emphasis in contemporary theology was experience and love. The revelation of God to man was not merely mental knowledge about God, but a subjective, God-encountering experience. Divine love was the compelling

force behind God's revelation, and divine love flowing out through the Christian is the vital force in the ministry of Christian education. Wesley likewise gave experience and love the fundamental position in his theology. Salvation through faith in the vicarious atonement of Christ was an experience. Faith was a gift of God's love and grace. Such love provoked love to God and love to fellow man.

In the area of philosophy of Christian education, Wesley's view corresponded with the contemporary view. Wesley's theories of knowledge, reality, and value, coincided with the current theories. The only difference was that Wesley did not always explicitly substantiate his conclusions.

In the area of curriculum, Wesley concurs with every requirement of the eight principles suggested for the formulation of a curriculum. Moreover, his objectives, resources, activities, and organization involved the same principles as the contemporary curriculum.

Wesley's method in Christian education was as fully developed as that of the contemporary. His understanding of teaching corresponded to Gregory's seven laws of learning. His teaching--learning process involved a four-step system, whereas the contemporary pattern was a five-step process. Wesley effectively used a variety of methods. Furthermore, his teaching method exhibited nine elements, which according to contemporary education, constitute good teaching.

Thus, Wesley's employment of Christian education principles is corroborated by the similarity of the emphases of his ministry with contemporary emphases.

The final point of comparison will be made by citing a number of principles considered important in contemporary Christian education, and

which John Wesley utilized in his ministry. One principle he practiced was the adaptation of the emphases according to the need. The historical survey revealed the rampancy of sin. The salient point of Wesley's ministry was his outcry against sin. He exposed sin in every area of English life, and with equal vigor, presented the solution to the sin problem. Another principle he put into operation was that of ministering to the total person. Those who were ignorant he tried to educate. For those who were poverty stricken, he arranged financial help. Those destitute of home he tried to provide with food and lodging. As a remedy for the ever-present sicknesses and diseases he tried to provide encouragement, medicine, and rules of health. To strengthen the believers he provided organization to promote fellowship.

Two other principles Wesley used, pertained to organization. His organization developed according to the demand of the needs and the number of his followers. Moreover, every agency underwent regular evaluation. If any agency failed in its intended purpose, it was either modified or deleted.

Wesley's teaching method used principles that are widely recognized and currently practiced. He used repetition. He would repeat his key ideas in different sermons, or tracts, or letters. He made wide use of the printed page. He effectively employed the laws of teaching and learning. This fact stands out in his teaching--learning process, and in his recognition of the value of interest, attention, and motivation in learning.

Finally, Wesley was ever mindful of his main objective, to bring children and adults into a vital relationship with God.

III. THE CONCLUSIONS

General conclusions. In light of the preceding research comparisons,

the following general conclusions were reached:

1. Wesley employed important principles that are recognized and valued in contemporary Christian education.
2. The major emphases of Wesley's ministry paralleled the emphases of contemporary Christian education.
3. Wesley's structure of Christian education, developed from principles evident in his ministry, coincided with the structural form of contemporary Christian education.

Specific conclusions. From the information indicated by the general conclusions, two specific conclusions emerge, which relate directly to the thesis problem:

1. Principles of Christian education were significant in the ministry of John Wesley.
2. John Wesley used the medium of Christian education to promulgate the doctrines he believed indispensable to mankind.

IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. To use the structure of Christian education developed in Chapter III, as a standard to evaluate the Christian education program of the writer's own denomination.
2. To draw a comparison between the development of liberalism in seventeenth and eighteenth century England, and twentieth century America.

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