

ACTIVITIES AND PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED  
" "  
IN TWO FIELD WORK PROJECTS  
1961-63

A Thesis Report  
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Presented By  
Isaac Taliaferro Richmond, Jr.  
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R.VI.T.40

Dedicated  
To  
My Mother and Father  
Who Have Been My Main Source  
Of  
Inspiration,  
Anxiety and  
Hope

## PREFACE

It is felt that education in religion and society can only be effective when it permeates the behavior of a person. Bringing the problems, that face youth, and the adults that work with them, to the forefront may become a means of knowing what may promote or retard the religious expression and experiences of those who are going to become participants in our society. The objective of the study is to bring to the attention of ministers, educators, and leaders of our country a view of the way our youth think and feel in regard to them.

Many changes have taken place in our social and religious life which affects our communities. The trend of thought of our youth toward religion and society should be a concern to all who have to do with spiritual leadership and social problems.

This presentation of the forces that contribute to the furnishings of the youth of today for the life of tomorrow is the outgrowth of a practical touch with the groups of which this work deals. The consideration of the life of youth from the religious and Christian standpoint is intentional, for character is supreme among all life's assets, and the church bears the message which alone can give the

highest purpose.

It has not been my desire to simply write a paper, but to bring an inspiration to those who labor to awaken and develop Christian character, that as the leader of youth they may have optimistic courage for their task, and vision that shall not fail. The message of these pages has come to me with insistant voices that would not be suppressed. Out of a heart that beats in unison with lovers of youth everywhere, I send these utterances forth. It is my honest prayer that they who sail the ship of youth may hear the voice and catch the vision which bears to them the good purpose of God for their future, that their ship may not be stranded upon dangerous reefs or storm-driven to unfriendly shores, but may sail instead securely the charted seas of youthful years with spirit unafraid.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

### Statement of the Problem

This is the proposition upon which the report is based: The church is where young people and adults spend much of their time. The church also influences these individuals' behavior in countless ways. It is the duty of the church to see that their years are good ones and that they are given all the assistance needed to develop into a mature Christian. The objectives of the reports, therefore, are three:

1. To give a picture of youth today so that adults may understand them and meet their problems, needs, and interests.
2. To acquaint the reader with the social setting-- both as to the pattern and demands of the youth's own age group and as to adult influences which bear on them.
3. To supply definite and workable suggestions as to how adults may live harmoniously with youth people and be most helpful to them.

Scope of the Report.--It is unfortunate that the socio-religious educational program of the West Mitchell C. M. E. Church has failed to keep up with the rapid advancement of modern technology. This apparent continual lagging on the

part of the church makes it increasingly necessary that the social and religious thinking of young people be revised.

The concern for a more adequate program of religious education in the local church falls within the framework of the writer's interest regarding the value of the report.

The findings in this report are drawn from West Mitchell and Holsey Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Churches.

Throughout the report the terms "youth" and "adolescent" will be used interchangeably without any modification of meaning.

#### Definition of Basic Terms

Religion.--Religion is an active force in the lives of men, promoting right conduct and leading to good character.<sup>1</sup>

Youth.--Chronologically, the adolescent-youth group is made up of persons twelve to twenty-four years old.<sup>2</sup>

Church.--The church is a body that springs forth spirit, life, and work from its members. In common with other groups, it exists in time and space. But the church is distinguished from other groups in its conviction of divine origin, and its unity with all other groups through a common loyalty to Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>George H. Betts, Teaching Religion Today (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1940), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Paul H. Landis, Adolescence and Youth (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Co., 1945), p. 23.

<sup>3</sup>Elmer G. Homrighausen, I Believe in the Church (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 28.

### 3.

#### Significance of the Report

The writer feels that the report is significant for the following reasons:

1. The problem of youth relating religion to everyday life.
2. The lack of religious education on the part of the college student.
3. The growing disrespect of youth for spiritual and moral standards.
4. The urgent need for launching a sound program of Christian education to fit and serve the growing needs of our youth in a modern society.

#### Materials and Method Used in the Report

Basically, the writer's field-work reports were used in bringing out the problems encountered. The specific materials were as follows:

1. The Young Adult Quarterly. This Quarterly is based on the International Sunday School Lesson of the Methodist Church. The lesson plans were made from the Young Adult Quarterly.
2. Bibles. The King James Version, and the Revised Standard Version were used.
3. Resource File. This file is composed of a collection of problems, needs, interests, and methods of worship of each age-level group from the Nursery Department to the Senior Citizen.

## II. EXPERIENCE AS A STUDENT TEACHER AT WEST MITCHELL CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

### General Church Situation

West Mitchell C. M. E.<sup>4</sup> Church is located on the corner of Walnut and Mitchell Streets, Atlanta, Georgia. The church has a membership of 800. At the time of my work there, the Reverend T. G. Lightfoot was the pastor. My first year's field work was confined to the teaching of a church school class.

The church school was set up as follows: First there was the Children's Division, over which was a superintendent. The classes in this division were the Cradle Roll, the Beginner, and the Primary. There was also the Young People's Division, over which was a superintendent. The classes consisted of the Intermediate, Senior High, and the Co-educational Class. A third division was the Adult Division, over which also was a superintendent. In it were the Men's Bible Class, Women's Bible Class, and an Interest Class. Over the entire church school was a general superintendent.

### Findings in the Field Work Project

The studies for the quarter beginning with the month

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<sup>4</sup>Christian Methodist Episcopal will be referred to as C. M. E.

of October, dealt with the theme of "Christian Growth." Incorporated in this quarter were experiences of increasing knowledge, control, sympathy, love, and service. Attention was given to hindrances to Christian growth such as doubt, egotism, self-righteousness, intemperance, and personality problems. Consideration was given to both personal and social maturity.

The lesson plan for the Co-educational Class during the writer's field work is as follows:

Scripture references

The aim of the lesson

Introduction

Major ideas in the lesson

The lesson summarized.

Below is illustrated the procedure followed in teaching the lesson:

Lesson for October 2 - "How Christians Grow"

Background Scriptures. Matthew 11:28-30; Luke 9:41-56;  
Philippians 3:4-17.

Aim of the Lesson. The aim of this lesson was to help youth and adults understand Christian growth. It also sought to challenge them to greater spiritual maturity.

Introduction. The Jews of Paul's day had some reason to think of themselves as being a superior group. The basis for this attitude was their religion. They believed, among other things, that God had favored them in that their religion had been especially revealed to Moses and transmitted to them. They, therefore, regarded the pagan world with

contempt. As a result, the Jews were often subjected to humiliations and indignities.

Giving an account of how the Apostle Paul always remained a loyal Jew, and how he looked upon his Christian experiences as an emancipation, I moved into the major ideas of the lesson.

1. "I count everything as loss" (Philippians 3:8)
2. "A righteousness of my own" (Verse 9)
3. "The power of His resurrection" (Verses 10-11)
4. "I press on" (Verses 12-14)
5. "Those of us who are mature" (Verses 15-17)

The questions in this lesson were as follows: "What is involved in growing more like Jesus?" A survey of the ideas brought out in the discussion of this question is as follows: Growing more like Jesus is the constant striving toward maturity, mastery over self, serenity in the midst of panic, and faith in the presence of calamity.

Another question was, "How do we count everything as loss?" The discussion of this question centered around the willingness of a Christian to deny himself the ways of the world and live for Christ.

After these questions were discussed, the lesson was summarized. In the summary attention was given to Paul's conversion and his ever-growing love for the sake of Christ. I pointed out that achieving spiritual maturity is a life-long process. It is one of the greatest values in life. It is also one which is worthy of sustained efforts. At the

close of the session, the class offering was raised. The closing prayer was said, and the class was dismissed.

My advisor, Mrs. Carrie L. George, emphasized the importance of bringing out one point each class session, instead of trying to cover a large body of material. I made good use of her suggestion.

The traditional approach to religion by the teacher of this class at West Mitchell C. M. E. Church had created a gulf between the youth and the adult groups. Even when religious ideologies did not conflict in the mind of the adolescent, it was clear that the former teacher had attempted to project the family religion and its social taboos onto the child. This method of teaching placed a strain on the adolescent's adjustment to the new pattern of Christian Education.

By truly conversing with the group, the writer could see that, for some, the period of skepticism gradually merged into acceptance. The transition took place because they found rational justification for a sufficient number of their beliefs to make the rest acceptable. Others, in the group, were unable to reconcile religious and scientific views. They seemed to have discarded their religion in favor of science. Still others, whose religion had been identified with narrow and unreasonable social taboos discarded the family religion. This was especially true of the college students in the class. Their religious training was predominantly negative. It was colored more by taboos



than by dynamic ideals.

The foregoing observations point to problems confronted by the members of the Co-educational Class. To that subject let us now turn. One problem which was stated by a number of the class members was, "God is someone watching you to see that you behave yourself." In the statement, the writer recognized that the pupil was bringing religion to bear upon the source of motive in conduct. The writer told the group that in order for religion to exert significant control over behavior it must be primarily a stimulus and inspiration rather than a set of inhibitions.<sup>5</sup>

Another problem is to be seen in this statement: "Every word in the Bible is true." Much discussion was given to this statement. The entire class showed a deep interest in finding out just what is true and what is not. Questions were raised about the Creation story, Moses and the Red Sea, and the resurrection of Jesus. In order to meet this situation, the writer drew upon the thoughts of R. C. Miller. He points out that God should not be looked for in the historical authenticity of the Biblical stories, but rather as he is revealed in the whole of the Biblical drama.<sup>6</sup> The writer explained to the group, also, that the beliefs of the Jews and early Christians stand in sharp contrast to the

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<sup>5</sup>George H. Betts, Teaching Religion Today (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1934), p. 145.

<sup>6</sup>Rudolph C. Miller, Biblical Theology and Christian Education (New York: Scribners' Sons, 1956), p. 194.

modern scientific world view. The average student in the class was confused with this problem. He was confused with the way Biblical writers put their materials together with little thought for consistency, as in the case of the two Creation narratives.

The greatest conflict in the Bible, as far as the Co-educational Class was concerned, was how the Hebrews traced everything back to God. He was considered the First cause behind all sorts of terrible acts.

My response to the class was that we should look at the Hebrew-Christian world view. According to this view, everything not clearly understood was a miracle. Further, I told them to see the miracle from a theological point of view: I based my ideas upon Alan Richardson's concept of miracles. According to Richardson, "Miracles were an essential part of the Gospel preaching, of which the true purpose was to awaken faith in the saving revelation of God's power toward them that believe."<sup>7</sup>

In an effort to enhance the Biblical knowledge of this group, the writer felt that a positive interpretation of the Bible be set forth. For my interpretation to the class I drew upon D. Campbell Wyckoff's "The Gospel of Christian Education." In his book the Bible is the starting point. The primary message of the Bible concerns God's gracious and redemptive activity for the saving of sinful man that he

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<sup>7</sup>Alan Richardson, The Miracle Stories of the Gospel (New York: Harper and Brother, 1942), p. 19.

might create in Jesus Christ a people for himself.

Wyckoff also points out that the center of the Bible is Jesus Christ. The connection of the Old and New Testament is found in the redemptive activity of God which means that Christians interpret the Old Testament in the light of the revelation in Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>D. Campbell Wyckoff, The Gospel and Christian Education (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press), pp. 48-49.

III. EXPERIENCES AS A STUDENT DIRECTOR  
AT HOLSEY TEMPLE CHRISTIAN  
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

General Church Situation

The Holsey Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church is located on Boulevard Southeast, Atlanta, Georgia. The church has a membership of 500. During my field work experience the church was under the pastorate of the Reverend D. L. Gorham. The writer's central area of work was with the Christian Youth Fellowship.

Considerable attention was given to the Teacher Conference, with emphasis on ideas and suggestions for improving the educational task of the church.

Being a student-director, my full time could not be given to the work of a director, but the following pages will indicate the relation of the Director of Christian Education to the general church.

The church school is set up as follows:

Church School Superintendent

Children Division - Department Superintendent

Classes in the Division

(a) Cradle

(b) Beginners

(c) Primary

(d) Junior

Young People Division - Department Superintendent

(a) Intermediate

(b) Senior

Adult Division - Department Superintendent

(a) Men's Bible Class

(b) Women's Bible Class

(c) Interest Class

The attitudes of the Director and church leaders were as follows:

1. A real desire to improve educational program of the church.
2. An awareness of possibilities of work of Director of Education.
3. An understanding of qualifications to be expected from Director of Education.
4. A willingness to cooperate with Director of Education, while recognizing separate fields of responsibility.

The attitude of the Director toward the church was as follows:

1. Devotion to the church.
2. A real interest in the people of the church.
3. An interest in the total program of the church--centered in the needs of the people.
4. No expressed criticism of the minister or people of the church.

The Director's work in the church included taking a

part in the following:

1. Working with the Christian Youth Fellowship.
2. Organizing a Teachers' Conference.

From the above, it is hoped that the reader will be able to grasp the following from a clearer perspective. First, the writer will deal with the C. Y. F.<sup>9</sup>

#### Christian Youth Fellowship

The ultimate goal of a youth organization within the church is to allow the youth to express personality in terms of leadership, responsibility and service. The objectives of the C. Y. F. is to help the church realize this goal. The activities and organizational plan should lend themselves to the development of personality under Christ. All activities of the C. Y. F. of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church were expressed as pointed out in Dr. Coleman's Organizational Guide for the C. Y. F. of the C. M. E. Church:

1. To lead the youth into a vital experience with God and to guide them in the development and interpretation of this experience.

2. To give expression to Christian Faith in terms of service to humanity.

3. To inspire youth to dedicate a portion of their time, talent and money to the cause of the Kingdom of God.

Membership in the C. Y. F. includes all young people,

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<sup>9</sup>From this point on the Christian Youth Fellowship will be referred to as C. Y. F.

(ages 12-24) who are affiliated by membership or interest with the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Officers of the C. Y. F. include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Executive Council.

The standard order of the C. Y. F. service is as follows: hymn of praise, C. Y. F. creed, invocation, prayer, hymn, study period, business session, scripture, National C. Y. F. Hymn, and the pledge of loyalty.

The task of the local C. Y. F. is to provide training for young people in Christian living and enable them to enrich their lives through worship, Bible study, discussion and Christian service. Supervised recreation is also a vital part of the local Fellowship Program.<sup>10</sup>

The writer's work with the Christian Youth Fellowship was concentrated in two specific areas, worship and Bible study.

Worship is one of the most important elements of the C. Y. F. It gives vitality and Christian depth to all the activities of the Fellowship. It helps young people to see their purpose in life. Worship unifies a youth group and keeps the whole program of work centered around Christ. Worship makes religious growth possible. It involves acts and attitudes. It invokes the deepest loyalty to God's presence and deepens our sense of dependence upon Him.

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<sup>10</sup>C. D. Coleman, Organizational Guide for the C. Y. F. of the C. M. E. Church (Jackson, Tenn.: C. M. E. Church Publishing House).

In preparing this group for worship, I set out to establish some attitudes of a true worshiper. The worshiper's personal attitude toward God and his fellowmen must be wholesome before he can begin to worship. Behind all worship is the recognition that there is a God of love, who can guide people today as well as in the past. This, I emphasized, makes up the attitudes which are involved in worship.

The acts involved in worship were drawn from the Resource File and are listed as follows:

1. Bowing in humility.
2. Praise through singing or praying.
3. Service done in God's name.
4. Words spoken in praise of Him and his work.
5. Dedication of talents in time, and gifts of money.

In planning for worship, the writer emphasized and discussed the following, which were also adopted from the Resource File:

Attitude of the Worshiper.

1. Praise to God.
2. An attitude of humility before the greatness of God.
3. An understanding of the things needed to make life Christian.
4. A feeling of comradeship with God.
5. Dedication.

What Group Worship Can Do.

1. Gives a sense of companionship with God.



2. Gives life meaning, purpose, and direction.
3. Helps one to discover the highest values in life.
4. Gives appreciation for right ideals.
5. Gives an interest for living.
6. Gives a sense of fellowship with all mankind.

In planning for worship the following explanation was given:

A good worship service is not an accident. It is the result of much planning and work. Satisfactory group worship requires careful attention to the approach to worship and the condition under which the worship is to be conducted.

An approach to worship should include:

1. A desire to relate all of life to God and the teaching of Jesus.
2. An appreciation for beauty and symbolism.
3. A sense of need for the Christian Fellowship with other worshipers.
4. A trust in Christ.

#### Conditions Conducive to Worship.

1. Satisfactory environment free from distraction.
2. Quietness and goodwill.
3. A common Christian purpose.
4. Climax.
5. Theme.
6. Good Leadership.

#### Principles Governing a Satisfying Worship Service.

1. Worship should express a carefully thought-out aim

or purpose.

2. Worship should have a theme.
3. Worship should have a setting.
4. Worship should meet the individual's need for God.
5. Worship should have variety.<sup>11</sup>

The ultimate good to come from any worship service will depend upon how it is conducted. The writer lifted these points to be remembered in conducting a worship service:

1. Everyone who is to take part in the service should be adequately prepared.

2. The leader must have persons who are to participate in the service and the material which is to be used on hand before the worship begins.

3. The leader must not make the service monotonous with mechanical details of announcements, introductions and excuses.

4. Arrangements should be made before hand for the comfort and convenience of persons who are to worship.

5. Worship should be varied. The writer made use of the following types in the C. Y. F. services:

- a. Service built around the life and work of great men.
- b. Service built around poetry.
- c. Services built around the lives of great men and women of the Bible and history.

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<sup>11</sup>Resource File under the heading "Worship Planning," 1961-62.

- d. Services built around historical events in the life of the church and our country.<sup>12</sup>

In trying to draw up some standard by which to test the effectiveness of the worship planning, the writer used the following check list:

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	
___	___	1. Was there obvious preparation of the room for worship?
___	___	2. Was there distracting confusion?
		a. What caused it
___	___	b. Could this have been eliminated?
___	___	3. Was the purpose of the worship clearly evident?
		4. Did the worship, in relation to the study, present a completely unified, enriching experience?
___	___	a. Was the theme obvious?
___	___	b. Did the service get the most out of the theme?
___	___	5. Was the theme well selected?
___	___	6. Were some definite needs of the group met?
		7. Did the experience of the worship service have some carry-over value into the lives of those who worshiped?
___	___	8. Were the hymns appropriately chosen?
___	___	a. Were they well sung?
___	___	b. Were they familiar?
___	___	c. Were they well placed in the order of the service?
___	___	d. Did they fulfill adequately the purpose for which they were selected?
___	___	9. Were the prayers meaningful?
___	___	10. Was a worship center used?
___	___	11. Was the Scripture suited to the service?
___	___	12. Did those persons who took part in the service conduct their part satisfactorily? <sup>13</sup>

The above list revealed many needs of the group at Holsey Temple.

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<sup>12</sup>Alice A. Bays, Worship Service for Teen-agers (New York: Abingdon Press), pp. 16-21.

<sup>13</sup>Frank M. McKibbin, Improving Your Teaching (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1934), pp. 124-125.

The following is a list of common needs found among the group:

1. Problem of leadership.
2. Overcoming the difficulty of public prayers.
3. How to vary programs.
4. Finding the meaning within Biblical readings.
5. Relating worship to everyday life.

The preceeding pages described the method and procedure followed in the worship service of the C. Y. F. Aside from the worship service, however, the study period stands out as the major function of the C. Y. F. meeting. The following is an account of what usually took place in the study period:

1. C. Y. F. Creed. After the hymn of praise, the group recited the C. Y. F. Creed.
2. Prayer. The prayer was usually led by the President or a member of the group. The prayer was extemporaneous.
3. Study Period. The assigned Scripture was studied before the session began.
4. Business Session. Time was taken out to attend such business as was necessary.
5. Sharing with God. General offering was taken.
6. National C. Y. F. Hymn - "Rise Up O Youth for Christ."
7. Pledge of Loyalty. In the pledge the youth re-dedicated their lives, talents and services to the work of the church.

In preparing lesson plans for the C. Y. F., the writer, in consultation with his supervisor, Mrs. Carrie L. George, decided on the unit plan. Programs were planned on a quarterly basis. Each lesson session was planned to include points of emphasis, method of presentation, supplementary materials to be used and assignments, if any.

The questions that were kept in mind in preparing a lesson plan were adopted from C. B. Eauey's Principles of Teaching for Christian Teachers and were as follows:

1. What is the aim of this lesson?
2. What can be done to help bring about a change in the lives of the pupils as a result of this lesson?
3. What can be done to make the lesson material touch all areas of life?<sup>14</sup>

It should be remembered that an hour spent with a class can accomplish little more than nothing, unless there is some careful detailed planning for the best use of time. This point was consistently stressed throughout the writer's work with the President of the C. Y. F.

Turning from the organizational structure and the general procedure of the C. Y. F., the writer wishes to give attention to the problems encountered, which is the core of this report.

As was pointed out earlier, there is a tendency to doubt during the adolescent period. The group at Holsey

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<sup>14</sup>C. B. Eauey, Principles of Teaching for Christian Teachers (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1940), pp. 39-40.

Temple was no exception. In their junior years certain Bible stories had been accepted without question, with little consideration as to whether the statements were to be taken literally or not. But as the older years came, the youth asked himself the question, "Are these things to be taken as historical truths?" The creation account of the book of Genesis and the statements of the school text-books came up for comparison. The unquestioning faith of childhood did not fit the need at this time.

This group displayed the fact that the church, as well as the home, has in certain instances, been too severe when the youth have failed to measure up to an exact standard. In the effort to suppress dangerous deviations from moral behavior or theological beliefs it has sometimes erred to the spiritual detriment of a young life.

Problems.--It will be disastrous for the religious teacher to dodge or equivocate when faced with such mental and spiritual problems. They are definitely more vital to youth than they will appear in the after years of manhood, and they must be treated seriously. The writer strongly feels that the successful leader of the young will deal with the thought of this conflict between scientific spirit and certain theories of Biblical inspiration with tolerance and seriousness. The teacher must emphasize the thought of the value of the spiritual truth in the Bible stories. He must show that the truth was presented through human channels, and men with human limitations expressed truth

only in accord with the thought and ideas of their own times. The Bible must be considered not as an authority upon scientific subjects, but as a revelation of God to men.

A young man in one of my class sessions remarked, "Why do we have to act like saints around older people?" From his explanation I could see that over zealous parents and teachers had not been willing to allow the child the privilege which St. Paul accorded to childhood: "When I was a child . . . I thought as a child."<sup>15</sup> Paul realized that life was moving from one stage of development to another. It is a tragedy that many of us in the twentieth century fail to realize this fact.

The writer confesses here to a mistake in his early dealing with children, in that he too often put a high value on the demonstrative religious manifestations of the seriously religious child. A deeper understanding of the nature of the child has led him to conclude that the child who is too mature in religious life is abnormal, and that such forced maturity is not a safe type of Christian life. In spiritual life as well as in nature we must have "first the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear."<sup>16</sup>

Habits and Amusements.--Herbert Spencer once said, "By

<sup>15</sup>I Cor. 13:11.

<sup>16</sup>Adapted from the Hymn: "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come."

no political alchemy can you get golden conduct from leaden instincts." Conduct is the manifestation of moral life and this life is the sum total of personal habits.

In my work, I have found that the greatest hindrances to the Christian character of youth are the impediments of evil habits and dangerous recreation. The moral problems of the adolescent are indicated by their frequent questionings concerning behavior: "Why can't I \_\_\_\_\_?" "What is the harm in \_\_\_\_\_?" "Is it wrong to \_\_\_\_\_?" The school years, whether of high school or college, are especially filled with these solicitations to cross the thin ice of forbidden rivers.

In a panel discussion on "Social Habits and Amusements," I found that the youth have a major problem with the following habits:

Drinking.--Many feel that the harm comes with the misuse of alcohol. However, they forget that the effects of alcohol, even in a small amount, tend to dull the sensory perception, and could result in a decision that would ordinarily appear absurd. The responses of these students to the drinking problem clearly showed that they had not been trained in regard to the detrimental consequences of drinking, even socially. Those persons who directly opposed drinking in any form did not have any stable convictions on which they staked their claim.

Since drinking, smoking, and the dope habit all have a close relationship, I read to the panel an excerpt from



Dr. Charles B. Tawns, in the "Century Magazine." He makes the following statement:

"The relation of tobacco, especially in the form of cigarettes, and alcohol and opium is a very close one. I have been dealing with alcoholism and morphinism; have gone into their every phase and aspect, have kept minute details of between six and seven thousand cases, and I have never seen a case except occasionally with women, which did not have a history of excessive tobacco. . . . A boy always begins smoking before drinking. If he is disposed to drink, that disposition will be increased by smoking, because the action of tobacco makes it normal for him to feel the need of stimulation. He is likely to go to alcohol to soothe the muscular unrest, to blunt the irritation he has received from tobacco. From alcohol he goes to morphine for the same reason. . . . Morphine is the legitimate consequence of tobacco. Cigarettes, drink, opium, is the logical and regular series."

From the above statement we can see that the teaching against the use of such habit-forming drugs cannot be exhausted. Especially when the church suffers from the consequences of such indulgences.

Religious leaders should expose the youth to the adverse affects of games and plays which magnify unduly the sex element. The social dance has, in the minds of many who are interested in youth, this objection. The writer believes that the modern method of dancing has done much to break down respect for womanhood. Without doubt the larger numbers of those who engage in present day social dancing do so without a single improper thought; but all social workers admit the element of danger connected with the dance, especially if the gathering has no safeguards as to the personnel and environment.

Is Petting Harmful?--Somewhere between the ages of fifteen and seventeen there comes into the life of every normal boy and girl an experience which is as catching as mumps and measles. This new experience seems to change all of life. Even the springtime seems more wonderful, the glory of the color on the trees in Fall takes on new beauty, and the earth seems full of music.

It is this period of youth, when girls and boys begin to notice each other, that esteem for the other grows. Nothing finer can happen to a boy in these years than to have the friendship of a good, pure girl. There is nothing that can make for the finest in womanhood in the girl's life at this time than the friendship and trust of a straight-forward, clean-thinking boy.

Nothing in life more clearly indicates clean and fine thinking than those thoughts and acts which are the expression of normal impulses. However, at this same time, we hear a great deal about self-control in sex matters, and it is most necessary. But the consensus of the students is that their teachers and religious leaders only point up what should not be done--never what should be. The writer feels that the best way to attain self-control over evil things is to get plenty of exercise in good things. You cannot like bad company long if you once know what clean worthwhile fellowship is; you will not want to travel with a set where self-respect and self-control are lacking if you have been with a crowd that knows how to have a good time

that is clean and square. I do not hesitate to say that prayer and reading the words of Jesus daily are the best helps in keeping at one's best.

A girl who permits a boy, and generally several boys to take liberties with her, giving them her kisses and letting them make love to her, when it is not real and has no beautiful and holy significance, cheapens herself. Everytime she does it she makes it a little less possible to think of marriage and love as something holy and sacred, and those sweet intimacies as reserved for the one who is her true and abiding lover.

The writer has not said and does not mean that it is wrong to feel a thrill when boy and girl meet. He wishes to set forth some things that he does not mean: He does not mean flirtations; he does not mean romance. On the other hand, he means fine, clean comradeship and friendship. Between boys and girls who are Christians such friendships ought to be numerous. Boys need the point of view which the girls can give, and girls need the point of view of boys. Together, and only together, can men and women work out the greatest problems of this generation. No generation of girls and boys ever had a finer chance to understand each other than has this generation. No generation of boys and girls ever was trusted together with as much intimacy as this generation. What will Christian leaders give to the next generation out of their experiences? Will it be a higher or lower standard in the relationship between men and

women? This is a challenge to Christian leadership.

What Shall We Do On Sunday?--This question confronts many young people today, because of the many forms of social recreation open to them on Sunday. The group at Holsey Temple felt that there was no real harm in taking part in play on Sunday. What is the Christian leader's position in this matter? My experience as a field worker convinced me that many who were given the responsibility of guiding youth did not know. The groups I worked with had no sound reason pro or con on the matter. Their responses seemed to center around the mixed attitudes of those "right and wrong" prophets.

The young and energetic should be made aware of the fact that there is a definite time and place for recreation. The writer believes that it is a part of God's own law that our minds and bodies should have a period of rest and recreation.

But we must also inform youth of the fact that we are more than simply machines contrived for doing work. We have value in our personalities, with power to think enjoy, and love. We are not merely bodies, but immortal spirits. We are simply using these bodies for a few years of earthly life. If the life of the spirit is starved and turned into evil paths, then that life becomes a failure and a tragedy.

The finest kind of rest is the rest of the spirit, that inner peace which comes from fellowship with hidden sources of spiritual power.

Our young people ought to rejoice, that there is one day in the week different from other days, a day when they can go to the house of God and share in worship, in refreshing the spiritual power of life. The main thing to keep before us is this: that to make Sunday merely a day for physical recreation, and starve the life of the spirit, is to warp the highest part of our personality.

The writer closes this phase of the report with Theodore Roosevelt's nine reasons for going to church:

1. In this actual world a churchless community, a community where men have abandoned and scoffed at or ignored their religious needs, is a community on the rapid downgrade.
2. Church work and church attendance mean the cultivation of the habit of feeling some responsibility for others.
3. There are enough holidays for most of us. Sundays differ from other holidays in the fact that there are fifty-two of them every year. Therefore on Sundays go to church.
4. Yes, I know all the excuses. I know that one can worship the Creator in a grove of trees, or by a running brook, or in a man's own house just as well as in a church. But I also know as a matter of cold fact that the average man does not thus worship.
5. He may not have a good sermon at church. He will hear a sermon by a good man who, with his good wife, is engaged all the week making hard lives a little easier.
6. He will listen to and take part in reading some beautiful passages from the Bible. And if he is not familiar with the Bible, he has suffered a loss.
7. He will take part in singing good hymns.
8. He will meet and nod or speak to good, quiet neighbors. He will come away feeling a little

more charitable toward all the world, even toward those excessively foolish young men who regard church going as a soft performance.

9. I advocate a man's joining in church work for the sake of showing his faith by his works.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Taken from the Century Magazine, "Roosevelt's Nine Reasons for Attending Church," October 1944, p. 27.

### Teacher's Conference

At the time of my assignment to this church, there was no workers' conference in operation. After having a conference with my field work advisor, Mrs. Carrie L. George, the decision was reached that I would attempt to organize such a conference. In consultation with the pastor, superintendent and the Director of Christian Education, we decided to have a meeting in order to organize the conference.

The initial meeting was held in the Phillip's dormitory lounge, of the Interdenominational Theological Center. Six teachers, and the church school superintendent were present. We talked about the nature of the educational development of the church. It was the concensus of the group that a council, such as we were attempting to organize, would be quite beneficial to the educational and spiritual growth of the church. Meetings of the council would be weekly. Though enthusiastically begun, the council was not too well attended. Regular attendance ran from four to six in number. The persons who did attend, however, showed a deep interest and a steadfast devotion to the work of the church. Though the task of the council varied with the particular situation dealt with, there were specific objectives set forth:

1. To foster an understanding of general and specific aims of the school.
2. To guide workers in improving methods.
3. To enable workers to arrive at a common basis for solving problems.
4. To make possible a united program for the church school without confusion, conflict, or misunderstandings through coordinated effort.
5. To help each worker carry his share of the responsibility of the group by developing an appreciation of organization.
6. To provide motivation by renewing inspiration.
7. To help to achieve progress through the entire group working as a unit.<sup>18</sup>

Good planning for worker's conferences provide for a variety in the types and kinds of meetings. Our program for conferences were centered around three types:

1. Panel.--This was a group of speakers. Three can be used but four to six was better. When possible, the group was seated around a table on the platform or, at least, in chairs facing each other. The chairman of the panel kept the discussion moving and each individual injected his viewpoint. --And it was discussion rather than formal speeches.
2. Debate.--It was customary to have two on a side although one or three were possible. It was remembered that

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<sup>18</sup>Erwin G. Benson, Planning Church School Workers' Conferences (Boston: W. A. Wilde Company), pp. 41-44.



a successful debate depended upon the ability of each side to comprehend and attack the arguments of the opponent. It was better in the worker's conference to omit a decision since the purpose of such a debate was to air a question rather than to win.

3. Group Discussions.--The group discussion type of conference was where a topic or problem was chosen and the audience was expected to participate. The success of this type largely depended upon the leader of the session. If there was a possibility that there would be little participation by the group, the leader cautioned certain individuals beforehand to be prepared to help keep the discussion going. The above statements provided the basic procedure that the council followed.

#### Findings of the Conference.

The general theme of this Teacher's Conference at the Holsey Temple C. M. E. Church was "The Bible and Religious Growth." The findings of each grade level, as revealed in the project are listed below:

The Pre-school Child and the Bible.--This group has a limited vocabulary. They must be guided in the light of their limited experience, vocabulary, and understanding. Only a few carefully selected Bible stories may be used with this group. But these stories may be told again and again. Except for the few simple Bible stories and verses which can be shared with nursery children, the principal use to be made of the Bible is an indirect use.

Answering questions about what the child sees and uses, tracing back their origin to God, is one method to be used. Looking at pictures which show children and grownups acting upon Christian principles as set forth in the Bible is another. Conversation about the child's own activities, and about his everyday experiences often opens up opportunities for knowing children better, so knowing better how to guide and help them grow according to those Bible principles which thus become a basic part of their lives.

Kindergarten Children and the Bible.--Much of what has been said about nursery children applies as well to kindergarten children. They have many of the same limitations of experience, vocabulary, brevity of attention span, and the same inability to sit still for any length of time. They do not understand mystical references, nor theological terms, nor any sort of symbols. Kindergarten children can begin to understand God's love through the evidences of his care and his work which they recognize in their everyday world. To this group, the Bible can become a book that offers practical and friendly help in the business of everyday living. The Kindergarten child recognizes the Bible as the source of many of the stories that he enjoys, and as the book that tells about God and about the friendly Jesus. Kindergarten children enjoy having Bible stories told and occasionally read from a suitable Bible story book. They delight in Bible pictures that are clear and in good color, and that do not contain too many details. These children

enjoy "playing" carefully selected Bible stories, and such dramatic play is profitable.

Using the Bible with Primary Children.--Primary Children have a larger background of experience than pre-school children, and so have wider associations and more contacts with others.

They can understand and are interested in simple Biblical backgrounds, such as those which deal with everyday life in Bible-times. Primary children are ready to enjoy a wider range of Bible stories than those offered to pre-school children. In using the Bible with primary children, it is important to remember that they are not far from kindergarten experiences. So, many of the kindergarten approaches to the use of the Bible will still be used with the primary child. That is, stories will still be simple, and will deal with familiar experiences of child life, homes, worship, and the like. Pictures and picture books will be used. Informal worship will still predominate. There will be much recall and repetition of familiar stories and verses.

Using the Bible with Juniors.--The time when the telling of Bible stories was considered the best method of teaching is outdated in the Junior Department. However, there will still be occasions when teachers will want to tell beautifully a Bible story for some specific purpose. But, it must be recognized that under guidance, juniors are ready to use the Bible directly, and to discuss their findings there. Moreover, they are quite able to tell stories themselves

and should be encouraged to do so. Juniors are ready for more than the isolated stories of Jesus and of Old Testament heroes that they knew in the Primary Department. They want to see the stories as a whole. The junior child can do simple Biblical research, retain memory work, face certain social and economic problems, and understand and appreciate simple symbolism.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer found that a primary cause of misunderstanding regarding the religious life of youth was a failure on the part of persons in the past age to understand youth itself.

The youth at West Mitchell and Holsey Temple C. M. E. Churches had not been taught in terms of age level. Their ideas about the Bible were immature. It was felt by the groups that any skepticism concerning religion meant suspicion from their parents. Very few persons in the groups showed any real interest in religion.

The groups responded enthusiastically to social questions such as dancing, dating marriage, and the drinking habit. They wanted to know what was right and what was wrong.

As a basis for our consideration of the characteristics of the adolescent religious life, the writer has noted three outstanding types of experiences that are seen in the religious unfolding of the adolescent. One is cominantly volitional; another is emotional; and the third is intellectual. At the dawn of early adolescence, the child is supremely interested in doing religious things. At sixteen, religious experiences affect his emotion. At nineteen, or later, his religious interest centers in

beliefs, doctrines, theology, and creeds. The writer has seen that varying conditions of personal life, and differing degrees of natural development forbid the use of a timetable for each changing characteristic in any religious experience. It is quite evident that the majority of young people do not have a completed adolescence.

It is during the years of adolescence also that youth seeks for himself a firm footing in the things of personal faith. He is often assailed by doubts of dangerous form, and many spiritual wrecks are due to the attempt of unwise parents and teachers to implant ancient notions in modern minds.

On the basis of the foregoing work, the following recommendations are submitted. The writer feels that these recommendations will prove helpful to those who are responsible for the Christian nurture of youth.

1. It is recommended that persons who are going to teach and guide youth in Christian religious lives should include in the curriculum such programs that will deal with sex, morality, marriage, divorce, alcohol beverages, laws governing health, and the responsibilities to the less fortunate.

2. The church's educational program should include the historical contribution made by all races, in order to stimulate an appreciation of the struggle and progress that has been made.

3. It is further recommended that the educational

program of the church include an evaluation and respect for other religions.

4. It is also recommended that the church's educational program include a recreational department which will seek to deal with all phases of human life.

I conclude by pointing to the church as God's agency in society that is primarily concerned with the moral and spiritual needs and interests of people. The aim is to guide them into the fullest development; to make them morally and spiritually free. It is the church's role to show men how Christ sets them free, by providing peace of conscience and inner unity; by making available to them power to do what they ought above what they please; by developing those internal constraints which make external restraint increasingly unnecessary. Such free men belong to the aristocracy upon which democracy rests. Only morally and spiritually free men can bring political and economic freedom to the world.

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