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A Study of Ministry to College-Age Youth

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A STUDY OF MINISTRY TO COLLEGE-AGE YOUTH

A Paper
Presented to
the Faculty of
Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Religion

by
Almon Weston Harlow
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). The good news for the present generation is the same as it was for the people of the first century. Individual men and women may be saved by the grace of God through personal faith in Jesus Christ.

The proclamation of this message is imperative.

For, "every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13).

But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? . . . So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ (Romans 10:14, 17).

Thus we, like the generations of Christians before us, are confronted with the task of meaningfully communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ to our contemporaries. Francis Schaeffer writes concerning the Christian church in this regard, "Its responsibility is not only to hold to the basic scriptural principles of the Christian faith, but to communicate these unchanging truths 'into' the generation in which it is living."¹

A look at our present generation suggests its complex

¹Francis A. Schaeffer, Escape from Reason (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968), p. 7.

nature. The technological explosion, the knowledge explosion, and numerous other explosions simultaneously promise prosperity and poverty, utopia and annihilation. It is in this unsettled climate that the present generation of college-age youth has emerged; and it is in this climate that the Christian church must meaningfully proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The problem with which this study is concerned involves the following questions: (1) Who are the college-age youth of this generation? (2) What are their basic characteristics and needs? (3) What ministries in the Portland area are communicating successfully to the college-age youth? and (4) What are the essential principles for successful ministry to college-age youth today?

JUSTIFICATION OF PROBLEM

College-age youth are an increasing challenge for the ministry of the Christian church today. From 1960 to 1975 the number of people in the United States between the ages of eighteen and thirty will have increased sixty-four percent compared to seventeen percent for the remainder of the population.² According to Paul Fromer, Editor of HIS magazine, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Chicago, Illinois, "The church must either come to grips with this group or find its ministry drastically curtailed."³

²Paul Fromer, "The Nature and Needs of College-age Youth," Youth and the Church, eds. Roy G. Irving and Roy B. Zuck (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), p. 127.

³Ibid.

With this burgeoning mission field at its doorstep, the Christian church has unparalleled opportunity and responsibility to minister fruitfully to this important segment of this generation. Paul E. Little, Director of Evangelism for the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Chicago, Illinois, observes, "Today's students are tomorrow's leaders. A college student won to Christ today will be a Christian lawyer, doctor, engineer, politician, professor, minister or missionary tomorrow."⁴ The Christian church needs quality leadership for tomorrow. The strategic opportunity presented by college-age youth cannot be neglected.

Unfortunately, the Christian church has not, as yet, awakened to the task. The late Henrietta C. Mears, former Editor in Chief of Gospel Light Press, Glendale, California, said, "The typical church is not reaching its share of the growing army of collegians."⁵ Whatever the reasons for failure, the Christian church must discover and employ the essential principles of successful ministry to this age group.

In reaching mission fields, whether geographical or in a particular enclave of society, there must be an understanding of the field and an identification with it before an effective approach can be made.⁶

It is the need for understanding, identification, and effective

⁴Paul E. Little, "Reaching Youth in College," Youth and the Church, eds. Roy G. Irving and Roy B. Zuck (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), p. 312.

⁵Henrietta C. Mears, "Teaching College-Age Youth," An Introduction to Evangelical Christian Education, ed. J. Edward Hakes (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), p. 192.

⁶Little, loc. cit.

ministry to the college-age youth that occasions this study.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

The basic assumptions of this research project are:

1. The fundamental predisposition of man is toward autonomy.
2. Autonomy incurs the wrath of the God of the Bible.
3. The whole creation has been substantially affected by man's first autonomous act, the Fall.
4. The whole man may be restored to right relationship with God, with himself, with his fellowman, and with his environment by the redeeming grace of God through personal faith in Jesus Christ.
5. The primary mission of the Christian church is the loving proclamation of this message into every generation.
6. College-age youth are a strategic mission field today.
7. There are general principles common to effective ministries to college-age youth.
8. The observation of presently successful ministries to this age group in the Portland area will facilitate discovery of essential principles of effective ministry to college-age youth.
9. These principles, when generally employed, will provide significant foundation for an effective ministry to college-age youth.

DELIMITATIONS

The vast area encompassed by the subject of ministry to

college-age youth necessitated the specific limitation of this study. Therefore, this study has been limited to: (1) unmarried college-age youth, (2) ministries to college-age youth located in the Portland area, (3) a search for principles of ministry and methodology which may be generally employed, and (4) a search for principles of ministry and methodology which are in harmony with, or which may be harmonized with, the basic assumptions of the writer.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms are used in this paper as defined.

Christian Church

This term is restricted to that part of Christendom that falls within the main stream of orthodoxy and is Evangelical in theology.

College-Age Youth

For the purpose of this study the term "college-age youth" will refer to those persons eighteen to twenty-five years of age.

Ministry

Ministry is that service or aid that directs man to his Creator and to the redemption of his whole being in relationship to God, to himself, to his fellowman, and to his environment.

Portland Area

The Portland area is understood to include the city of Portland and its immediate vicinity within a radius of fifteen

miles.

Success

For this study, success of a particular ministry was determined by three criteria: (1) the number of people to whom the ministry was directly communicating (an arbitrary minimum was set at fifteen people), (2) the testimony of those who have observed the ministry, and (3) the subjective self-appraisal of its leadership.

The term effective is used as a synonym for successful.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The Revised Standard Version of the Bible was used exclusively where Biblical references are cited.

The study commenced with a survey of selected literature in various fields relating to the needs and characteristics of college-age youth. This literature surveyed was obtained from the libraries of Portland State University, Warner Pacific College, Western Evangelical Seminary, and the researcher. The survey of literature was then collated and organized into chapter two of this paper.

With an understanding of the field thus gained, the writer surveyed ministries in the Portland area that were enjoying some success in working with this age group. Pastors, youth ministers, college sponsors, and others in leadership in these ministries were interviewed and, in some cases, their ministries observed. Chapter three consists of a brief profile of each of the ministries surveyed and concludes with a synthesis of the common

principles observed. The fourth chapter is the last and states the summary, conclusions of the study, and recommendations for further study.

Chapter 2

THE COLLEGE-AGE YOUTH

Who are the college-age youth of today? What are their basic needs and characteristics? This chapter attempts to answer these questions for the purpose of gaining an understanding of the individuals that compose the vast mission field of today's college-age youth.

Due to the voluminous literature describing the basic needs of college-age youth it has been necessary to restrict this survey of literature to selected materials relating specifically to the nature and purpose of this study.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Who are the college-age youth of today? For the purpose of this study, college-age youth have been defined as those persons between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five years. Clifford V. Anderson, Associate Professor of Education and Dean of Students at Bethel Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, writes concerning this age group, "The young adult group is a growing group in our society due to the post-World War II baby boom. Estimates suggest that this group numbers more than thirty million persons in the United States."¹ Many of these people are in colleges and

¹Clifford V. Anderson, "The Nature and Needs of Young Adults," Adult Education in the Church, eds. Roy B. Zuck and Gene A. Getz (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), p. 35.

universities. It is estimated that the number of students attending American institutions of higher learning will exceed eight million by 1975.² Many other college-age youth are becoming a part of the vast working force of the United States. College-age youth may or may not be living with their parents, but most are living in the city. "It is estimated that seventy-five to eighty percent of this young-adult generation live in urban areas."³ Other college-age youth may be found in rural America and some have joined the armed forces.

The members of this age-group are individuals. Each is unique, unlike any other human being, with special needs, peculiar characteristics, and different goals. Certain generalizations, however, seem pertinent to the understanding of today's college-age youth. He is living in a realm of experience that is filled with concerns for an education, choice of a vocation, selection of a mate, establishing a family, and acceptance as a responsible member of the adult community. His search is, at the same time, for independence and for relationship.⁴

The multiplicity of these concerns suggests that the

²"Campus '65," Newsweek, March 22, 1965, p. 44.

³Directions for a Young Adult Ministry (Nashville: Division of the Local Church, General Board of Education of the Methodist Church, 1966), p. 9, cited by Clifford V. Anderson, "The Nature and Needs of Young Adults," Adult Education in the Church, eds. Roy B. Zuck and Gene A. Getz (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), p. 35.

⁴Thomas R. Bennet, "A Profile of the Young Adult," International Journal of Religious Education, December, 1965, pp. 8-9, describing a study by Allen S. Ellsworth, "Young Men and Young Women: New Insights on Becoming an Adult," National Board of the YMCAs, 1963.

college-age youth is in the process of transition. He is no longer an adolescent, nor has he achieved adulthood.⁵ Paul Fromer highlights the transitional stage of college-age youth with the following description:

Transition is the word to describe college and career youth. This transition is often made outside the family context. They are challenging the authority of parents, teachers, church and civil leaders. They are bound by love to very few people, wheeling freely in loose patterns, and often anonymous in the big city or university. They have little sense of community responsibility. They are seeking to make up their minds about what they are like and what they want, so they are taking soundings of themselves and others. They want freedom to look around; yet they also want the security and delight of friendship. They seem to say, "Don't fence me in--but don't fence me out either."⁶

The college-age youth is in the midst of change. During his transition from adolescence to adulthood, he is liberated, skeptical, and searching.⁷

The college-age youth is liberated. The impersonal relationships of urban life allow the college-age youth to become anonymous, hidden in the sea of city dwellers. The bonds of family, religion, school, and former social expectations have been weakened by his escape to the city, and he is now free to expand his sphere of experience.⁸

⁵Paul Fromer, "The Nature and Needs of College-Age Youth," Youth and the Church, eds. Roy G. Irving and Roy B. Zuck (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), p. 128.

⁶Ibid., p. 126.

⁷Clifford V. Anderson, "The Nature and Needs of Young Adults," Adult Education in the Church, eds. Roy B. Zuck and Gene A. Getz (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), p. 38.

⁸Ibid., p. 39.

The college-age youth is skeptical. He is keenly aware of the unsolved problems of today. The bomb, mass depersonalization, ecology, the problem of crime, and a host of other problems have not been solved by the adult community. The result has been a reluctance on the part of college-age youth to accept the adult world with its institutions and customs.⁹

The college-age youth is searching. He is in quest of self, others, meaning, and a workable ethic in the modern world.¹⁰ He is an unique individual embarking on a journey into adult life.

This general description of the college-age youth introduces the basic needs and characteristics of this age group.

SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS

Robert J. Havighurst popularized the concept of developmental tasks. He defines a developmental task as follows:

A developmental task is a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of an individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks.¹¹

In his transition from adolescence to adulthood the college-age youth is an unusual combination of maturity and immaturity. This combination is more dependent on experience than on age.¹²

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Robert J. Havighurst, Developmental Tasks and Education (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956), p. 2.

¹²Fromer, op. cit., p. 128.

It is important to an understanding of the college-age youth to know the developmental tasks with which he is faced. Clifford V. Anderson lists nine tasks relating to the period of life from eighteen to thirty:

(1) completing or continuing education, (2) selecting a mate, (3) learning to live with a marriage partner, (4) starting a family, (5) rearing children, (6) managing a home, (7) getting started in an occupation, (8) taking on civil responsibility, and (9) finding a congenial social group.¹³

Modern society expects that these tasks will be completed at the appropriate time in life. Though every person will not complete all of these tasks, the fact that they are socially expected will influence his thoughts and activities considerably.¹⁴

Each college-age youth is an individual. One may begin progress toward the achievement of the developmental tasks stated above in adolescence, while another may wait until early adulthood to begin. One may develop his philosophy of life, understood to be an adolescent developmental task, while another may continue the development of this task into college-age.¹⁵

The overlapping of the developmental tasks of adolescence and early adulthood suggests that an understanding of college-age youth and the developmental tasks in which they are engaged necessitates an acquaintance with adolescent developmental tasks.

Robert J. Havighurst discusses the following developmental tasks of adolescence in his book, Developmental Tasks and Education:

¹³Anderson, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁵Ibid.

The environmental influence on the college-age youth who pursues further education at a college or university is significant. He is faced with new standards, new acquaintances, new ideology, new concepts, and new experiences. After his graduation, the open challenges of college life are replaced by the subtle challenges of world influence. The high school graduate who pursued employment has already engaged the developmental tasks of beginning to build a life in the world. The college graduate has had these tasks delayed by his tenure in the halls of institutional learning.¹⁸

It is important to recognize the multiple factors which contribute to the developmental tasks of the college-age youth. The inner need of the individual and the influences of his environment give rise to his developmental tasks. His desire for marriage and the social pressure to marry present the task of mate selection. Should his vocational choice be among the professions, he is faced with the task of continuing education. There is a close relationship between consecutive developmental tasks. One task leads to another.¹⁹

The transition from adolescence to adulthood encounters a corresponding transition in developmental tasks. The adolescent task of selecting and preparing for an occupation leads to the early adulthood task of getting started in an occupation.

¹⁸J. Gordon Chamberlin, The Church and Its Young Adults (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943), pp. 24-25.

¹⁹Robert S. Clemmons, Young Adults in the Church (New York: Abingdon Press, 1959), p. 26.

The developmental tasks of adolescence and adulthood, however, cannot be clearly distinguished by absolute division at age eighteen. While one college-age youth has begun his life's work, another may still be preparing. It must be remembered that each individual can only be understood in the contexts of his personal experience and environment. The transition from adolescence to adulthood is a process of individual maturation, not a leap between independent moments of experience.

Knowledge of the developmental tasks of adolescence provides an understanding of the existence from which the college-age youth is emerging. Knowledge of the developmental tasks of early adulthood suggests the direction in which the college-age youth is moving. Combined, the knowledge of these developmental tasks provides an overview of the complex metamorphosis incumbent upon college-age youth today.

Further discussion of each of these developmental tasks is not practical here. The preeminent concern among college-age youth about several of the themes introduced in this section warrants special attention. These concerns are the major questions of college-age youth and will be developed in the next section.

MAJOR QUESTIONS

The questioning mood of the present generation of college-age youth is one of its most significant characteristics. "Today on campuses across the U. S., the young American is searching for answers" ²⁰ The universities have taken pride in alerting

²⁰"The Search," Time, November 21, 1955, p. 60.

young minds to the big questions of life.²¹ Many students, however, are not finding the meaningful answers they are seeking.

According to Paul E. Little:

. . . one of the major reasons many college dropouts give for leaving is that they came to college looking for answers to life and, instead of answers, they found only more questions. Disillusioned, they decided to try for meaning and authenticity elsewhere. A staggering 40 percent of all students entering college fail to graduate.²²

The college-age youth in or out of college is engaged in the adventure of discovery. He is absorbed in the quest for meaning and authenticity. Clifford V. Anderson defines this quest as follows:

The quest is for self.
The quest is for others, perhaps another, and for some, the Other.
The quest is for meaning in life.
The quest is for a style of life in a modern world.²³

Other students of this age group have suggested specific questions which characterize the search of college-age youth. The following seven questions are representative of the questions confronting college-age youth today:

1. Who am I?
2. Why am I here?
3. What shall be my life vocation?

²¹Michael Novak, "God in the Colleges," Harper's Magazine, October, 1961, p. 174.

²²Paul E. Little, "Reaching Youth in College," Youth and the Church, eds. Roy G. Irving and Roy B. Zuck (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), pp. 312-313.

²³Clifford V. Anderson, "The Nature and Needs of Young Adults," Adult Education in the Church, eds. Roy B. Zuck and Gene A. Getz (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), p. 39.

4. How do I relate to others?
5. Whom shall I marry?
6. What should I believe?
7. Is there a God?

The pursuit of satisfactory answers to these questions is a vital part of the process of human maturation in the United States today. The college-age youth is submerged in a sea of inquiry, experimentation, and verification with regard to three areas of life: (1) identity, (2) interrelationships, and (3) ideology.²⁴ The major questions of this age group may be categorized within these three areas as follows:

I. Identity:

- A. Who am I?
- B. Why am I here?
- C. What shall be my life vocation?

II. Interrelationships:

- A. How do I relate to others?
- B. Whom shall I marry?

III. Ideology:

- A. What should I believe?
- B. Is there a God?

Much of the happiness of the college-age youth depends on the success of his quest for answers to these questions.

Identity

The question of identity deals specifically with three

²⁴Fromer, op. cit., p. 128.

related questions? (1) Who am I? (2) Why am I here? (3) What shall be my life vocation? The first of these questions relates to the college-age youth's need to differentiate himself from his peers: Who am I? As a part of this differentiation, he seeks to determine his individual purpose and worth: Why am I here? Finally, he is obliged to categorize himself within the context of today's society: What shall be my life vocation?

In his book, The God Who Is There, Francis A. Schaeffer states, "Every man is in tension until he finds a satisfactory answer to the problem of who he himself is."²⁵ This tension is inherent in the plight of mankind to find its place in the universe. For the individual, it means a search for personal uniqueness. The success of this search has been made increasingly difficult by the mass production and depersonalization of twentieth-century society. In a study of student activism and developmental stress, Donald R. Brown makes the following observation:

The student generation has a phobia of increasing technological mechanization of the societal means of dealing with large numbers, as personified in the IBM card, which threatens the less stouthearted with an overwhelming crisis of depersonalization.²⁶

The crisis of depersonalization and the resultant sensation of anonymity compels the college-age youth to establish his individual identity. Thus this task may lead him to challenge

²⁵ Francis A. Schaeffer, The God Who Is There, (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968), p. 87.

²⁶ Donald R. Brown, "Student Activism and Developmental Stress," Student Activism and Protest, eds. Edward E. Sampson and Harold A. Korn and Associates (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1970), p. 94.

authority, whether it is the authority of his society, his parents, or his peer group. The recent student civil rights demonstrations reflect the tendency of the college-age youth to rebel in his attempt to find himself.²⁷ Though not every college-age youth rebels on this scale, rebellion must be understood as a part of the college-age youth's maturing process.²⁸

The quest for identity involves the discovery of purpose and worth. Today's college-age youth is confronted with the possibility that he is a machine whose only value is its utility.²⁹ But he wants to believe that he himself is significant.³⁰

What the college-age youth thinks about himself is implemented in his occupational choice. He is asked to state specifically, "I am this or that kind of person."³¹ Charles F. Kemp writes concerning the process of vocational selection of the college-age youth:

His entire future will be influenced by his decision. He will live a different kind of life, depending upon whether he decides to be an engineer, a doctor, a statesman, or a coach. His happiness and satisfaction in life will be largely determined by whether or not he chooses a vocation that is in line with his interests, his capabilities, his philosophy of life, his goals, and his

²⁷Paul Fromer, "The Nature and Needs of College-Age Youth," Youth and the Church, eds. Roy G. Irving and Roy B. Zuck (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), pp. 129-130.

²⁸Henrietta C. Mears, "Teaching College-Age Youth," An Introduction to Evangelical Christian Education, ed. J. Howard Hakes (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), pp. 192-193.

²⁹Fromer, op. cit., p. 129. ³⁰Mears, op. cit., p. 193.

³¹Henry Clay Lindgren and Donn Byrne, Psychology: An Introduction to the Study of Human Behavior (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1961), p. 337.

ideals. His contribution to society, his sense of meaning and purpose will also be affected by his sense of calling or his sense of vocation.³²

The far-reaching implications of vocational selection in the life of the individual are evidenced in the preceding quotation. The college-age person who has not made this choice is frequently confused. He may experience anxiety over his failure to determine his life work and even panic to some degree. In the United States, ". . . an individual derives a sense of identity from his occupation. Not to have made a vocational choice is, in a sense, like being an incomplete person."³³

The question of identity is of tremendous importance to the college-age youth. He is in the process of discovering himself, his personal uniqueness, his purpose and worth, and his life vocation. This process is intertwined with the following discussion of the questions of interrelationships and ideology.

Interrelationships

The process by which the college-age youth establishes meaningful relationships includes two important questions: (1) How do I relate to others? and (2) Whom shall I marry? A third question (How do I relate to God?) could be included in this discussion; however, the writer has reserved the consideration of that important question for the section on ideology.

While discovering the answer to the first of these

³²Charles F. Kemp, Counseling with College Students (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 44.

³³Lindgren, op. cit., pp. 337-338.

questions, the college-age youth is lonely. Because his age-mates are also seeking self-definition and meaning in life, they relate only poorly with one another. Other people, however, are important to the college-age youth. The basic human needs for love and esteem necessitate relationships with others.³⁵

The college-age youth is not sure what kind of relationships he desires. He does not want to get too involved with other people, but he needs and seeks friends. Paul Fromer describes the intermediate social stage of the college-age youth as follows, "The later adolescent is an inbetweenner in the matter of interrelationships. He wants to be free from entanglements and responsibility, yet he wants the support and stimulation of fellowship."³⁶

The social group is an important element in the life of the college-age youth. It is there that he develops the friendships and fellowship he needs and desires. Relating to others via the social group, however, is difficult for the college-age youth. He has found himself faced with the challenge of finding new friends and new sources of fellowship. If he remains at home after high school graduation and his acquaintances go on to college, he is isolated from his former social group. If he leaves home to go to work or school, he must break into new social groups.³⁷ The development of social relationships is aggravated

³⁵Lindgren, op. cit., p. 268.

³⁶Fromer, loc. cit.

³⁷Forest B. Fordham and Vincie Alessi, Teaching Older Youth (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1959), p. 14.

by the college-age youth's self-concept. Fromer continues his discussion of this problem:

Not being sure who he is, or if he is a person of worth, the student hesitates to let others know him. Further, he hesitates to get to know others because of the responsibility that knowledge would place on him. He also fears that if he establishes a personal relationship with someone, he'll either give or receive hurt.³⁸

The person in this age group must have sufficient security to be able to give to others and to receive from them.³⁹ It can be seen that the development of meaningful interrelationships is dependent on the satisfactory answer to the questions of identity.

In summary, the college-age youth finds the answer to the first question of interrelationships (How do I relate to others?) a difficult and lonely pursuit.

It is during this period of life that interest in satisfactory relationships with the opposite sex is highest.⁴⁰ In keeping with the achievement of his developmental tasks, the college-age youth asks, Whom shall I marry? Charles F. Kemp writes:

The capacity to love and be loved, to understand and accept one's masculine or feminine role in life, to establish a lasting partnership with a husband or wife, based on mutual acceptance, understanding and love, is one of life's greatest values.⁴¹

Dating is important in the process of mate selection. It eases the loneliness characteristic of this age group; it encourages a sense of personal worth and leads to satisfaction in marriage. On the other hand, courtship brings with its pleasures,

³⁸Fromer, loc. cit. ³⁹Fromer, op. cit., pp. 131-132.

⁴⁰Kemp, op. cit., p. 49. ⁴¹Ibid.

heartache and anxiety when the process leads to dissolving a relationship rather than its satisfaction in marriage. Though some college-age youth will never marry, the goal of dating in most cases is that of finding a mate.⁴²

The college-age youth realizes that the time has come, or soon will, when he must "settle down" and establish his own home and family. The right mate will give his life great meaning. If he makes an unsatisfactory choice, he will encounter considerable unhappiness.⁴³

The question of interrelationships is a difficult and anxiety-filled occupation of the college-age youth. The successful search for answers to the questions: (1) How do I relate to others?, and (2) Whom shall I marry?, will bring him personal satisfaction and happiness.

Ideology

The third major area of inquiry for the college-age youth is that of ideology. He is asking questions that relate to two previously suggested questions: (1) What should I believe?, and (2) Is there a God?

The question of ideology is closely related to the questions of identity and interrelationships. The view a person has of himself and his relationship to others is affected by his sphere of reference. Many times the questions of identity,

⁴²William W. Wattenberg, The Adolescent Years (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1955), p. 102.

⁴³Forham, op. cit., p. 13.

interrelationships, and ideology are asked simultaneously.⁴⁴

In regard to the question, "What should I believe?," Marjorie McCorquodot observes, ". . . students are seeking something to which they can commit their lives, something worth living for as well as something worth dying for."⁴⁵ The college-age youth has not established what meaning his life has. Dr. Jay Glen Gray states, "Many of the harassed young men and women I teach, at any rate, have not yet decided what sense, if any, their existence has."⁴⁶ Paul Fromer makes a similar observation when he says, "They are trying to form a world and life view that makes sense out of their kaleidoscope whirl of daily experience. They wonder what it all means."⁴⁷

The college-age youth is forging his own moral values and establishing his own philosophy of life. When he was growing up, he adopted the standards and values of his parents. Now that he is entering adulthood, he must assume personal responsibility for his own life in society. Under pressure to conform to society's values, he must test those values and fashion his personal standards of life and conduct.⁴⁸

In the present culture of the United States there is a

⁴⁴Fromer, op. cit., p. 132.

⁴⁵Marjorie McCorquodot, "What'll They Die for in Houston?," Harper's Magazine, October, 1961, p. 180.

⁴⁶Jay Glen Gray, "Salvation on the Campus," Harper's Magazine, May, 1965, p. 59.

⁴⁷Fromer, loc. cit.

⁴⁸Robert S. Clemmons, Young Adults in the Church (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1959), p. 27.

lack of absolutes in regard to values. This lack is problematic for questioning youth. Donald R. Brown notes:

The inherent loneliness of youth as it seeks self-definition and clarity has been increased by the rise of anonymity accompanying the moral blandness of a society in which guilt is hard to find and therefore impossible to expiate.⁴⁹

It is impossible to establish absolutes without some authority. Gray understands the real problem of college-age youth to be the quest for a significant authority:

The desire for self-definition often goes hand in hand with an inner need--more or less conscious--for a compelling authority to make freedom meaningful. . . . the real problem of our college youth is to discover some authority, both private and public that will make possible authentic individuality.⁵⁰

Today's college-age youth is seeking a substantial foundation for his ideology. He is not satisfied with easy answers. He wants his loyalties to be well grounded.⁵¹

In an exploratory study made in selected colleges and universities for the Committee for the Study of Character Development in Education, Edward D. Eddy concludes:

It is not surprising to us that the student, increasingly aware of personal and world tensions, and lacking a perspective not unlike his adult counterparts, seeks some foundation for his expanding horizons.⁵²

⁴⁹Donald R. Brown, "Student Activism and Developmental Stress," Student Activism and Protest, eds. Edward E. Sampson, Harold A. Korn, and Associates (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1970), p. 94.

⁵⁰Gray, op. cit., p. 54.

⁵¹"The Search," Time, November 21, 1955, p. 61.

⁵²Edward D. Eddy, The College Influence on Student Character (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1959), p. 119.

The search for authority and meaning in the shaping of values leads to the question, "Is there a God?"

In a Cornell University values study, responses at eleven universities from 2975 students polled revealed that forty-eight percent identified themselves with the statement, "I believe in a Divine God, Creator of the Universe, Who knows my innermost thoughts and feelings, and to Whom one day I shall be accountable."⁵³ Another twenty-seven percent identified with the statement, "I believe in a power greater than myself, which some people call God and some people call Nature."⁵⁴

This study suggests that most students have a belief in God. A later survey by Newsweek reveals that seventy-five percent of the students polled believed in God, but for many, that belief was highly tenuous.⁵⁵ The Newsweek survey goes on to report:

Almost 40 per cent of the students said that their experiences in college had made them question their faith: The doubts increase as students grow older. Almost twice as many seniors as freshmen said college had raised questions about their faith.⁵⁶

Newsweek states that the first encounter with the multiplicity of philosophic thought in freshmen courses initiates the student's doubt.⁵⁷ But today's college-age youth are not ready to reject the possibility of a "Final Examiner."⁵⁸

⁵³Rose K. Goldsen, What College Students Think (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1960), p. 154.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵"Campus '65," Newsweek, March 22, 1965, p. 57.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 58.

Michael Novak makes a significant observation with respect to the place of God in the university:

What, then, is the place of God in our colleges? The basic human experiences that remind man that he is not a machine, and not merely a temporary cog in a technological civilization, are not fostered within the university. God is as irrelevant in the universities as in business organizations; but so are love, death, personal dignity. Religion can thrive only in a personal universe; religious faith, hope, and love are personal responses to a personal God.⁵⁹

Novak suggests that the universities are evading the fundamental questions about meaning, and thus the question of a personal God may not even be posed.⁶⁰ The absence of a firm concept of a personal God as the authority from which man can establish absolute values for living results in a mechanical society with mechanical men who possess no solid moral standards. Francis A. Schaeffer states:

If the intrinsically personal origin of the universe is rejected, what alternative outlook can anyone have? It must be said emphatically that there is no final answer except that man is a product of the impersonal, plus time, plus chance.⁶¹

This offers an explanation for the dilemma presented in the conclusion of a Newsweek article entitled, "Campus '65":

What values, then, will today's largely unreflective students hold as tomorrow's citizens? They themselves do not say. . . . They could become the brightest technocrats

⁵⁹Michael Novak, "God in the Colleges," Harper's Magazine, October, 1961, p. 178.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Francis A. Schaeffer, Escape From Reason (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1968), p. 87.

in the nation's history.⁶²

The answer to the question of ideology is left open for this generation of college-age youth. They are searching for a meaningful answer. Many believe that religion holds the key. Eighty percent of the respondents in the Cornell study expressed a need for a religious faith.⁶³ Religion is no longer viewed negatively but has become intellectually respectable.⁶⁴ Today, college-age youth across the United States are looking to religion for the answers to the important questions of life.

SUMMARY

The college-age youth of today form a large and growing segment of the population of the United States of America. They may be found in varied occupations, diverse educational pursuits, and differing living situations. Most live in the large metropolitan areas, but some still dwell in rural settings.

The members of this age group are in transition from adolescence to adulthood. They are liberated, skeptical, and searching.

The present generation of college-age youth consists of unique individuals; however, they are engaged in common tasks of development. These include the continuing of adolescent tasks and the early tasks of adulthood.

⁶²"Campus '65," Newsweek, March 22, 1965, p. 58.

⁶³Goldsan, op. cit., p. 159.

⁶⁴"The Search," Time, November 21, 1955, p. 60.

Each college-age person must be understood within the contexts of his personal environment and experience, both of which greatly influence the process of his maturation.

The present generation of college-age youth is searching for answers to the major questions of life in three closely related areas: (1) identity, (2) interrelationships, and (3) ideology.

Chapter 3

PROFILES OF TEN MINISTRIES TO COLLEGE-AGE YOUTH

This chapter consists of profiles of ten ministries to college-age youth in the Portland area. Local ministers and lay sponsors were interviewed and, when possible, their ministries were observed directly. The purpose was to discover fundamental principles of successful ministry to this age group. The chapter concludes with a synthesis of the common elements and principles observed in these ministries. The researcher selected a variety of ministries for the purpose of broad exposure. These ministries represent different methods, different structures, and different theological emphases, but all are experiencing some degree of success.

CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST¹

Campus Crusade for Christ is a Christian organization ministering around the world. Its primary objective is to evangelize the world by 1980 and the United States by 1976. Campus Crusade staff members are stationed at colleges and universities for the purpose of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There are ten staff members working in the Portland area.

¹The information for this profile was obtained in a personal interview with Drake Garritson, Portland Area Director, Campus Crusade for Christ, February 22, 1973.

Workers are assigned responsibilities by Campus Crusade for Christ International and are required to raise their full personal support. There are presently staff members working on the campuses of Portland State University and both campuses of Portland Community College.

The primary goal of the local organization is to reach Portland with the claims of Christ. This involves the formulation of strategies and planning for the advancement of the gospel. The particular goal of reaching every student by 1976 is the goal of those staff members working on college campuses. There is also the concern of developing disciples to share in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Activities directed to the achievement of these goals include the establishment of "Action Groups." These small groups consist of a few people meeting regularly for Bible study, prayer, and discussion. The staff worker takes the members of these groups on campus and shows them how to share their faith. The objective is for these people to form "Action Groups" of which they are the leaders and thus multiply the Kingdom of God.

Contacts are made through personal relationships, random conversations, and team meetings which present the gospel to athletic teams and other campus units.

There is also a noon fellowship meeting on campus for Christians each Friday. A Friday evening gym night for recreation and various training sessions are offered.

The basic principles of the ministry are: (1) Christ has commanded his people to proclaim the message of salvation to all

the world and to make disciples, (2) the workers must have a solid and mature relationship with Christ, (3) each worker must share the gospel in love, (4) every man is searching for Christ, (5) the leadership must follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit, (6) the workers must be sensitive to the listener, and (7) the workers must give each person an opportunity to respond to Christ.

The success of the ministry is attributed to: (1) keeping to the basic and simple message of Christ, (2) the life of the staff as they walk by faith, (3) presenting the simple message of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, (4) keeping a world-wide vision of the mission.

CEDAR MILL BIBLE CHURCH²

Cedar Mill Bible Church is located at 12208 Northwest Cornell Road, Portland, Oregon.

The ministry to college-age youth at Cedar Mill Bible Church is under the direction of the youth pastor of the church. The college-career group is young but has become a meaningful part of the lives of its participants. It ministers to students from several local colleges and to young working people.

Lay sponsors assist the youth in the various activities in which they are engaged. The Sunday School hour is devoted to teaching and discussing Bible books. Sunday evening is a fellowship time with singing, praying, testimonies, and a variety of

²The information for this profile was obtained in a personal interview with Ron Draper, Youth Minister, Cedar Mill Bible Church, February 22, 1973.

special speakers and films. There are also four student-led Bible studies during the week. Occasional social activities are planned. Other special activities include rest home visitation and leading four evening worship services a year.

The primary goals of the ministry are to: (1) help the students see Christ as their Lord, (2) encourage youth to become effective and confident witnesses for Christ, and (3) enable youth to become examples of Christ to the younger and older people of the church.

The ministry of Christ and the love of the group in being sensitive to the needs of others are the basic reasons for the ministry's success.

VARSIITY CREW: CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH COLLEGE-CAREER MINISTRY³

Central Bible Church is located at 8815 Northeast Glisan, Portland, Oregon, near Multnomah School of the Bible. Many of the students to whom Central Bible Church ministers attend the various colleges in the area, but the greatest number are students from Multnomah.

The goal of Central Bible Church is the instruction of God's people in Biblical content and conformity to its precepts. Specifically, the objectives are to teach people to: (1) walk in fellowship with the Lord day by day, (2) use the Bible effectively, (3) live an exemplary life and have opportunity to employ their

³The information for this profile was obtained in a personal interview with Jay Beaumont, Director of Church Ministries, Central Bible Church, February 21, 1973.

spiritual gifts. These have been the primary emphases of all the ministries of the church from its beginning and are reflected in the ministry to college-age youth. The corollaries to this goal are to effectively communicate Biblical content and to encourage content involvement by students.

The college-career Sunday school class is taught by the assistant pastor of the church. Biblical exposition is the predominant approach with some instructional aids employed. The goal in that hour is to teach Biblical content. Assignments are given to the students at this time. There is a Sunday evening meeting after church geared to Biblically related subject matter: personal evangelism, Bible study methods, missions, and issues of the day. The evening meeting is discussion-oriented. The church also has a well developed ministry to military personnel. Prayer, literature, and other expressions of personal concern maintain contact with servicemen away from the local church. This ministry also prepares those entering military service for the possible difficulties of maintaining a meaningful spiritual life in the military. A Wednesday evening prayer meeting is a regular part of the college-career ministry.

Lay sponsors work together with students to determine program and give mature leadership. The students are in charge of the meetings with the exception of the teaching which is the responsibility of these sponsors or the assistant pastor. Missionary projects are encouraged and a number of students from Central Bible Church have gone into full-time Christian service. Various socials and retreats are planned throughout the year.

Specific principles govern the planning of the program. These principles are: (1) planning is essential, (2) the Word of God must be central, (3) avoid the philosophies of the world, (4) adopt only those methods which are subject to the authority of the Bible, (5) knowledge of the Scriptures prepares one for any problem in life, (6) get people involved in the Scriptural content, (7) the church is to equip the saints for service, and (8) teach the Scriptures effectively.

Success in this ministry was attributed to the strong emphasis on Biblical content and the loving prayers of the church specifically for the individual college-age youths. There is a meaningful ministry of individuals in the church to the students and their families. This is not programed but is a spontaneous expression of concern.

THE COLLEGE-CAREER FELLOWSHIP OF HINSON MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH⁴

Hinson Memorial Baptist Church is located at 1137 Southeast Twentieth Avenue, Portland, Oregon.

The ministry to college-age youth at Hinson began with the concern of the local pastor for this age group. His burden prompted the church's employment of a full-time minister to students. The ministry serves more than eighty people, most of whom are students. Hinson ministers to a number of Western Conservative Baptist Seminary students as well as students from Multnomah

⁴The information for this profile was obtained in a personal interview with William A. Dyrness, Minister to Students, Hinson Memorial Baptist Church, February 16, 1973.

School of the Bible, Portland State University, and to students from other local schools.

The primary goals of the ministry are to build up and strengthen those college-age youth attending Hinson Memorial Baptist Church and to encourage them in outreach and evangelism. The college minister, William A. Dyrness, who holds a Doctorate of Theology from the University of Strasbourg in France is impressed with the youth's need of ministry, to be developed into mature Christians ready to be effective witnesses.

To accomplish this goal, a strong ministry at the local church has been established. A solid program of weekly activity attracts people, and the minister is afforded the opportunity of service to individuals within the context of that program. The main concerns are teaching and personal work.

The teaching ministry is emphasized in the Sunday school hour. The approach is lecture, alternating monthly with Bible book studies and topical studies relating to the Christian life. Occasional small group activities are employed in the Sunday school class, and opportunities are given for questions and answers.

A "sing" is held at the homes of different members every Sunday night with the emphasis on singing and sharing testimonies, prayer requests and needs. There is no planned program for these evening "sings;" students lead the meeting. The evening "sing" is an important time for the college minister to meet and speak to individuals and to set up counseling appointments as necessary to meet individual needs.

dialogue. The minister does not attend, because he believes his presence represents authority and tends to inhibit discussion.

Another principle guiding the teaching ministry is the concept that the college-age youth needs information. Thus, the lecture method is used extensively. It is believed by the college minister that dialogue is for fellowship, not for teaching. Thus, authoritative teaching is essential.

Several reasons for the success of the ministry were suggested: (1) people draw people, (2) a good group spirit is present, and (3) personal victories and needs are meaningfully shared.

THE INSTITUTE IN BASIC YOUTH CONFLICTS

This ministry comes to Portland twice annually. It is designed for those who have sufficiently matured to reflect honestly on themselves and their relationships with others. Thousands of college-age youth are served by this ministry in Portland although it is not limited to this age group.

The material for the profile of this ministry was gathered as a result of the writer's participation in the institute. There was no interview with those in leadership. The tremendous success this ministry is enjoying with college-age youth requires its inclusion in this study.

The basic presupposition of the institute is the authority and divine inspiration of the Bible. Every area of the curriculum is permeated with scripture. The Word of God is used as the absolute from which desirable goals and objectives are obtained, and

the standard by which achievement is measured.

The institute confronts the conflicts of youth knowledgeably. It gives scriptural answers to important and difficult questions in ten areas of life: (1) acceptance of self, (2) family conflicts, (3) conscience, (4) personal rights, (5) moral freedom, (6) successful living, (7) purpose, (8) developing genuine friendships, (9) successful dating patterns, and (10) commitment.

The instructor, Bill Gothard, is a capable teacher with a winsome personality. He repeatedly illustrates concepts with personal experiences, displaying open and honest transparency in an effort to help others. His unusual ability to apply scriptural truths to the real needs of people is a significant factor in the ministry's success.

The primary methodology is lecture with visual aids. The large numbers prohibit discussion, though an attempt to answer questions is made.

The institute does not deal in theory only. It presents practical instructions leading to successful maturation as a Christian person. It relates significant insights into human experience which facilitate discernment of the roots from which many problems of life grow.

The Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts effectively ministers by combining knowledge and meaningful direction with a firm Biblical understanding. It guides college-age youth, and others who attend, to interpret life situations from the Biblical perspective.

INTER-VARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP⁵

Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship is a world-wide ministry to college students. Staff personnel encourage Christian students in their walk with Christ and help them to witness to their world.

Staff members must raise one half of their financial support and Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship provides the remainder of the support. Recent college graduates who are actively involved in ministry to college-age youth are selected and assigned official staff responsibilities. A staff member works with students on a number of campuses in an enabling role rather than a direct ministerial role.

The basic goals and objectives of the ministry are to: (1) help students to experience Christ as Lord, (2) promote evangelism, and (3) lead students to an understanding of their personal Christian mission.

To achieve these goals, staff workers converse with students, discussing their spiritual lives and encouraging personal Bible study, prayer, scripture memorization, and evangelism. Students are guided into leadership of small evangelistic Bible study groups and into an increased understanding of the Christian's relationship to the Body of Christ.

Seminars and personal counsel by staff members provide

⁵The information in this profile was obtained in a personal interview with Becky Manley, staff member, Portland Area, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, February 21, 1973.

opportunity for ministry in the important areas of discipleship, evangelism, and missions. Content includes talks on apologetics, leading people to Christ, follow-up, discipling believers, methods of evangelism, and personal Christian responsibilities.

The major principles of the ministry are: (1) teaching by personal example, (2) giving one's life, not just information, (3) developing genuine friendships, (4) identifying with people, (5) being real, honest, and vulnerable in relationships with other people, and (6) living a whole, integrated Christian life.

The success of this ministry in the Portland area is attributed to: (1) the prayer support by numbers of people, (2) the personal prayer life of the staff members, (3) communicating Jesus as He really is, warm, vibrant, captivating, and irresistible, (4) the personal honesty, openness, and integrity of the staff personnel, and (5) the exemplary life styles of the workers.

MARANATHA EVANGELISTIC CENTER CHURCH⁶

Maranatha Evangelistic Center is an independent church located at 1222 Northeast Skidmore, Portland, Oregon.

The youth ministry of Maranatha Church serves over five hundred youth between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five years. There is no separate college-age program. This age group is included in the homogeneous constituency of blacks and whites from a great cross section of the many subcultures of youth ages

⁶The information in this profile was obtained in a personal interview with Don Warren, Youth Minister, Maranatha Evangelistic Center Church, February 19, 1973.

fifteen to twenty-five.

The youth ministry began with four young laymen who wanted to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to the youth in their community and also provide something for the youth of the church. They held a youth service on Sunday evenings before the church's regular evening service. Because of the limitation of time and the increased attendance, they moved the youth service to Friday evenings. Their first Friday night meeting was attended by seventy to eighty youth. Within one month attendance had grown to four hundred.

The numerical increase gave rise to programing. A youth choir was started and now has approximately sixty members.

The primary objective is evangelizing the youth in the immediate area of the church. This goal is reached by the Friday night youth service. In addition there is a Monday night follow-up meeting where new converts are taught the basics of Christian living and doctrine.

The youth are encouraged to involve themselves in the total life of Maranatha Church. Except for Sunday School, the ministries of the church are not graded. The attempt is made to get people working in the church and witnessing in the community.

Other activities for youth include hiking, trips, meetings in people's homes, bowling, and basketball. There is also a monthly youth skate. The frequency of social activities is one to two a month.

Maranatha Church has a new concern for reaching the whole man, and they anticipate a growing program to meet more than the

spiritual needs of the youth who attend. The need for flexibility in ministry was also emphasized.

One of the major factors in the success of the program is the dedication and sincerity of the youth choir. They have sung in a wide variety of places, and their music gives a tremendous witness in the youth program, its services, and its ministry to the world.

Another factor considered important to the success of the ministry was the pastor's ability to relate to and draw youth.

THE HOUSE OF THE RISEN SON⁷

The House of the Risen Son is a new ministry to students at Mt. Hood Community College. Jim and Doris Marrington have been interested in youth ministry for some time and have participated as lay sponsors to high school and college youth in several church programs. An increasing burden to be available twenty-four hours a day encouraged them to establish this ministry. It appeared to them that no one had the time to give to youth, to listen to them and to show interest in those students attending the local church as well as in the unsaved youth on campus.

At present, twelve students live with the Marringtons in a house which they have leased for this purpose. The ministry is not supported financially by outside sources, but some gifts have been received from interested persons. Consequently, both Mr. and

⁷The information in this profile was obtained in a personal interview with Doris Marrington, co-founder, the House of the Risen Son, February 20, 1973.

Chapter 4

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

College-age youth are a challenging mission field for the Christian Church today.

The purpose of this research was: (1) to develop an understanding of the college-age youth of this generation, (2) to acquire a knowledge of the basic characteristics and needs of college-age youth, (3) to examine ministries in the Portland area which are communicating successfully to college-age youth, and (4) to discover the essential principles for successful ministry to college-age youth today.

The preceding objectives were achieved by: (1) a survey of selected literature relating to college-age youth, and (2) an investigation of ten successful ministries to college-age youth in the Portland area.

The survey of literature revealed that college-age youth form a large and growing segment of the present population of the United States of America. They may be found in varied occupations, diverse educational pursuits, and differing living situations. Most college-age youth live in large metropolitan areas.

College-age youth are in transition from adolescence to adulthood. They are in the process of completing the developmental

9. College-age youth must be led to respond to the Word of God and not allowed to listen only.

10. Fellowship is an important ingredient in successfully meeting the needs of college-age youth; therefore, wholesome opportunities for fellowship must be provided.

11. College-age youth should be encouraged and permitted to take responsible leadership in ministry to their peers.

12. Methods are not as important as the attitudes and message of those who minister.

13. A strong base of unselfish prayer is prerequisite to success.

14. Continuing success is directly related to continuing prayer.

15. Leadership must be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

16. Success is God's blessing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The study of ministry to college-age youth suggested a need for further study in the following areas: (1) the needs peculiar to single women in this age group, (2) the needs peculiar to military personnel in this age group, (3) the intellectual needs of the exceptional student in this age group, and (4) the correlation between understanding the needs of college-age youth and success in ministry to that age group.

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