

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION--  
A PRACTICAL APPLICATION TO THE  
EMERGING AFRICAN NATION OF GHANA

By

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## PREFACE

I was encouraged to undertake this project in preparation for the teaching profession, both in the High School and in the ministry of the Church, on my return home to my native Ghana, West Africa. This project is a combination of my own insights and those I have acquired since my arrival here in Canada, two winters ago.

I wish to place on record the invaluable help I received from my advisor Professor Lois Tupper in making this project possible. I am also indebted to Professor Murray Ford for reading through my work and making positive suggestions.

My sincere gratitude goes to Mrs. Pauline Jones of The Hillfield Strathallan Colleges in Hamilton for her co-operation.

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## FOUNDATIONS OF THE CHURCH IN AFRICA

Africa is receiving much more attention today than hitherto. No longer is it called the Dark Continent. African peoples have taken over or are preparing to take over very soon the government of their own lands. It is an age of transition. What are the forces behind these surging peoples of Africa?

One of the greatest forces has always been the power of religion. "This incurably religious people" is a phrase often on the lips of many old European African administrators.

Animism--Religion of Africa

The religion of Africa is basically Animism and the African world-view is spiritual. To Africans, the spiritual world is so real and near, its forces intertwining and inspiring the visible world, that whether pagan or Christian, man has to reckon with things invisible to mortal sight. The spirits are, in the main, the ancestors, and the forces of nature--the powers behind the windstorm, rain, thunder, seas, lakes, rocks, the sun and moon<sup>1</sup> to mention a few. They are not just

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<sup>1</sup>A Ghanaian Newspaper "The Ghanaian Times", July 30, 1969 issue, doubts if Africans will give the same reverence to the moon, now that man has defiled it. The moon will fall on us--it predicts.

the seas or the rocks for they are spiritual powers capable of manifesting themselves in many places. It is not that Africans are so stupid as to worship the material sun or moon but the power and personality behind the sun and moon.

In West Africa, in particular, men believe in a great pantheon of gods which are as diverse as the gods of the Ancient Greeks or the Hindus. Many of these gods are the expression of the forces of nature, which men fear or try to propitiate. These gods generally have their own temples and priests and are not restricted to one spot; and even if there is only one shrine, the god is not imprisoned in it. It must never be forgotten that we have to do with a spiritual religion however material it may appear at first sight.

All Africans believe in the ancestors as ever-living and watchful. Africans revere their dead fathers as they respect a living chief and the ancestors are regarded as having powers which are useful to men. The ancestors were human but at death they have acquired additional powers and men seek to obtain their blessing or avert their anger by due offerings. Above all is the Supreme Being. There is a much more general belief in him than has been thought in the past. Often, he is considered to be so remote that men do not pray to him regularly. But in time of great distress, many Africans turn to the Supreme Being in desperation. He is the final resort, the last court of appeal and he may be approached directly without intermediary. His power is supreme; all flows from him and inheres in him.

### Early Christian Efforts in Africa

It was into this African world--a spiritual world-- that Christianity came as a missionary religion. Christianity first came into Africa, about the 6th century, through what was then called Roman North Africa, comprising the modern states of Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, all of which are Arabic. However, Christianity did not live for long in this part of the Continent. By the middle of the 7th century, the Moslems had invaded Roman North Africa and had firmly established the Islamic Religion.

Early in its history, Islam had had contacts with Africa. When the Islamic religion made its great advance in the course of the 7th century, it moved across the North, sweeping everything before it from the Nile Delta to Gibraltar. This sweep of Islam across North Africa, resulting in the collapse of the North African Church, like a house of cards, still puzzles us in many ways. Why should groups of Christians in North Africa have welcomed the armies of Islam to their cities? Why exactly did the great North African Church of St. Cyprian and St. Augustine meet disaster and ignominy in this way?

No single reason explains this vast catastrophe in one of the most promising areas of early Christendom. From a political standpoint, we can ascribe some of Islam's early success to the fact that it moved into the vast power vacuum left after the enervating struggles between the Roman and

Persian Empires. This set the stage for the armies of Islam to sweep onward without any real opposition. But this factor in itself does not explain the favourable reaction which the North African Church had toward the invasion.

It is sometimes said that the Church failed to prevent calamity because it did not do missionary work. Up to a point this may be true but it does not seem to be the basic reason. More probably the Church in North Africa failed because it did not become indigenious. It failed to become a part of the very life of the people. It was too much of a Roman and Roman controlled Church for North Africans. And because the native peoples of North Africa hated Rome, the Roman-controlled Church failed to win their deepest loyalties. These people had many grievances against Rome. We need only think of the vast system of absentee land ownership through which Romans owned large tracts of North African land. The local populations detested this system and everything that went with it. And when Islam moved in, some groups--even Christian ones--welcomed it as a liberator against Romanism.

What made this invasion worse was the fact that as soon as Islam moved in, the Roman Christians in North Africa moved out and went back to Sicily and Italy. The North African Church was thus left in a sad plight and could in no way face up to the victorious onrush of Islam. The North African Church was not so much destroyed by the sword of Islam as it was bled white through isolation from the main stream

Christianity. As a matter of fact, the Church acquired some freedom under Islam but a very restricted freedom; it was not allowed to expand under Islamic rule and lost contact with the rest of Christendom. Today the remaining Christian groups in these areas represent almost petrified forms of Christianity. The victory of Islam was complete.

The next attempt at the planting of Christianity in Africa was made by the Portuguese. Under Prince Henry the Navigator, in the 15th century, the Portuguese came to our part of Africa--this is the area South of the Sahara Desert, commonly referred to as Tropical Africa, the home of the Black People. The early Portuguese were traders who had come purposely to trade in gold and slaves. However, they were soon followed by Portuguese missionaries whose arrival marked the beginning of real Christian evangelism in Tropical Africa<sup>2</sup>. Their slogan was the Plough and the Bible. The Plough, in the sense of teaching the African how to cultivate the rich land on which he lived, thereby diverting his attention from inter-tribal wars, the purpose of which was to subdue and conquer less powerful tribes and sell them as slaves to European slave traders on the coast. And the Bible, to carryout evangelism among the natives. The initial success of the Portuguese missionaries stimulated the interest

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<sup>2</sup>The Portuguese missionaries were instructed by Prince Henry to join hands with a Prester John believed to be evangelizing among the natives.

of other foreign missionaries, and soon more missionaries-- the Church Missionary Society and The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Methodists (England), the Basel Missionary Society (Switzerland) and others--started flooding into Tropical Africa.

The missionary process and methods were simple. First they obtained permission from the local chiefs on the coastal areas for a piece of land. On this given land, they erected schools and in some cases, churches for instructing the natives in the Christian faith, and the catechumens. From this coastal base, the missionaries started moving into the interior. Where they could not gain access to the interior to spread the Good News, the missionaries trained natives and sent them out to evangelize among their own people. Very soon the missionary impact was felt everywhere. Soon the natives began to leave their homes and settle around the schools and churches of the missions. To show signs of their conversion, Africans started discarding native dress in preference for Western type of clothing and it became fashionable for them to adopt the names of the missionaries. For instance, a man formerly called Kojo Duku now became known as John Smith.

I should state, however, that from the inception of the missionary movement until quite recently, it was tacitly assumed that to evangelize and to civilize were two sides of one coin and for a heathen African to be civilized meant none other than to be Westernized in his manners and customs if not languages. And indeed, the missionaries laid great

emphasis on their converts wearing European clothes. "No adherent will wear a blanket!" By the close of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, the missions had made fairly substantial gains and the number of converts was steadily increasing. This does not mean that the Christian effort did not meet with some setbacks.

Our first task in approaching another people, another culture, another religion, is to take off our shoes, for the place we are approaching is holy; else we find ourselves treading on men's dreams. More serious still, we may forget that God was here before our arrival. We have, then, to ask what is the authentic religious content in the experience of the African. We may, if we have asked humbly and respectfully, still reach the conclusion that Africans have started from a false premise and reached a faulty conclusion. But we must not arrive at our judgment from outside their religious situation. We have to try to sit where they sit, to enter sympathetically into the pains and griefs and joys of their history and see how these pains and griefs and joys have determined the premises of their argument. We have, in a word to be present with them. It is true that the missionaries were physically present with Africans but in a sense they were also far remote from them. I should like to list four reasons for the set-backs to their Christian effort in Africa.

### Some Set-backs to Christianity in Africa

First, there was a total lack of understanding and sympathy on the part of the missionaries where African customs, beliefs and practices were concerned. For instance, such features of African life as pouring of libation, cross-cousin marriages, dancing, sacrifice, tribal rituals and polygamy were termed as barbarous and even inappropriate to the Christian faith. The missionaries objected to African social values and this led to bitter resentment.

Secondly, Christianity was dubbed the white men's religion and even now many Africans consider Christianity to be such. The inner significance of this complaint is simply for this reason. It is unfortunate that religious pictures, films and film strips should have almost universally shown a white Christ (it would seem certain his skin was dark if only from the hot Eastern sun), child of a white mother, master of white disciples; that Christ should be worshipped almost exclusively with European music set to translations of European hymns, sung by clergy and people wearing European dress in buildings of an archaic European style; that the form of worship should bear no relation to the traditional African ritual nor the content of the prayers to contemporary African life; that the organizational structure of the Church and its method of reaching decisions should be modelled ever more closely on Western concepts rather than deviating from them.

Thirdly, Christianity faced and still faces opposition from the traditional African religion. The traditional religion still has a firm grip on many Africans. The Ancient ideas of the religion of the forefathers constantly reappear even in the separatist Christian sects and in the magical and witchcraft beliefs which most people still hold. In the villages, the conservatism of society strengthens the retention of the old faith.

Fourthly, perhaps the greatest setback and presently a threat to the Christian faith in Africa is Islam. In many parts of Africa, Islam has been making tremendous inroads in recent years. There have been no small numbers of tribal chiefs and ordinary men and women, who, having been educated in Christian mission schools and baptized in their youth, have become Moslems in their later years. The reason for this phenomenon most commonly stated among African people is that Islam is the blackmen's religion while Christianity is the religion of the white men. Personally, I do not share this view. It seems to me that there are deeper reasons.

Culturally Islam attracts Africans chiefly because it allows them to remain fairly unchanged especially in regard to polygamy. Islam, furthermore, has the advantage of being one of the recognized world religions (which none of the indigenous African religions can claim to be). Therefore by becoming

Moslems, Africans feel that they belong to a religious community which extends far beyond the continent of Africa.

Religiously Islam has presented itself in the simplest possible terms, both in doctrine and in practice. We should here note the parallel attraction of Black Americans to Islam.

In General Africans who are converted to Islam do not need to experience such a radical discontinuity in their mores as those who become Christians. The fact that conversion to Islam is extremely easy for the unlettered and polygamous Africans increases mass conversion, creating a social climate strongly conditioned by the Islamic ethos. In such a situation, not to become a Moslem is not to belong and this is a serious matter for people living in any tribal society.

It remains, however, that Jesus brought God's Good News to all men in every culture. As a result of the blending of traditional Christian beliefs and native African practices, an indigenous African Church is being established. The clergy is African; the hymns and liturgy are African-oriented. Thoroughly African, the Church in Africa takes pride in its own religious heritage; thoroughly Christian, it looks to Christ as the author and finisher of its faith.

The Plight of the Church in Ghana  
After the Achievement of Independence (1957-1966)

Immediately after independence, the former government led by Dr. Nkrumah turned unduly materialistic and

threatened to ignore all spiritual values. This called for public opposition. Unfortunately there was not much from the Churches. Most of them preferred to be silent. But the experience of the ordinary Christian who did not support the party in power was one of distress and sometimes horror. The government gradually devised machinery to deprive him of media for communicating dissenting views. Churches were weakened because they were not agreed on the methods of opposing a regime which propagated much that was clearly opposed to the spiritual values they taught. The traditional lack of cooperation between Catholics and Protestants decimated the power of the Church as a whole. And in the Protestant community itself, multiplicity of denominations and sects<sup>3</sup> did not help. Our seven and one-half million people accommodate virtually all the denominations in Europe and America, plus a few indigenous sects or churches which some of the older-established denominations refuse to recognize even as Christian.

There were direct threats to the existence of the Christian Church and its growth in Ghana. One was found in youth organization called The Young Pioneers, founded by

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<sup>3</sup>Rise of sects or spiritual churches started in 1950 with the arrival in Ghana of American Evangelicals.

Nkrumah's party to take in all other youth organizations. Through this means, youths were taught all sorts of things supposed to increase loyalty to the person of the President. Many were the parents who dreaded the consequences of what their children might say casually about them in the meetings of these Young Pioneers. A few determined parents refused to let their children join and anxiously waited for the consequences.

When in August 1962, the Anglican Bishop of Accra, Bishop Richard Roseveare, with the support of the leaders of the main denominations in Ghana, denounced the Young Pioneer movement as godless, he was immediately deported. The Nkrumah government made its position clear: "The Church must never interfere with any government policies . . . ." Lay members of the Church looked to the clergy for leadership in opposition but the clergy did not lead. In Ghana and elsewhere, religious liberty suffers at the hands of apathy.

The Church, if it is to be taken seriously by society ought to give guidance in all spheres and disciplines. The charge, therefore, that the Church is irrelevant to the tasks facing the nation as it grows tends to sound very convincing in such societies as ours. The leaders of the Church are incapable of explaining to their own followers what the government is doing and so to non-Christians, no one really speaks from the side of the Church with authority. This is unfortunate.

I have concentrated on the Christian's difficulties in our circumstances first because I am a Christian myself and

second because of my desire to say something about the plight of the Church under a government, which to all intents and purposes was unchristian.

The situation is different today. A new civilian government has recently been voted into office, whose leaders are Christian and God-fearing. Christian Churches are now free to run their schools, clinics and hospitals, both as a service to the nation and as a means of winning persons to their faith. Financial assistance is needed by many of our Churches, at least for the present. Whether the considerable resources some Churches receive from abroad constitute a threat to integrity in the decision-making of our Church leaders is something on which we are not all agreed. I believe that if the financial assistance given by fellow Christians abroad is in the spirit in which St. Paul discusses it in the New Testament<sup>4</sup> and if it is received in the same spirit, then the integrity of our leaders and the Churches concerned need not be compromised. What is required is that they shall speak the truth and that the truth shall make all of us free.

Anyone who has read our national newspapers in the past two years will have noticed the resurgence of interest in spiritual values, which has made people call for honest and God-fearing men to lead the country in future years. My prayer is that this call will be heeded by my fellow countrymen.

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<sup>4</sup>I Corinthians 9:3ff.

One of the astonishing achievements of the Church is Religious Instruction in our schools. I was involved in the teaching of Religious Knowledge in our High Schools and also in the educational program of the Church. In the course of my studies here in Canada, I had the privilege of observing Religious Instruction in the Hillfield-Strathallen Colleges in Hamilton and also visited Melrose United Church and Burlington Baptist Church where I observed and participated in the Church's educational program. My impressions are recorded in the following chapter.

## II

### OBSERVATIONS OF CANADIAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND SOME CRITICAL APPRAISAL

#### Observation of Religious Instruction in Hillfield Strathallan Colleges, Hamilton

It is interesting to relate my teaching in Ghana with observations that I made at the above institution.

In all, I spent three Mondays at the College observing Mrs. Jones teach Religious Knowledge to Grades 5, 7 and 10 students. A few things about Mrs. Jones herself will enable us to know something of the tutor with whom I had the privilege of working.

The teacher, Mrs. Jones, is an attractive lady in her late 30's; married with four children, two boys and two girls. She possesses a B.Sc. degree and is presently working on her thesis for an M.A. in Religion. She is polite and well-mannered. It is in the classroom that Mrs. Jones' qualities as a good teacher can best be seen. She is humorous, lively and very punctual. I was deeply impressed by the manner in which she stimulates the interest of her students and uses vivid illustrations to make her teaching clear to the students. Perhaps a remark by one Grade 10 student whose opinion I had sought about her teacher, sums up Mrs. Jones' attitude to her work: "She is one of the ablest teachers we students of the College are lucky to have."

### Classroom

All lessons in Religious Knowledge take place in the classroom of each particular grade. The classrooms are large with pictures and sometimes students' pieces of art work displayed on all walls. The rooms look well-swept and everything is tidily arranged. Desks are arranged in a horseshoe form and a big table with a chair, right in the middle of the horseshoe formation is used by the teacher. There is in each classroom a bell that starts ringing three minutes before a class must conclude.

#### Grades 5 and 6 (girls)

Students in the above Grades are between the ages of 10 and 11. They dress immaculately in the College's uniform for girl students--a light brown blouse over green skirts with green stockings and brown lacing shoes.

#### Lesson

At the time of observation, Mrs. Jones was taking these students through the Genesis story. The Bible was the text used in class and the teacher was insistent that every student must bring her Bible to class. Before the day's study, the class spent a few minutes going through difficulties and points of interest in the previous study; with this over, the stage was then set for the day's lesson.

Usually Mrs. Jones asked students to stand up and read in turn passages from the Bible and then at the end of the reading, she started to give explanations and deal with issues

arising from the passages read. The reading by the students was quite good though some found it difficult pronouncing certain names and other words. I liked the general and broad treatment that Mrs. Jones gave to the Genesis story. She made it plain to the students that the stories in the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis about the Creation are not meant to be ordinary history, geography or even Science. They go beyond all this; they are clear demonstrations of God's power and will at work, creating the universe and all that is in it by merely commanding. (Gen. I).

Mrs. Jones tried to trace the similarity between Egyptian stories and the Genesis account of the Creation and suggested that perhaps the whole idea might have come from ancient Egyptian sources. At this stage, one student wanted to know why the Book of Genesis records two accounts of the creation. Mrs. Jones replied that perhaps the writers were not sure of the stories and therefore thought it necessary to present the two stories and leave the readers to weigh and judge the significance of each.

One student, who by all indications, was a literalist-- Mrs. Jones spent some time asking the students not to be literalists when reading and trying to understand the contents of the Bible--wanted to know which particular fruit Adam and Eve ate in the Garden, leading to their expulsion by God. Again Mrs. Jones replied that Adam and Eve did not physically eat a particular fruit and that the fruit of the tree refers to the Fruit of the Knowledge of good and evil, it is a frame of mind. She went on to say that what happened in the garden

was that God placed explicit faith and trust in man, but he grossly abused this faith and trust to his own detriment through disobedience. The result was his expulsion by God. Mrs. Jones used a present day episode to illustrate this point. While certain parents were leaving home for a visit to a family friend, they warned their twelve-year-old son not to switch on the T.V. Immediately they went out, the son put on the T.V. and started watching a hockey game. When the car of the parents pulled into the garage and they made for the house, the son heard ~~of~~ their approaching steps. He immediately shut off the T.V. and hurried back to his bedroom as though he had been in bed all the while. When, however, the mother went to set the alarm clock which she had placed on the T.V., she was astonished to discover that the top of the T.V. was really hot. She therefore asked her son whether he had switched on the T.V. while they had been away. To this, the boy confessed. Mrs. Jones pointed out to the students that not only had the son disobeyed his parents but had also lost the confidence and trust they placed in him. So it was with Adam and Eve. God could never restore the original faith and trust placed in them.

#### Grade 7 (Boys)

This class has an average age of thirteen. The class starts at 1:30 p.m. and ends at 2:10 p.m. Again the basic text book is the Bible.

The class had already studied Genesis and was working with the stories of the early kings of Israel at the time of my observation. Mrs. Jones dealt with King Solomon, laying emphasis on his grandiose building program. The class then went on to study Solomon's trade policy, his taxation and forced-labour systems, and his marriages.

The class next studied certain flood stories in the history of Egypt, India and Sumer and Mrs. Jones discussed with the students the common features and similarities of these flood stories and that of Noah in the Bible. For this purpose the map of the ancient Mediterranean World was drawn. Egypt, India and Sumer were then treated.

#### The Flood Stories

Egypt: Hathor, a goddess, was sent to destroy mankind. The other gods wanted man to build temples and made sacrifice. They coloured the Nile red with beer. Hathor drank it believing it to be the blood of mankind. While she slept, the other gods hid the survivors. However, there was no real flood because there was no ice-age on continental Africa.

India: Manu was warned by a fish to build a boat. The Indians believed that this fish was an incarnation of the god Krishna. Manu put his family and domestic animals in the boat. When the boat drifted to sea, the fish pushed it safely ashore.

Sumer: Utnapishtim was warned by God of the coming of a flood. He built a boat and put his wife and family, etc., into it. It was washed up on a mountain near the Caspian Sea.

The class then read the story of Noah's Ark and the flood, from Genesis 6:5-9:17. The students, on the whole, showed a keen interest in the lesson.

#### Grade 10 (girls)

This class has an average age of fifteen. On the whole, I was with the class for three weeks. The class was close to its study on Myths (myths of Greece and Canaan) when my observation began. Since there was no basic textbook for this lesson, Mrs. Jones herself printed stories of both Greek and Canaanite myths and distributed these stories to the twelve girls in the class. Mrs. Jones spoke at length on Canaanite pantheon; Baal, Yam, Mot, Anath, Ashtar and Shepash and went on to say something about the Canaanite myths' influence upon the religion of Israel. She also explained to the class, the meaning of theogony--the result of a creative re-interpretation which re-organizes old myths, alters them and supplements them with new inventions.

The last day of my observation in the Grade 10 class was spent on the foundation of the Hebrew Monarchy, the reigns of Kings, Saul, David and Solomon. Apparently the class had already done something on the reigns of Saul and David so that attention was focused on the latter part of Solomon's reign and the reasons for the disruption of the Hebrew monarchy. The Book of Kings was read for the study.

I contributed to the study of the collapse of the Hebrew Kingdom. Scholars often trace the reasons for the

disruption exclusively to Solomon's reign but there was one major contributory factor, very remote, which sowed the seed of hatred and jealousy between the Northerners and the Southerners. I told the class that when the Hebrews entered the Promised Land, they encountered the Canaanites. In the ensuing skirmishes, the tribes of Benjamin (who later formed the main stream of the North) contributed more to the struggles to wrestle the land from the Canaanites. But with the achievement of the united monarchy, all benefits and privileges arising therefrom were diverted to the southern part of the kingdom (Judah) to the neglect of the northern section (later Israel). Thus the Northerners were aggrieved and started to harbour ill-feelings and even hatred against the Southerners.

I next discussed with the class the immediate causes of the revolt, namely, Solomon's unfair taxation system whereby the Northerners paid more than the Southerners; the forced-labour conscription, again with more of the burden falling on the North, and then Rehoboam's refusal to lessen the burden of the North with his famous saying: "My father chastised you with whips but I will chastise you with scorpions."<sup>1</sup> So that the seed of disruption was already germinating and it was immediately after Solomon's death that the North seceded from the rest of the Kingdom.

I would like to say that my three Mondays at the

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<sup>1</sup>2 Kings 12:14.

Hillfield Strathallan Colleges gave me a profound insight into teaching processes and methods. It was a real joy participating in the College's program and I found Mrs. Jones extremely helpful and very cooperating. I believe the first hand experience I gained will be of great help to me on my return to Ghana as I take up responsibilities again for Religious Instruction at High School level.

The following points came out strongly to me:

- (a) A teacher must be punctual at all times;
- (b) He should be well prepared before going into the class for his teaching;
- (c) He should try as much as possible to make himself clear and be straight to the point as far as the students are concerned;
- (d) Whenever practicable, he should use illustrations to help the students grasp Biblical meanings;
- (e) He should have a sense of feeling and understanding; a sense of humour and devote his "whole-self" to his work;
- (f) Students should not be passive hearers for in the educational process motivation and involvement of students are very important.

The students of Hillfield Strathallen Colleges were not lacking in these.

On my return home, I hope to get involved in the Church's educational program. For one year (1968-69) I was

the Assistant to the Pastor at James Street Baptist Church, Hamilton. I also spent some time observing the Church's School at work at the Melrose United Church in Hamilton and at the Burlington Baptist Church in Burlington. Below is an account of my observations.

#### Melrose United Church School Program

Miss Lily Uyeda is the director of the Church's educational program.

The school program is for children between the ages of 6-13. It takes place once a month on a Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. I had the privilege of observing the school on Saturday, February 8, 1970.

The first question that strikes us is why a Sunday School should take place on a Saturday. Two reasons are advanced for this shift:

- (a) The former Sunday School program did not arouse the interest of the children; and
- (b) The Melrose United Church found it very difficult getting teachers for the Sunday School.

It was therefore decided to shift the program to a Saturday on an experimental basis. It was started in October, 1969 and has since been working out pretty well.

I observed the Grade 8 class under Mrs. McCuaig as teacher. The class started at 10:00 a.m. with prayer by the teacher. The study for the day was the Sacraments, i.e. Baptism and the Lord's Supper; the institution of the Lord's Supper was treated more fully that day.

In order to impress the significance and essence of Holy Communion on the children, it was felt that someone connected with its administration should be invited. The Rev. Stan Lucyk, Pastor of the Church, was there to lead this particular study. The 14th Chapter of St. Mark's Gospel which speaks of the institution of the Lord's Supper was read in class, followed by an explanation relating to its significance by Mr. Lucyk. There was the breaking of the bread and drinking of the wine, symbolizing the Lord's Supper.

Lunch time was 12:00 noon. At the ringing of a bell, all the children gathered in a spacious hall to a treat of hot dogs, apples and milk. (There were seconds). The Pastor, teachers and invited guests--two from McMaster Divinity College and two others from the Burlington Baptist Church--shared in the lunch.

Exactly at 12:30 p.m., all the children went into the gymnasium for games which included tennis, volleyball. Then exercises were conducted by a qualified physical instructor. Some of the children preferred to jump around by themselves. In short, each of them was involved in activity of some sort.

Classes resumed at 1:00 p.m. with music and singing. Two high school girls came to the Grade 8 class to play the guitar. I spent the last hour visiting other classes, observing what was going on. On the whole I was highly impressed by the organization and program of the school. It would be desirable to have a similar organized educational

program in our churches in Ghana if only we could raise the money required for its implementation. The experieiment at Melrose United Church is already producing some really positive results. It has the opportunity for outreach into the community and already children from the neighbourhood are present with children from church families. It is also attracting some families whose children are involved in the school program, into the Church itself.

Mrs. McCuaig impressed me as a teacher who has the interest of the class at heart. She was alert and well prepared. She has a penetrating way of making the subject matter clear and meaningful to the students and when possible she used illustrations.

The students were attentive and engaged in meaningful discussions. Their reading skills were quite good, though one student found some difficulties with pronounciations. The teacher as I discovered afterwards has him under special care. Students both asked and answered questions; their zeal for discovering meanings was high.

Mr. Lucyk's presence was a stimulus to the class. However I noted some hesitation in his presentation of the institution of the Lord's Supper. This may be explained by the fact that he was dealing with students who were not yet communicants.

But the purpose, to help the students understand the meaning and significance of the Lord's Supper, was amply

achieved.

In my opinion, the experiment at Melrose United Church is already achieving the desired results. Both the Pastor and teachers are enthusiastic about the School's program and are happy with the progress made so far.

The students are eager to learn, to know themselves and to participate in all the planned activities of the school. One can only hope that the Melrose Church School will prove a success.

#### Burlington Baptist Church Sunday School

I spent two Sundays at the Burlington Baptist Church, observing in the Sunday School. My interest was in the Young Peoples Group and the Grade 8 class.

#### Young People's Group

This group was under the supervision of Mr. Walter Mulkewick, a high school teacher in Burlington. The class started at 9:30 a.m. There were six boys and five girls present.

The day's study was preceded by a prayer offered by one of the students. The teacher then called out certain words and asked the class to write on pieces of paper words which came to mind at their mention. On the left are some of the words mentioned by the teacher and on the right, some of the words written down by the class.

principal	-	authority
Church	-	Fellowship in Christ

Jesus	-	Saviour
Bible	-	God's Holy Word
Basketball	-	Players
Father	-	Mother
Love	-	People
Gospel	-	Sharing

After this, the teacher read certain extracts from the Senior High Teacher's Guide Book on some views as to the nature of the Church, and invited the class to say whether they agreed with some of the views expressed. For instance, the Church was said to be an outmoded institution that does not keep pace with modern trends. A general and very lively discussion ensued. Some of the students agreed that while the Church is an old institution, yet it is far from being out-dated. Others argued that it is precisely because the Church does not bother about happenings outside its walls that the accusation levelled against it seems justifiable. After a very hectic discussion, the class agreed that for the Church to become relevant to the youth of today, it must move beyond its walls and become more and more involved in youth programs for the whole community, thereby arousing their interest. The Church, it was decided, should become more involved in social action--making its influence felt in matters of race, drugs (one student complained that so far the Church has remained mute on this) and juvenile delinquency. The class ended at 10:30 a.m.

## Grade 8 Group

This class consisted of seven boys and five girls. Only one of the team of teachers, Miss Ann Balch, was present. Also present was another student from McMaster Divinity College.

The class started at 9:30 a.m., with the listening to a tape on the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus and this set the context for the day's study. Miss Balch asked the class to regard itself as T.V. interviewers with the opportunity to interview Jesus. She read the following: "You are a member of a well-known team of interviewers on a T.V. Show and have just been handed the scoop of the century. You have been guaranteed a half-hour show with Jesus as guest. It's your chance to get somethings straightened out. You want to be certain that the toughest issues are faced directly, so you and the rest of the team will prepare the questions ahead of time. Decide what you will ask and then write down for future reference the list of questions the group agrees are most important." The following are some of the questions listed.

- (a) Can you tell us something about your Father? Did He create the universe?
- (b) What is eternal life, and what shall we do to merit this eternal life?
- (c) Why do the Jews oppose you?
- (d) Where did you get the power with which you perform your miracles?
- (e) Can you perform a miracle for the audience to see

that you are the Son of God?

- (f) We hear you preach that you are going to die and rise again from the dead on the third day. Tell us where you are going after your rising again and what you are going to do there.
- (g) As your followers, what should we do in order to bring others into your Church?
- (h) Are you going to clean up the mess in the present world?
- (i) We hear you are the first hippie. Is this true?

Because of lack of time, the teacher could deal with only two of the proposed questions. To me the nature of the questions clearly demonstrated the class's knowledge of the life, ministry and death of Jesus. The day's study came to an end at 10:30 a.m.

The Church School in Burlington Baptist Church is well organized. I observed other departments as well as the ones mentioned above and was thrilled by the efficiency of the teachers and the willingness of the students to learn and share among themselves.

I was not, however, impressed by the poor attendance of the Young People's group. On my first Sunday, present with the teacher were six students; there were only two the following week. The teacher, too, was absent.

One reason, I am told, for the irregularity of the students, was that many of them find it difficult to get to the Church by 9:00 a.m. This is not an adequate reason to me. For one aim of the Church School is to imbue the student

with a sense of discipline and a spirit of responsibility. Students who fail to adhere to these essential qualities will not help the noble cause of the Church's School.

The Young People's group has the potential to be a good class if only the attendance improves and students settle down to serious work.

The Grade 8 group proved themselves to be punctual and more serious. Their teacher was quite efficient and has an effective way of enabling her students to wrestle with problems and meanings. The idea of the T.V. interview described earlier proves this point. She treated her subject matter very well and used illustrations when necessary. The reading skills of the class were better and student involvement in the search for meanings and understanding was high. It was a promising class.

### III

## TOWARD A PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION-- AN APPLICATION OF INSIGHTS GAINED IN CANADA TO THE GHANAIAN SITUATION

### The Teaching of Religious Knowledge in Ghanaian Schools

Ghana is a developing country in the sense that its citizens are trying to acquire the modern technological capacity to meet their economic needs. In the process we have attached great importance to education, industrialization, housing and transportation, because in these areas our people can readily see rapid growth.

Preoccupation with economics and politics has not pushed matters of religion and religious liberty into the background. As the result of general elections held in August, 1969, a new civilian government has taken over from the Military and it has promulgated a new constitution. Many touchy issues--financing of religious groups by outside sources; polygamy; tensions between Islam and Christianity; fetishism; ownership and operation of Christian schools, clinics and hospitals--have a stake directly or indirectly in the new constitution.

For a long time Religious Instruction has been compulsory in all government-supported institutions of learning and in some private schools too. The present political leaders

in Ghana are men of strong Christian conviction when compared with the group of irreligious and unchristian men in the toppled regime of Nkrumah. Our leaders are more favourable to the Church and they have the feeling that the classroom is the obvious site for Religious Instruction in view of the few Churches that we have in our country. The Prime Minister, Dr. K. A. Busia, formerly a Professor of Sociology and Christian Ethics in the University of Ghana, is a trained catechist, and a lay preacher in the Accra Methodist Church. In a recent address to the annual Methodist Synod in Accra, he expressed the need for a spiritual resurgence and called upon the Church to play a significant role in the spiritual life of the nation. The Prime Minister pledged the Government's support both financially and otherwise for all Christian Churches in the country.

Because Religious Instruction is compulsory, we have always faced a shortage of trained instructors in the discipline. The Department of Religious Knowledge in the University of Ghana produces annually only a handful of qualified instructors, so that our schools have always had to look elsewhere for teachers. Thus the news was most welcome that the Government was going to build Trinity College in Accra, where Religious Instructors will be trained for our schools.

Teachers of Religious Knowledge are men and women of different denominations. Ghana's Ministry of Education enactment stipulates that these teachers possess a University degree, or the General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.) "A" level, with Religious Knowledge as one of the subjects.

Normally, it takes a student five years to go through the ordinary secondary education. But if a student wants to go on to University, then he has to go through two years of sixth form course--this sixth form course is a bit higher than Grade 13 here in Canada. Religious Knowledge is compulsory for the normal five years of secondary schooling, but is optional in the sixth form. However, it remains compulsory for some Arts Students in the Sixth Form in certain schools.

I had the privilege of teaching in one of the government secondary schools in Accra, the capital of Ghana, from September, 1965 to June, 1968. My main subject was Religious Knowledge, but I also taught Latin and Greek as supplementary subjects in Forms 4 and 5 (Grades 11 and 12). As Senior Religious Knowledge Instructor, one of my responsibilities was the drawing up of the school's curriculum in Religious Knowledge. I would like to say something about the curriculum.

#### The Curriculum

Our students are prepared specifically for the General Certificate of Education Examinations and the Syllabus is drawn in accordance with the West African Examination Council Regulations. The Religious Knowledge Syllabus is made up of two sections, Old Testament and New Testament.

#### The Old Testament Syllabus

The Old Testament Syllabus is divided into two sections:

- (a) History and Religion of Israel from the Rise of the Monarchy to the Fall of the Northern Kingdom in 721 B.C.; and
- (b) The History of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) to the

exile in 586 B.C.

Students are to choose one of these two periods.

#### The New Testament Syllabus

This is a detailed study of either:

(a) St. Luke's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles; or

(b) St. Mark's Gospel plus Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of St.

Matthew's Gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles.

Again, students have to choose only one of the two sections.

I have already stated that our Religious Knowledge program is geared toward the G.C.E. examination, so that the preparation starts from the Junior forms. In all, we have five forms, Forms One to Five. The syllabus in the various forms is as follows:

#### Forms One and Two-- Old Testament

During the first two years, students are taken through the books of Genesis and Exodus. The magnificence and importance of the Genesis story is impressed upon them, namely that, what is recorded in Genesis 1-11, is not ordinary history, geography or even fiction. Nor is it meant to be science. It goes beyond these areas of discipline. It is God's breaking through into history of mankind and making himself known to all. The Book of Kings is treated in the second half of the year. Exams are conducted at the end of the year.

### Form Three

By the time the students reach the third form, they will have completed the study of the Old Testament section meant for the first two years. Therefore in Form Three, they are plunged right into the New Testament.

They study either St. Luke's Gospel or the Gospel of Mark with Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of St. Matthew's Gospel depending on which particular book is to be offered for G.C.E. exam. The second half of the year is spent in the Book of Acts.

### Forms Four and Five

These are the Senior Forms. At this stage of their education, these seniors have a fair and substantial knowledge of both Old and New Testaments. For the next two years they are given more attention and guidance in their studies. Much of the time is spent in conducting seminars, essay writing and tutorials. Our duty at this stage is to show the students individually and severally the correct approach to answering questions and correcting any deficiencies that are detected in any of them. By the middle of March every year they sit for a "mock" exam, conducted under the same regulations as the G.C.E. exam itself. This is the final preparation for the major exams in early June.

### Books

(a) Bible (Revised Standard Version)

- (b) History and Religion of Israel by R. Rattay;
- (c) The Gospel of St. Luke by Rev. Mike Marshall;
- (d) The Gospel of St. Mark by Rev. Mike Marshall;
- (e) The Gospel of St. Matthew by Rev. Mike Marshall; and
- (f) The Book of the Acts of the Apostles by Rev. Mike Marshall.

#### Role of Teachers

Each week, two sessions of forty-five minutes each are allowed for Religious Knowledge. Usually the teacher asks students to read passages from the Gospels in preparation for a particular study. In class, the assigned passages are read again and the teacher invites the students to ask questions and bring out difficulties that beset them. He then proceeds to clarify and explain certain difficult verses or points to the class. The teacher pays particular attention to footnotes at the right hand side and bottom of the Gospels.

In the light of recent experience here in Canada, I have come to realize that every teacher must prepare well before going into the class because as a teacher, he has a very significant role to play. He is not only the instructor but also the enabler, the guide whose primary duty it will be to help the students by stimulating, guiding and enriching with his own experience.

For this reason, he should be punctual, alert and active in class. He should have a clearly defined aim for

each lesson and a careful plan to accomplish this aim. He should be skilful in asking questions and always try to give the students ample opportunity to participate in discussions.

This involvement of students is very essential as it is a necessary tool in the teaching-learning process. Also the teacher should be apt in following up and using students' suggestions and view points and above all be willing to help them individually especially the slow and dull ones.

It is necessary that teachers meet at least once a month to discuss ways and methods of going about their work. As teachers, they are bound to come up with problems arising out of their teaching and it is only at such meetings that these problems can be discussed and solutions found.

As Senior Religious Knowledge Instructor it will be my duty to meet with other Religious Knowledge Instructors once a month for discussion. We shall have to ensure that each and every one of us is doing his work conscientiously. Maintenance of discipline among students and the conducting of monthly examinations to determine students' progress, should be part of our total discussion. Because our curriculum is tailored to the needs of the Exams Council, we have always limited Religious Knowledge only to intellectual knowledge. The result of this has been that our students do not have a broad perspective of the Christian religion. Again, recent experience has dawned on me the need for effective Religious Instruction to extend beyond the intellectual

knowledge. Throughout the Forms, it should be the teacher's concern to broaden students' horizon for God's Word is still alive and fresh everywhere. In this respect teachers may show students the spiritual basis for all their actions--moral, intellectual, social or of any other sort. Only so can students rise to unity of life and purpose.

#### Christian Education in Ghanaian Churches

I should state from the outset that there is no overall plan for Christian Education as such in the Churches in Ghana. We do, however, have Sunday School programs, Youth Fellowships and Adult Action Groups within the Church establishment.

The need for Christian Education in our Churches cannot be over emphasized. The Church being a Christian enterprise, is of necessity a teaching enterprise, for Christianity depends upon teaching for its propagation and maintenance. The Church's procedures should, therefore be orderly; its educational methods sound; its equipment as up-to-date as possible; its curriculum based upon the best educational standards. It's organization and program should be so constructed throughout as to reveal a primary concern for growing persons. There should be a thorough study of child life, of the changing needs of young people and adults and of the ways of cooperating with the Holy Spirit in influencing life. There should be familiarity with the best teaching

procedures and materials, that the resources of music, religious art and drama, worship, handwork and story may be effectively captured for this supreme purpose.

The objective for Christian Education is that all persons be aware of God through his self-disclosure, especially his redeeming love as revealed in Jesus Christ, and that they respond in faith and love-- to the end that they may know who they are and what their human situation means, grow as sons of God rooted in the Christian community, live in the Spirit of God in every relationship, fulfill their common discipleship in the world and abide in the Christian hope.<sup>1</sup>

There should be acquaintance with the inexhaustible wealth of subject-matter found in the Bible, and rich experience in testing and applying this in terms of life today.

The Church in Ghana can also be a school, a fellowship of disciples learning at the feet of the Master Teacher. The Church in Ghana should take as its commission the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:18: "Go ye therefore and make disciples . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and lo, I am with you." Our aim should be not simply to win names for the Church's roll but to gain true followers of Christ whose purpose will be to unite with others in a fellowship of those learning how to live as Christians. This applies to all ages--adults as well as children.

The tendency among Ghanaian Christians is to think

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<sup>1</sup>The Church's Educational Ministry--A Curriculum Plan (The Bethany Press, U.S.A. 1965), p. 8.

that once they become converts to the Christian fold, their conversion is complete. I personally feel that the sooner our converts agree to be honest with themselves and confess that there are many things they have still to learn as Christians, the greater will be our fellowship as humble human beings and the deeper will be our common zeal for spiritual discovery and joy in achievements.

The first mission of the Christian Church in Ghana, then, is to teach, that is, to make known and vitally effective in individual lives the "Good News" of Christ as Saviour of men. This task should be surely at the heart of Christian Education in Ghana. For Jesus Christ holds a unique place in Christian faith, which differs in kind as well as in degree from that held by any other person. A unique personal relationship to Jesus should be sought and won by his followers in Ghana. Jesus is (also) called Saviour. Surely he is the Saviour of the world in the sense of pointing the way to a new and better life. But he is also the individual's Saviour. Men have found that through faith in him, they may be saved from baseness and sin and lifted to a higher plane of life. Christian experience in this regard is so clear that we would not be true to our purpose if we did not include this aspect of Jesus' mission in our Christian Education objectives.

Christian Education should seek to make so real to Ghanaians the matchless person of Jesus that he may call

forth their supreme loyalty and devotion. This can happen when teachers hold the person of Christ, his enabling power, and his standards and ideals constantly before pupils, so that acceptance of him may involve understanding the facts concerning his life and teaching, also full commitment to him and to his way of life.

Our public schools aim to build up strong moral character. So far as they can, without interfering with religious beliefs, they endeavour to give the children the highest incentives for their moral habits. The Sunday School must cooperate with the Day Schools in this. It must supply what the Day School cannot give. It must give the spiritual and religious teaching which our public schools, according to their function, cannot sufficiently give.

Undoubtedly, the greatest menace to moral strength in Africa today is the host of people of all ages who are not receiving any systematic instruction in Religion under any auspices. Especially unjust is the fact that millions of children, through circumstances beyond their control, are allowed to grow up without religious training. In a day when secular education is becoming universal, when opportunities for adult education are increased on every hand, it becomes one of the clear duties of the Church to build plans so that Religious Education may eventually become continental and in the meantime to extend it's ministry to many unchurched children and adults.

Board of Christian Education  
in the Local Church

As a prerequisite for Christian Education in Ghana, there should be adequate and effective administration. Good results do not come by accident; careful planning is necessary. The general purposes of the Administration Board should be to unify the Church's educational program and improve its educational standards but above all to extend its educational ministry and to vitalize its spiritual content and outcomes. All organization, program and activity must be evaluated in terms of the above goals.

The Administration Board, however, should be given responsibility and power on behalf of the Church in all matters of Christian Education. It should seek for unification and coordination of all educational interests of the Church, including the Sunday Church School, young people's work, leadership training, missionary education and all other lines of study included in a comprehensive and balanced program of Christian Education. The Board should also appoint all teachers, department heads and other officers for the various phases of the program.

In brief, the task of the Board is to supply stimulating leadership in building a comprehensive program of Christian Education, adapted progressively to the spiritual needs of all for whom the Church is responsible starting with the youngest child and including the oldest adult.

### Membership of Board

The Board's members should be elected by the Church itself in the same manner as other Boards. This is the usual and best plan. It is of the utmost importance that the leaders who are the best qualified members of the Church for this work be selected for the Board. The Board should organize at its first meeting by electing a Chairman to preside over all meetings and a Secretary to keep all minutes and records. It is important that there be a stated time for regular meetings.

It should be the function of the members of the Board to acquaint themselves with the latest educational methods and materials. Since the task of the Board members involves educational work, they should be selected because of their fitness for their entire task rather than to represent a particular department or phase of their work. Otherwise there is the danger of a Board member coming to the meetings of the Board for the sole purpose of working for the interest of the causes which he represents, an attitude which could be disastrous.

### The Teacher in Christian Education

Like other Churches, the Church in Ghana will face a constant need for more and better trained teachers. It should be the responsibility of the Administration Board to discover and appoint teachers. Such teachers should be men

and women who are active members of the Church, nurtured in the Christian faith. If good teachers are to be ready they must be put in training now, in training schools and classes. Care will need to be taken that the individuals chosen are placed where they are best suited to serve. Some people are better adapted to work with children, others with young people or adults. Frequently readjustments must be made because individuals prove to be misfits. In such cases, great tact and Christian kindness must be used.

Teachers should be of a high degree of intelligence as indicated by ability to meet and handle both people and situations. They should have a growing knowledge of the Bible and deep interest in other Christian works. They must be helpful, kind and thoughtful of others and treat their pupils with respect and consideration and inspire and lead others in thought and action. Christian teachers should use methods suitable for the age of pupils and make intelligent use of lesson materials. Resource materials--films, filmstrips, audio visuals, books, religious pictures, etc.--should be used in addition to the lesson text to help pupils discover meanings, and these materials be selected from a wide field. It is necessary that the materials be suitable and helpful to the main purpose of the Church School work, interesting and suggestive.

Every teacher should consecrate himself to the task of

helping not only little children but also adults know and love their Heavenly Father.

### The Place of the Bible in the Curriculum

We should be eager that pupils learn to use the Bible. In order to teach them this, we must have them individually and by themselves endeavour to use it. We also should want them to enjoy it. To accomplish this, we ought to give them such parts to read or study as cannot fail to interest them. The stories of the Bible have real interest for the children.

We should therefore pick out interesting stories (according to overall plan), assign them for home reading, one each week, and when assigning a passage give background knowledge to help them toward intelligent reading of it. The younger children, should read the Bible study for the simple interest in the story.

In class they should study a subject, beginning with their own experience and leading to a spiritual truth. The Bible story is one important source from which their conclusion is derived. It is advisable to put the Bible into the hands of young people. Practically if children are given Bibles when so young that they find it difficult to read more than the appointed lesson and the lessons are widely chosen, they are easily led to feel, though much of the Bible is incomprehensible to them, yet the way to enjoy it is to read the portions assigned. This soon becomes a habit and the child

is in much better position to appreciate the Bible, than when brought up to wonder why he should not read it. It is a serious question whether the habit of keeping the Bible from children is not responsible for its widespread disuse among adults. As J. D. Smart has rightly put it:

The goal of their [children] Bible study therefore, is that they may know in all his fullness the God who is revealed in the Bible and may so understand all their life in the light of his presence that not only their words and actions but their very existence will be, moment by moment, a living witness to the reality of God.<sup>2</sup>

Many Churches in Ghana do not have a curriculum plan. This being so, we have to work toward the formulation of a curriculum in which the Bible will have a unique place.

#### Role of the Pastor

The Pastor, as the active head of the Church is by virtue of this fact the active head of the Church's program of Christian Education.

The Church, as an educational institution must have a leader who is capable of thinking in educational terms and of assuming constructive educational leadership. The amount of personal direction he will give to various detailed phases of the program will depend in part upon his own ability, in part upon the quality of assistance he has in those helping to carry on this work. In no case should he feel that Christian

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<sup>2</sup>J. D. Smart, The Teaching Ministry of the Church (The Westminster Press, London), p. 153.

Education is outside his province simply because he has well-qualified leaders to take hold of certain aspects of the work or because he has not had recent seminary courses in Religious Education.

The Pastor cannot safely dodge the fact that his task is an educational one. As preacher, he is educator; for any preaching which is worthy the name is also teaching in the sense that its aim is to change life mentally and emotionally. As minister and leader of Christ's Church, he is head of an organization which the Great Teacher established as a teaching and training agency. The minister cannot afford, therefore, to think of Christian Education as an optional part of his program. To do so is to confess failure at too vital a point. Christian Education is the heart of everything he is doing. The educational approach is the key to every objective he is trying to reach.

If the minister is fortunate enough to have a competent Director of Christian Education or a Church School Superintendent of more than average ability, he may be able to relieve himself of a large number of the routine responsibilities and concentrate through his pulpit and personal contacts upon building inspiration and undergirding the program with vigorous moral support.

The leadership of the Pastor in Christian Education may make itself felt in the following ways:

- (a) By setting before himself the task of making the entire membership alert to its educational program.
- (b) By exercising personal initiative in establishing educational objectives, in raising educational standards and in building the educational program.
- (c) He should furnish constructive guidance and develop a corps of qualified teachers who will help him carry out the educational tasks of the Church.

## CONCLUSION

What does the Church have to offer to the Ghanaian pupil in his search for identity, self-understanding and maturity?

One important weapon that the Church can place in the hands of young people is the freedom to learn and grow. The centre of the Gospel portrays a person who, when asking the question, "Who do men say I am?", offered his disciples the freedom to learn and find the truth by themselves through reflection on their experiences with him.

In the same way, the Ghanaian pupil will have to understand himself and to grow as we allow him to become involved in the total experiences and life of the Church. As teachers or ordinary members of the Church fellowship, we must offer guidance to the pupils and help them reflect on this life both with themselves and the congregation as a whole.

But our responsibility stretches beyond this. The pupil is in need of understanding of his experience and the capacity to discover his life in a meaningful way. Thus the Church should start with the actual experiences, issues and problems of a personal life lest it give weight to the feeling that it has only formal answers to questions that no one is asking. Our area of concern is to help pupils discover

meaning and enjoy a sense of freedom and responsibility in living.

Young people and many adults are today asking the question, "Who am I?" The answer may be found in the pupil's confidence in the Church which cares about him and with which he can share and be supported in his life experience. Our aim is to offer people an opportunity to grow into free, joyful, creative human beings.

The essential task of the Church is not that everyone be able to articulate the same expression of faith but rather that everyone experience in his daily life the love and mutual concern for persons which is what the Gospel is about.<sup>1</sup>

At this level, a person may move from thinking and talking superficially about his faith to growing in real appreciation and understanding. The Church should therefore provide the opportunity for such growing experience and reflection on it.

Finally, it is important that we help people find a basic orientation for their lives within the Church. This process of re-orientation has traditionally been called "a new being in Christ." This includes growing in self-awareness, in openness to others and willingness to share with them our identity and our sufferings and joys as well as sharing theirs; it means that our concern involves allowing and helping others to mature.

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Robinson, Christian Education (S.C.M. Press, Missouri, 1965), p. 36.

Good teaching, like any other human social process, needs to seek increased personalization, increased possibilities for self awareness and for personal participation in the culture. Just as we protest do-good paternalism in society if it does not have personalization in mind, so we must avoid teaching in a way which does not promote this maturity. Much educational thinking today emphasizes that something must happen inside the learner (not outside) for him to grow.?

Young people today do not want to be told what to do by adults. They want to be free from parental restrictions but at the same time, they need adult companionship, support and understanding. Adults who are willing to share with young people in this way invariably find themselves enriched in return. The opportunity to become that kind of person is part of what the Church in Ghana should strive to offer its youth and adults.

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<sup>2</sup>"Learning is a Happening", Spectrum, July-August 1965 (Division of Christian Education, National Council of Churches of Christ, U.S.A.) p.

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