

Religious Education as an Aid to Personality  
Development in Intermediates.

by

Patsy Charleston Weaver

A THESIS

Submitted to the Department of Religious  
Education in Gammon Theological Seminary  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree Master of Religious Education.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

1949

250 19

Approved by:



R.IV. THH

Dedicated

to

My husband, Curtis S. Weaver



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1.....i- ii- iii
I. Aims and Objectives of Religious Education.....	1
II. How Christian Personality Develops...;	12
III. Statement of Project.....	23
IV. Dealing With Problems of the Under Privileged.....	29
V. Integrating Christian Personality.....	35
Summary.....	40
Bibliography.....	44

## Outline

### Religious Education as an Aid to Personality Development in Intermediates.

- I. Aims and Objectives of Religious Education.
  - A. The Meaning of Religious Education.
  - B. The Objectives in Religious Education.
  - C. The Curriculum of Religious Education.
- II. How Christian Personality Develops.
  - A. Through Christian Environment.
  - B. Through major Spiritual Sources.
    - 1. Formal Worship.
    - 2. The Bible and Other Christian Literature.
    - 3. Membership in Church and Other Worth While Groups.
    - 4. Respect for and Interest in Moral Customs and Standards.
- III. Statement of Project.
  - A. Description of Physical Plant.
  - B. Available Resources.
    - 1. Material and Natural Resources.
    - 2. Human Resources.
  - C. Calendar of Activities.
- IV. Dealing With Problems of the Underprivileged.
  - A. Social Problems.
  - B. Mental Handicaps or Problems.
  - C. Environmental Problems.
  - D. Moral and Religious Problems.
- V. Integrating Christian Personality Through Community Cooperation.
  - A. The Church in the Community.
  - B. Community Council.

Summary.

## Introduction

The growth of personality in children is the constant interest and concern of both the parent and the teacher. It must first be discovered in each child, for each child has a different personality. It is also true that the personality of the child should be stimulated, nurtured and guided.

It is at an early stage of personality development that a child takes on roles, finds patterns of behavior, and becomes an individual. His personality grows as he lives with others and as others live with him. Some writers speak of personality more in terms of achievements than in its character at birth. However, Mary M. Shirley in her study of The First Two Years says, differences in personality were apparent in some babies at birth, and in all within the first three months.

This thesis seeks to show that when religious education becomes a part of the environment in which a child is born, and grows up in, it will have an influence on his personality development. Since religious education is a process of growth, and personality development is also a process of growth, it would be much easier to let religious education aid in the personality development beginning at birth, rather than to wait until later in the child's life

to begin giving him religious educational training.

Every normal child must be himself. It is the object of religious education to develop wholesome individualities in children. Religious education to a child is what the protection of other trees are to a young tree in the forest. The young tree's chance for growing straight in the forest is far greater than it would be on an open hill. The other trees in the forest will protect it from high winds, beating rains, and other forces of nature which will retard or stunt its growth. A child's chance for having a desirable personality is far greater with the aid of religious education which has as one of its objectives, "to effect in growing persons the assimilation of the best religious experience of the race, as effective guidance to present experience," than it would be if he is allowed to grow up with no religious guidance.

Since religious education is not a mere transmission of accumulated material from generation to generation, as it was once considered to be, then it is necessary to explain what religious education is, and what its objectives are. We have come to see that religious education has a creative function. The past is transmitted only for the sake of a richer present and a growing future.

Chapter two describes the conditions under which Christian personality develops best. It suggests various approaches that the leader may use to bring about these conditions, and

indicates ways in which influence shapes personality.

Chapter three is devoted to the description of the writer's project. A calendar of the year's activities is given. The problems that are found in Chapter three are discussed in their moral, religious, physical, social, mental and emotional relationship to the more normal situation in which wholesome personalities are developed, in Chapter four.

The fifth Chapter is given to ideas, techniques, and methods of integrating the work of the Church, home, school and other agencies in the job that they have pledged to do, develop personality and character in young people.

Many persons have helped to make this thesis possible. I acknowledge my indebtedness to the labors of others in the field of Religious Education. I wish to express my even greater obligation to those who have given so generously of their personal counsel and instruction, especially to Dr. P. A. Taylor, Jr. for the inspiration and encouragement he gave me during my first year at Gammon. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the aid of Professor James S. Thomas. I am grateful for his helpful criticism and valuable suggestions during the preparation of this thesis. It is impossible for me to indicate every instance of assistance, which I have received from cooperative persons, but to

them I express my gratitude.

Patsy Charleston Weaver

Gammon Theological Seminary

April 1949

## Chapter I. —

### Aims and Objectives of Religious Education

#### A. What Religious Education Means.

The meaning of religious education as the term is used here should be understood by the reader before the objectives in religious education are stated.

There are many conflicting views concerning the nature and purpose of religious education. The two most generally accepted views are:

1. Religious education as set apart from general education - Religious education in this sense is thought of as a part of the whole in method, but definitely independent in content. According to this viewpoint religious education can be given in a different school at a different time from secular education, because the content is different. Advocates of this viewpoint have so great a zeal for removing religious emphasis from public education that it is feared by many that we are producing a genera-

tion of people so secularized that they will have little appreciation or interest in the church or the community in which they live.

2. Religious education embraces the whole of education, both secular and religious. According to this viewpoint religious schools only add emphasis and quality to the educational function of the public school.

Goe, in Education in Religion and Morals, does not draw a sharp distinction between religious education and education in general. He says, "the primary difference between religious and other education is the end in view, or the conception of human life that is represented, so that for us religious education is simply education in the complete sense of the term."<sup>1</sup>

The second viewpoint is supported by those who represent general education as well as those who represent religious education. "One of the best known authors on the curriculum includes religion as one of the ten areas of activities which constitute his major objectives."<sup>2</sup>

The objectives in religious education given here will be from a Christian viewpoint. The term Christian education is used to designate a certain type of religious

---

1. G.A.Coe, Education in Religions and Morals, quoted in Paul H. Vieth, Objectives in Religious Education, p. 8

2. Paul H. Vieth, Objectives in Religious Education, p.9



education. The term Christian itself implies the centrality of Jesus Christ in Christian religious education. His life and teachings are important in our interpretation of Christian religion of today. This interpretation is based upon more than nineteen hundred years of Christian history, plus different cultural situations, and varying ideologies that have both influenced and been influenced by Christianity.

As Christianity has come into contact with diverse conditions and new knowledge it has itself undergone reinterpretation and enrichment. Religious education therefore is not an education with a fixed predetermined content. There is no true interpretation of the Christian religion which is its function to transmit. Rather religious education is an enterprise in which historical experiences and conceptions are utilized in a process by which individuals and groups come to experiences and convictions which are meaningful for them today."<sup>3</sup>

The religious educator encourages people to face their own problems, and to search for the Christian solutions of those problems which are true to fundamental Christian convictions.

### B. Objectives in Religious Education

There are seven major statements which religious educators regard as being necessary in forming the Objectives in religious education. These statements are based upon a study of the writing of ten leaders in religious education. These leaders were selected from a group of persons who were in a

---

3. Harrison S. Elliott, Can Rel. Ed. be Christian? p.310

position to know the literature of religious education. The selections were made by professors of religious education in Seminaries and Colleges.

The material for this study consisted of all the writings, both book and periodicals, of these ten leaders, during and after 1916. All the source materials were read, and the material that would lend itself to the interpretation of Vieth's views on the aims and purpose of religious education was selected. This material was used to formulate seven major objectives, each with sub-titles.

After this list of objectives had been completed a referendum in the form of a questionnaire was sent to 434 persons who were authorities in the field of religious education in an attempt to evaluate these objectives. The tabulations from this referendum revealed that many were in agreement with the objectives as there were stated.

#### Objectives in Religious Education as stated by Vieth.

- I. "To foster in growing persons a consciousness of God as a reality in human experience, and a sense of personal relationship to him.
- II. To lead growing persons into an understanding and appreciation of the personality, life, and teaching of Jesus Christ.
- III. To foster in growing persons a progressive and continuous development of Christlike character.

- IV. To develop in growing persons the ability and disposition to participate in and contribute constructively to the building of a social order embodying the ideal of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.
- V. To lead growing persons to build a life philosophy on the basis of Christian interpretation of life and the universe.
- VI. To develop in growing persons the ability and disposition to participate in the organized society of Christians - the Church.
- VII. To effect in growing persons the assimilation of the best religious experience of the race, as effective guidance to present experience."

#### C. The Curriculum of Religious Education.

The meaning of Curriculum - There are three definitions for Curriculum given by Paul H. Vieth in his The Church and Christian Education: they are:

1. "In the broadest sense of the term, all life is curriculum. There is no experience which does not have an influence on what people become. And if religion is concerned with all phases of life, then most of life's experiences

may be thought of as the religious curriculum."

2. "The curriculum of Christian education include all those activities and experiences which are initiated or utilized by the Church for the achievement of the aims of Christian education."
3. The curriculum of Christian education is the "prepared materials for use in the Church's<sup>4</sup> program for Christian education."

Vieth considers the first conception that he has given too broad for practical purposes. While these forces are important to growth and development a curriculum is needed that will give the Church Board of Christian Education something specific to do. The second definition points to many approaches that may be used by the Christian leader to help pupils to develop full wholesome personalities.

These activities and experiences will include things done for the pupils, activities which the pupils themselves are led into doing, environing conditions which influence thought and attitudes, persons with whom the pupils come in contact, fellowship groups in which they are immersed, books and other source materials, and their life situations and problems outside the Church which are used as illustrations of Christian living and the setting for Christian conduct. 5

The third conception is one aspect of the second. The

---

4. Vieth, The Church and Christian Education, pp.134-135  
 5. Ibid., p. 135.

second is considered most useful, but the third cannot be ignored because of the importance of good material.

The history of how the Sunday School was established and developed in America reveals the struggle of Christian education from the earliest settlers to the present day. Our concern here is how we came to have what is known as Uniform lessons all over Christendom. The need for a Uniformed lesson plan arose in what Professor Sweet calls "the restless thirties and forties, when so many divisions took place within the denominations, and when each denomination began to emphasize their own interest."<sup>6</sup> The first attempt toward selected uniform lessons for all Sunday Schools failed, because each denomination felt it should supply its Sunday Schools with lessons which emphasized its doctrines and aims. It was not until 1865 that a movement for uniform lessons based on the Bible was initiated by John H. Vincent, a Methodist minister in Chicago. Out of this movement the National (later known as the Inter-National) Sunday School Association adopted a resolution which authorized the convention "to appoint a committee of five clergymen and five laymen to select a series of Bible lessons for a series of years not exceeding seven."<sup>7</sup> These lessons were to embrace the Bible, alternating between the Old Testament and

---

6. W.W. Sweet, The Story of Religion in America quoted in Harrison S. Elliott, Can Religious Education Be Christian?, p. 23.

7. Harrison S. Elliott, Can Religious Education Be Christian, p. 24.

the New Testament.

The provision met the denominational problem by allowing each denomination to select its own topic, scripture passage, and golden text for each lesson. They were also allowed to publish "Lesson Helps," and their quarterlies.

The Uniform lesson had many oppositions, some valid and others invalid. One valid opposition to the Uniform lesson was the educational unsuitability of one lesson for all ages. "As early as 1884 a group of women had organized themselves into a National Primary Union and had demanded of the Inter - National Lesson Committee the provisions of lesson material better suited to younger children."<sup>8</sup>

This demand reached the stage of effective action when in 1906 Mrs. Barnes, organized what was known as a Graded Lesson Conference which took responsibility for outlining the Inter-National Graded Series.

The educational approach was recognized to be of major importance in religious education during that period. Both subject matter and method was suited to the age and attainment of the pupil. Nurture through instruction in the home and Church was considered the normal method of being sure that children would grow up as Christians and take their places in the Churches as adults.

During the period in which the need for uniform lessons was first recognized until the present day, a vast amount

---

8. Ibid., p. 25.

and variety of material has been put forward for the program of Christian education in its several parts and agencies.

The Church has now available for its use:

1. Uniform lesson. - These lessons are designed for Sunday School use; they are uniform in the sense that the scripture passage serves as a starting point for all age groups.
2. Group Graded lessons (also called departmental graded<sup>n</sup>). - These lessons group pupils into departments with a typical age span of three years. The lessons are uniform only for persons in the same department. Lessons for each department may be different.
3. Closely graded. - These lessons provide a separate course of lessons for each year.
4. Elective Courses. - Courses which may be offered in some denominations as elective at the will of the group. Each course undertakes to cover a definite field of study for one age group.
5. Vacation School texts. - Teacher's material.
6. Weekday School texts. - Usually this material is provided for the teacher only.
7. Youth Fellowship or Society topics. - Materials issued in Youth magazines, and books or manuals containing program suggestions for a year.

This list does not include curricular offerings for

adult groups in the Church, pastors' classes, missionary organizations and guidance material for religious growth in the home. The above list may be supplemented with suitable aids, in the form of colored pictures, periodicals, motion pictures, hymns and music, and selected books.

There are two questions that should be answered here.

1. What is the purpose of the curriculum of Christian education? 2. What basic needs should the curriculum of Christian education meet? "The purpose of the curriculum of Christian education is to confront individuals with the eternal gospel, and to nurture within them a life of faith, hope, and love, in keeping with the gospel."<sup>9</sup>

With this purpose in mind we are able to answer the second question. The first obligation of the curriculum of Christian education is to be true to the Christian faith. Second in importance is the individual. The curriculum should meet his needs and his perplexities in the time in which he lives through the experiences of others. The curriculum speaks words of assurance through some of the ways that it has at its command. Third in importance is the Church. - The curriculum attempts to meet the needs of the Church's teaching task, and help them to accomplish it. "The success of the ecumenical movement tomorrow depends largely on what we write into our curriculum today."<sup>10</sup>

---

8. Paul H. Vieth, The Church and Christian Education, p. 145  
 10. Ibid., p. 153



The need for better materials is recognized by the leaders of Christian education. They also see that this problem has to be met by Protestantism as a whole in an inter-denominational cooperation in publication. But until this problem is solved, leaders in religious education have given us the best possible curriculum of Christian education for meeting the needs of the people as outlined in its purpose.

## Chapter II.

### How Christian Personality Develops

#### A. Christian Environment.

When personality development is mentioned, immediately we think in terms of what has been considered by many psychologists as the two main influences on personality growth and development, heredity and environment. Some scholars differ on which of the two exercises more influence on the growing individual. There is another school of thought which believes that the influence of heredity is equally as great as the influence of environment on the growth of personality, and vice versa.

Three environmental conditions which may have a direct bearing on the development of Christian personalities in children are economic, housing and home and school conditions.

The economic conditions play a large part in the expansion or expression of a child's life. The economic system of which we are a part is so constructed that we have the very rich and the very poor. There is a larger percentage of America's total population in the very poor category than in the very rich or even comfortably secure

category. Large numbers of children are growing up in America without the necessary food, clothing or shelter for healthy, vigorous growth. Inadequate economic security puts a feeling of insecurity, injustice, and hopelessness into an individual. When a child has to grow up in an environment of this type he is filled with fears. He has a constant feeling of strain and in many cases he develops a hopeless resignation, ready to let happen what will. Then there is little wonder that these children are delinquent and are problems to society.

#### Housing and Home Conditions

The housing condition in many of our cities is causing a problem almost as great as the problem of economic security. There are many families in America who are financially able to live in better quarters, but because there are children in the family they are not allowed to live in children-restricted houses or apartments. It is demoralizing for a child to have to apologize for a poor home and unkempt surroundings.

One of a child's basic needs is met when he has a good home in a respectable neighborhood. This need should be met for every child in the country by a decent home and attractive surroundings. A home should be as permanent as possible where there are growing children. It is very necessary for a child to feel that he belongs to the community in which

he lives. The character of a home and of a neighborhood determines to a large degree the character of children in them.

Delinquency is likely to be found anywhere, but according to Chave "where there is more stability and a larger number of constructive forces and where children can find legitimate satisfaction, the rate of delinquency diminishes."<sup>11</sup>

The country is more desirable for growing children than the city. The latter type of home is seldom built to encourage a girl or boy to have hobbies or even to entertain their friends in. They usually have to go outside of their homes for all the recreation they have. The child who lives in the country has room to move about without infringing upon the property of others.

It has been said that the spirit of religion can be caught by a child in his home better than any place else. His first sense of self-worth, and the spirit of love and trust should be his in his home. Sportsmanship and regard for others develop in a home where the interest of all is the interest of each one individually. "A child's philosophy of life slowly matures, but it may be unconsciously shaped at every turn of events in the life of the child when wise parents guide his expanding experiences and help him to get relative meaning and values in his adjustments."<sup>12</sup>

---

11. Chave, Personality Development in Children, p.156

12. Ibid, p. 168

The child who is reared in an orderly stable home can readily see the value of dependable facts and procedures of a world governed by law and order and faith. He senses his moral obligations first to himself and home, and later in life to the society of which he is a part.

### School Conditions

Next to the home in importance to personality development is the school. When a child reaches grade school most of his time is spent in school. This affords the home little opportunity to condition his conduct. In many homes, especially in the cities where the home is so crowded, parents are thankful for a schedule which will take the children out of the house for the entire day. The school gives more attention to the health, moral life, and general development of some children than their parents do. Some children never know what it means to follow a schedule until they enter school.

The pious parent often laments, "Johnnie never knew or said a curse word until he started to school." But very rarely do you hear a parent say, "Johnnie has learned to play with other children since he has started to school." A child cannot possibly go to school without showing some improvements whether they be social, or mental. "A comparative study of nursery school children showed no measurable gain physically, or mentally in a period of seven months' observation, but a

larger percentage of nursery children showed improvement in habits, eliminating undesirable forms and gaining desirable ones..., dispositions were considerably modified in the new environment."<sup>13</sup>

The school experiences and the home experiences of a child should be so clearly integrated that what the child learns at home may serve as a background for and give meaning and motivation to what is learned in school. It is impossible for the best character education to work without close co-operation of home, school and community. All influences are inter - acting and counter - acting, or co - operating.

#### B. Christian Personality Develops through Major Spiritual Forces.

##### Formal Worship

Group worship has value for the individual that many have not yet learned to appreciate. The child learns to worship in a group before he learns to worship as a person. In any true worship service the worshiper should respond to a Presence greater than himself, and only by taking part in the service is he able to respond. It is therefore exceedingly important that worship services be carefully planned, graded and conducted. A child will not be able to receive the same spiritual values from a worship service planned for adults, that he will receive from a service planned for

---

13. Ibid, p. 172

children of his age. Chave thinks, "most adults fail to appreciate the fact that their religion is an accumulation of experiences, and that it is impossible to transfer to a child the adult attitude and meanings."<sup>14</sup>

2. Christian personality develops through the use of the Bible and other Christian literature.

The Bible is one of America's best sellers, but it is the least read and understood of all best sellers. People are usually too lazy to study it. If we expect to develop Christian personality in children we must see to it that the child possesses some knowledge of the truth and principles of the Christian religion. This knowledge can best be obtained through the Bible. To know the Bible in the same sense that our forefathers knew it is of very little value to personality development, but the ultimate objective is that the child may be able to use it in actual life situations. The Bible to most children is little more than a book of magic. What the Bible is not needs to be taught in many cases. To Chave:

There is no inherent value in the Bible or other sacred scriptures until the learner is able to enter into the social situation of olden times, to take the role of the person described, to feel the values they sought, and to understand their belief and practices. Bible stories are not rated

---

14. Ibid., p. 227

upon the interest they may arouse, but upon the conditioning value of the experiences for better personal and social living. 15

Both the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament Gospels contain all that is needed for a complete philosophy of life. The Bible can be very valuable in solving the problems of life; if it is used as a resource, there is no problem that the Bible cannot throw some light on.

There is an unlimited amount of other Christian literature which may be used as aids in personality development. Books that treat special problems for group discussions are also available. Young people and leaders of children should be urged to use such materials. Books of a non - religious nature may be used if they have an uplifting quality. This type of book not only improves the reader habit, but it stimulates the growth of Christian personality.

### 3. Personality Developments through Membership in Church and other worthwhile Groups.

A desire to take the vows of Church membership is an expected result of good teaching and Christian home environment. The child should grow up in the Christian way of life from birth, receiving Christian guidance in the development of habits, attitudes, and standards of life. But there ought to be a time in the child's life when he makes a personal commitment to the Christian life. In the ideal

---

15. Ibid., p. 234



situation this commitment will grow out of a normal religious educational process. The Church School curriculum is full of units that contribute to the Christian faith and personal commitment of children as they grow. Children should be taught early in life that with a choice of Christ their lives should be marked with stages of progress. For many people to become a Christian means becoming a member of the Church. They take the vows without sensing their importance, and without taking them seriously. This type of membership becomes an end in itself. Having been made a member of the Church the individual feels that the process of becoming a Christian is completed.

Roy A. Burkhardt, in his Understanding Youth says, "The cost of becoming a communist is small in comparison with the imperatives that the way of Jesus puts upon one's life. To make human society the Kingdom of God and to reach personal perfection represents the highest ideals of which  
16  
any one can dream."

Young people should be encouraged to become members of other worthwhile groups, who are pledged to character development. Membership in these groups will give them entertainment that they will seek otherwise in the bootlegging joint or the dance hall.

---

16. Burkhardt, Roy A., Understanding Youth, p. 75

4. Christian Personality develops through the respect for and interest in moral customs and standards.

A person must have some respect for, or some interest in a moral standard to accept it. The moral standards of society cannot be imposed upon a child in an effort to make him moral. It may compel him to obey certain approved ways, but this does not make him moral. "If a child does not discover that cooperation gives larger satisfaction than parasitical behavior and so develop social desires and skills,<sup>17</sup> he will not achieve social status."

Our competitive society makes it hard for a child to develop moral principles or to pattern his conduct after those whose conduct he approves. To tell a child that honesty is the best policy, does not mean much to him if the principle does not work when it is tried by him. A child is trained in morality not to verify moral abstract codes, but moral training should help the child to evaluate social relations so that he will see a growing desire for the better way, even if conditions force a compromise.

Punishment and reward have their good and bad points in developing desirable personalities in children. In punishing or rewarding a child the motive should be the governing factor.

---

17. Ernest J. Chave, Personality Development in Children, p.203.

Jean Piaget says that punishment is the child's criterion of the parent's feeling as to the gravity of an offense. However grave the offense is, what the parent should first consider is the motive. In cases where rewards are given as aids in developing desirable habits and standards, care should be taken to help the child see the reward as a happy association of the important end. Some adult leaders make the mistake of awarding children with rewards for acts that they would be normally expected to do. Children will quickly learn to depend upon a stimulus of this kind, and they will go through life expecting this type of stimulation.

Our forefathers thought of conscience as being a mysterious inborn faculty giving a person power of moral discrimination. We no longer feel that an individual will know right from wrong, good from bad, or sin from evil because he has direct guidance. To Chave:

The term 'conscience' tends to refer to acquired social sensitivity and comprehension of moral standards. Sometimes it is treated as a censor among the selves of the developing personality, the self which has become more socialized and which applies the most searching principles of conduct to each and every situation. Perhaps the term may indicate the moral maturity of the individual, the degree to which he has become unified in his moral outlook, habits and attitudes. 18

---

18. Ibid., p. 225

For Christian personality development children need help to see contrasting differences between superior and inferior moral conduct. Adults should give children as much freedom as they can use to advantage, but well planned goals with approved moral and religious standards are essential to Christian personality development.

### Chapter III.

#### Statement of Project.

The project which is described in this Chapter was conducted at Ariel Bowen Methodist Church. The work was done under the supervision of a representative from the Young Women's Christian Association and the pastor of Ariel Bowen Church. Activities engaged in during this project were predominantly group activity with as much time given to individual cases as could be spared. The program was motivated by the Christian purpose of the Church and the Y.W.C.A. Policies and methods of work were subjected to the test of whether or not they were contributing to the children's personality development. The program was also an attempt to help the children to enjoy wholesome recreational activities, and to encourage them to deal sincerely with the social problems which affected themselves and others.

The program included:

1. Worship services each evening
2. Arts and Crafts (for those who were interested in them)
3. Story hour
4. Supervised games (both active and passive)

5. Simple quiz programs using current events, Bible questions and good manners questions
6. Democratic discussions on selected topics

#### A. Description of Physical Plant

The Ariel Bowen Methodist Church is located at 380 Arthur Street, Atlanta, Georgia. The Church is located in the Pittsburgh community, which is a very large Negro neighborhood. The Church is a red brick two unit building. The main Sanctuary is up a half flight of stairs from the ground level. The main entrance faces Arthur Street, which runs North and South. From this same entrance there is a door that enters into the basement at the foot of a flight of stairs. Since it was in the basement the field project was carried out, a full description of the basement will be given. The Church is built on a hill side, which allows the west side of the basement to have a ground floor entrance. This entrance faces Smith Street, and is at the back of a large room which includes about two-thirds of the floor space of the basement. There are six windows on the west side of this room, and four doors on the east side. The doors lead into two class rooms, a furnace room and a kitchen. At the far end of the room, which is on the south end, there is a small box-like stage in the center. On each side of the stage is a door. The door on the west side leads into another class up a back flight of stairs into the main Sanctuary and the door on the east side leads

into a class room sometimes used for the office work of the Church. Each of the two side class rooms, which are about twelve feet square, has two small windows which open in from the east side of the Church. The class room which was used by "The Busy Bee Workers" has a piano, two robe cabinets, an oil stove, a table and six or seven chairs.

The large room is used for general assembly of all the clubs for joint worship and recreation. There is a piano on the stage. There is a large stove in the center of the room. All the seats are movable, and at the front entrance is a water cooler.

#### B. Available Resources.

##### 1. Materials and Natural Resources.

All materials used in the project were furnished by the Ariel Bowen Methodist Church. Many games, such as bingo, Chinese checkers, dominoes, reading games and table tennis were used by the leaders. The Church also furnished such materials as textile paints, crochet needles and thread, construction paper and cloth to be used in the Art and Craft class. There is a vacant lot two doors from the Church where the children are allowed to play such games as baseball, marbles and ring plays when the weather permits.

##### 2. Human Resources.

Work on this project was started October 6, 1948. Sixty-seven children were registered for the year's work. They ranged from the age of seven to fourteen years. This

group of children was divided into four groups. All boys were put into one group, and assigned to the only male worker. The girls were divided into three groups: Group 1, ages 7 - 8; group 2, ages 9 - 10 - 11; and group 3, ages 12 - 13 - 14. Group three was assigned to this worker. There were fourteen girls in this group, four more joined the group during the year.

At the first meeting of Group three everyone became acquainted with everyone else. This was done by group singing and the use of a game called "Human Lotto." In the following meeting the group was organized into a club, and chose its name, "The Busy Bee Workers." A schedule was worked out for the use of the hour and a half each week. The period was divided into three parts: devotions, recreation and work. Ideas for the year's work which had been brought in by the girls were listed on the black board, and the girls with the help of the leader selected an activity or special event for each month. A list was made of the selections and turned over to the Program Committee for specific planning as the year moved along.

#### C. Calendar of Activities.

October 1948:

Halloween Observance. - The class room was decorated for Halloween, and a Committee of girls was appointed to make a report on the origin of Halloween.

The Art project for October was crocheting.



November 1948:

Contributing to the Over Seas Relief program. -

Each member brought one bar of soap to be contributed, to Over Seas relief through the Y.W.C.A. soap drive.

Crocheting was continued as the Art project.

December 1948:

The Annual Recognition Ceremonial. - This Candle - light service is one of the two occasions during which the parents of the girls are invited to take part in Annual activities with their girls. It was during this period that the Advisor visited the homes of the Club members. These visits were for two purposes, first to invite the parents to the Recognition Ceremonial, and second to get some idea of the home environment of each girl.

The Art project for December was making Christmas Cards and decorating the class room for Christmas.

January 1949:

Activities which developed Courtesy habits. - Objectives which were for this special activity were to arouse interest in good manners, to inspire ideas of happy useful life, to teach the girls to work, play and share with one another, and to develop habits of courtesy by stressing accepted customs and rules of polite behavior.

The Art project for January was making tooth pick brooches and macaroni bracelets.

**February 1949:**

Brotherhood Observance.- A study of Mexico and South America was made in an attempt to learn more about these countries, and to understand the people, their problems and their customs.

The Art project was making and mailing valentines.

For entertainment a Valentine party was given in February for all groups.

**March 1949:**

Two radio programs were selected for the group to listen to and report on during the month. They were: The Greatest Story Ever Told, which can be heard every Sunday night, and Mind Your Manners, which can be heard on Saturday mornings. These programs were chosen to stimulate interest in the Bible and its teachings, and to encourage the girls to be mindful of their manners at all times.

The Art project for March was textile painting.

**April 1949:**

April's special feature was a study of the life of Jesus during the Easter season. The Craft project was making Easter lilies for the Church. A joint Easter egg hunt was also planned for April.

The following Chapter will deal with certain problems which some children are meeting in the community in which this field work was done.

## Chapter IV.

### Dealing With Problems of the Under Privileged.

#### A. Social Problems.

In seeking a solution for any problem one must give attention to all factors involved. But the chief concern in any problem is the attitude of the individual to his special difficulty. No two persons act the same way toward a similar problem. With children, one child might become embittered and seek an opportunity to hurt others because he has been hurt or has a problem that he has no solution for. But another child with a similar problem will react differently. He might face his problem squarely and seek a wholesome solution for it. Most children find it hard enough to meet the regular course of events when they have the advantage of good health, intelligent and sympathetic parents, and helpful surroundings. How much harder it must be for that child who does not have these advantages. But if he is to live a wholesome life he must be taught by those who are interested in him not to pity himself or make excuses for himself; instead, one must cultivate the spirit of achievement and the thrill of adventure in the child so that he will not have time for self pity in his upward climb.

Some of the greatest problems that children have and which warp their personality development are not readily apparent. In most cases accepted social institutions such as divorce and remarriage cause problems for the children that are involved. An example of the effect a divorce may have upon one child in comparison to the seemingly small effect it may seem to have on another child is shown in Case 1.

Case 1. Alice and Carrie are sisters who live with their grandmother. Their mother lives next door to the grandmother with her second husband. Alice is younger than Carrie. Carrie seems to accept the fact that her mother's divorce and remarriage is something that is likely to happen to anyone. Alice, on the other hand, seems to feel that any time her mother's name is mentioned she must defend her. This causes Alice to always be on the defensive. She takes it upon herself not only to defend her mother, but all the members of her family, the Church and the school. She has a feeling that she must defend anything in which she has a part from the slightest attack.

A solution for Alice's problem will not be very easy to find. She should be loyal to those she loves and the ideals which she cherishes, but she should not let this love cause her to become obnoxious to others. Anything that puts a child on the defensive instead of permitting him to share life freely on par with others is detrimental to the finer expressions of personality.

## B. Mental Handicaps to Personality.

Case 2. Ida is 12 years old. She is large for her age, but she is mentally dull. This means that she finds it difficult to keep up with her schoolmates. She finds it difficult to get on happily with other children. She has the problem of being in a class with children who are younger and smaller than she is, and of seeing them make better grades. These problems will have a lasting effect on her personality growth.

Ida's problems could be solved very easily if her school provided for individual variations. But unfortunately special opportunity classes and differentiated programs which should be the part of every community is not a part of the community that Ida lives in.

Mental problems are not all the same. Some children find much of the ordinary school work to be so easy that it does not challenge their capacities. Some of them get into trouble because they do not have enough to do. Teachers should act as guides for such students, helping them to discover interesting facts, to solve significant problems, and to plan and execute creative projects that will occupy and challenge them. In this connection Chave makes this statement: "Teachers and administrators who have the welfare of their pupils in mind and are not bound by tradition or formal requirements have opportunities many times a day to do or say something that will

stimulate the self respect of a student, stir his ambition<sup>19</sup> or further some social tendency.\*

### C. Environmental Problems.

The first environmental problem that most people think of is economic. The economic problem as it is faced by many children in the Pittsburgh Community has been a bar to many privileges that are essential in personality growth.

A child reflects the attitudes of those around him and shows the spirit of his parents in meeting his economic problems while he is young. But when a child grows up and sees the special privileges others enjoy he begins to resent the injustice of society, and becomes dissatisfied with his home environment. It is dwarfing to personality to live in over crowded homes and neighborhoods. When children are forced to struggle against their environments to attain a wholesome standard of living, only a few reach that standard. It is much easier to drift along with the masses than to struggle to the top.

Next to the home, the environmental problems of the community affect the child most. Some communities have such assets as supervised playgrounds, parks, swimming pools, decent movies and many other advantages of civilization. The children that live in these communities get an abundance

---

19. Chave, Personality Development in Children, p.176

of enriching stimuli, and are carefully guided in their growing experiences. Other communities have very few assets, and those that are offered are under par, and in some instances degrading. Children who are reared in an environment of this type are denied many privileges and have to take whatever chance brings them.

Environmental conditions present a very vital problem in the Pittsburg community. Crowded homes and unkempt surroundings, over crowded streets, and poverty can be seen within one block of the Church. It is the children from these homes that come to Ariel Bowen Church for, as they put it, "recreation."

#### D. Moral and Religious Problems.

From their earliest age children look to their parents for guidance by precepts and example. A child should get his standards of right and wrong and his general outlook on life from his parents. While stories may contribute much in presenting a moral or religious idea, moral, and religious values are not found at the end of stories. These values can only be found in concrete social relations of growing and expanding life. The hopelessness of developing Christian personality in children is that in most cases one has not only the child to work with, but a home and neighborhood as well. Children who have immoral surroundings and whose struggle to exist involves questionable practices, cannot

have healthy moral standards.. The conductors of the Hartshorne and May tests found as a result of testing hundreds of children that there was no relationship between what a child knew to be right or wrong and his actual conduct. In commenting on the tests Harrison Elliott observed that: "Those who conducted the research came to the conclusion that the moral education which these children had received had resulted in no general moral standards<sup>20</sup> which controlled their conduct."

Most children find religion to be a problem because so few adults can help them when they fail to find satisfaction in their religious life. Religion for children should be as Chave expresses it, "faith that rests in adventurous living and not in authoritative dogmas; hope that springs from fulness of life and not deprivation; love that<sup>21</sup> transforms the commonplace and not vapid sentiments."

---

20. Harrison S. Elliott, Can Religion Be Christian? p.46  
 21. Chave, Op Cit., p. 271



## Chapter V.

### Integrating Christian Personality Through Community Cooperation.

Every child hungers for affection and attention. Children develop fully only in the atmosphere of love and security. They like to participate in pleasures and share them with others. The needs for attention and affection that are not taken care of in the home must be taken care of either by the school, the Church or some other organization in the community. A community can meet these needs only by having a program in which each institution or agency will have an integral part.

#### A. The Church in the Community

Churches have been accused, and rightly so, of creating one of society's greatest problems with their denominational differences. In many instances children have had their lives blighted because of this selfishness and ignorance. Denominational cooperation should be the first goal that Churches should try to reach in a program of integration. The fact that they are attempting to minister to the spiritual needs of the same people necessitates understanding between the denominations. To do this Schisler says: "they

may cooperate in such matters as community surveys, reaching the unreached, community institutes in the interest of the local church program, parent conferences and in uniting their combined efforts to rid the community of evil institutions and influences."<sup>22</sup> He further states that: "less emphasis upon denominational differences and more effort to work together in saving all the life of all the people would go far toward increasing respect for the confidence<sup>23</sup> in the Church on the part of all people anywhere."

The Church might act as an integrating influence in the community by the exaltation of religion in the minds and hearts of the people as a conservation of the highest social values. Religion should mean the elevation of human worth. The Church should teach people to feel the value of human rights and work for them. A Church should show by example the social spirit of the community, placing its greatest stress upon the welfare of growing children. Churches should combat every influence which tends to degrade, impoverish or exploit the common people. It is also its duty to cultivate in children faith in themselves, in others and in the unlimited resources of the universe.

---

22. John Q. Schisler, The Educational Work of the Small Church, p. 120.

23. Ibid, p. 120

## B. Community Council

Many communities have found it necessary to organize a council to tie together into one effective unit all community agencies which are concerned with Christian character development and human welfare. This type of community council may have a far-reaching influence on planning the educational, religious and social development of its children. Many unnecessary pitfalls may be avoided for children if an organization of this type is at work in the community. Cleansing the community of evil influences has become a legitimate and essential part of the program of Religious Education. Harner feels that, "if it is legitimate to save a boy from ruin by a discussion of life situations and moral standards, it is just as legitimate and perhaps a little surer to accomplish the same results by removing some of the moral pitfalls from his way."<sup>24</sup>

The educational agencies of the community must guide against too many competitive educational enterprises. In a situation of this kind more harm than good is done sometimes. Instead of integrating the community where there is rivalry for the loyalty of its constituents, the opposite will be accomplished. This is not only an unwholesome atmosphere for growing children, but the community cannot

---

<sup>24</sup>. Nevin C. Harner, The Educational Work of the Church, p. 252.

give its people its best service when this type of rivalry exists. The danger of vying for the loyalties of children is that an extraordinary loyalty for one organization may be developed to the exclusion of all other organizations. The alert community works intelligently toward integrating its educational agencies because where there is unity there is strength.

The child of the past generation did not have the problem of facing a complexed and confusing world that the child of today faces. A generation ago in most communities the home, the Church and the school were the only organizations which exercised any influence that affected the life of a child. But today many agencies and countless organizations serve the growing child in his search for a significant place in his world. This means that the community should be united. It should see that only the best movies are shown in its movie houses, and that the radio programs, comic strips and playground opportunities should be selected to give the children fun without vulgarity. Soares makes this statement as a solution for our complex community life:

While we cannot return to the unity of the old simpler community life we may achieve a higher unity through our very complexity. The community itself may become the socialized group in which the young people may grow up, sharing its life, cooperating in its enterprises, bearing a proportion of its burdens, contributing to the determination of its

policies and enjoying the success of its achievements. 25

The divisive forces of the community seem sometimes to be so strong that they might be eternal. While this may seem to be true, there are certain practical ways of cooperating which can be started today.

Children know very little about the doctrinal differences which are created for them by their parents. The wise leader in Religious education can safely begin cooperation in areas where children are naturally aware of their togetherness. There is no such thing as denominational recreation. There is such a thing as recreation sponsored by denominations. But the main concern of children is to find some outlet for their creative desires. There is no reason why a community could not begin its integrating program in this area. The same is true of creative types of significant worship experiences. A community could cooperate in this way without taking anything from individual Churches, and by adding unmeasurably to the growth of children who belong to all of them. At any rate, Christian leaders must recognize that their primary task is not to maintain an institution, but to provide for the growth and integration of Christian personality.

---

25. Theodore G. Soares, Religious Education, p. 90

### Summary

It has been noted that any education dealing with life is potentially religious. Religious education is not only related to theology, but religious education is concerned with all life and its values. It is not the object of religious schools to separate religious and secular education, but to give more explicit expression to the religious spirit which is found in all education, and to provide such interpretation that is necessary and desirable. Vieth's seven objectives in religious education have as their specific goal the development of growing persons into Christlikeness through life situations.

The curriculum of Religious Education includes all those activities and experiences which are utilized by the Church for the achievement of the aims of Christian Education. Its purpose is to confront individuals with the eternal gospel, and to nurture within them a life of faith, hope and love in keeping with the gospel. The curriculum has three obligations: to be true to the Christian faith, to speak words of assurance, and to meet the needs of the Church's teaching task.

It has also been noted that the economic condition in which a child is reared plays a large part in the expansion

and expression of his life. This is also true of the home and the school conditions. The demoralizing effects a poor home and surrounding have upon the personality development of growing children are far reaching. It has been pointed out that while a child may be delinquent in any situation, his chances for becoming delinquent are far greater in areas where he cannot find legitimate satisfactions. Therefore, the country offers the child more opportunity for development without infringing on the property of others, than the city with its crowded homes and neighborhoods.

It has been pointed out that major spiritual sources, such as the Bible and other good literature, Christian environment and formal worship, are important to the development of Christian personality. Through groups or formal worship children become conscious of a Presence greater than themselves. Adult religion is an accumulation of experiences which makes it impossible to pass it on to children. This is the basic reason why worship services for children should be planned in the light of their experiences.

Church membership should be the results of a normal religious educational process. The commitment should not be taken lightly, because to make human society the Kingdom of God, and to reach personal perfection represents the highest ideals of which anyone can dream. Membership in worthwhile groups is also recommended.

The growing child must be helped to assume responsi-

bility for his own success or failures. The training of a child in morality should not be indoctrinating but discriminating. Punishment and reward have their good and bad points as aids in personality development. Care must be taken not to encourage a child to rely upon the external stimulus that the bribe of a reward will create. What a child knows to be right or wrong, good or bad does not determine what his actions will be in a situation. Children have formed desirable tendencies in personal and social behavior and yet because of conflicting pressure they do not express them.

Through seven months of field work on a project at Ariel Bowen Methodist Church the worker was able to study a group of girls. The policies and methods of the project were subjected to the test of whether or not they were contributing to the Christian personality development of the children. The object of the program was to help the children enjoy wholesome recreational activities and to encourage them to deal sincerely with the social problems which affected themselves and others. Problems encountered were of a social, mental and environmental nature. Environmental conditions presented a very vital problem in the Pittsburg community. Crowded homes and unkept surroundings, over crowded streets and poverty can be seen within one block of the Church. Out of these conditions come the children who have social and mental problems. Many of these



problems can be easily solved by an alert community by providing such assets as supervised playgrounds, parks, decent movies and other advantages of civilization.

The home can do much to solve the social problem.

It was noted that the need of attention and affection is a basic urge, and that the community is obligated to fill this need. Denominational cooperation and the organization of a community council are considered to be the steps toward integrating Christian personality through community cooperation. Our complex community life calls for unity. This unity may be achieved in the community through the cooperation of agencies which are pledged to Christian personality development, and combat every influence which tends to degrade, impoverish or exploit the common people. Maintaining institutions is not the primary task of leaders in Religious education, but to provide for personality growth in persons.

## Bibliography

- Betts, George H., and Hawthorne, Marion O., Method in Teaching Religion, New York, The Abingdon Press, 1925.
- Burkhart, Roy A., Understanding Youth, New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1938.
- Chave, Ernest J., Personality Development in Children, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1937.
- Coe, George A., Education in Religion and Morals, New York, Fleming H. Revell, 1904.
- Coe, George A., What Is Christian Education? New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.
- Cope, H.F., Religious Education in the Church, New York, Scribners, 1918.
- Eakin, Mildred Moody, and Eakin Frank, Your Child's Religions, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1945.
- Elliott, Harrison E., Can Religious Education Be Christian? New York, The Macmillan Co., 1940.
- Fallow, Wesner, The Modern Parent and the Teaching, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1946.
- Harner, Nevin C., The Educational Work of the Church, New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1939.
- Henry, Freddie Elizabeth, The Small Church at Work for Children, Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1941.
- Martin, A.W., Worship in the Sunday School, Nashville Abingdon-Cokesbury.
- Schisler, John Q., The Educational Work of the Small Church, New York, The Abingdon Press, 1925.
- Soares, Theodore G., Religious Education, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1938.
- Vieth, Paul H., The Church and Christian Education, St. Louis, Cooperative Publishing Association, 1947.
- Vieth, Paul H., Objectives in Religious Education, New York, Red Label Reprints, 1930.