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**A BIBLICAL COURSE OF STUDY
FOR THE
DAILY INSTRUCTION OF JUNIORS**

**A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Religious Education
Asbury Theological Seminary**

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

**by
Mildred Leatherman**

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

The religious training of children has been a major concern of mankind since the beginning. History portrays a diversity of cultures, showing their interaction and their influence on succeeding eras of civilization. Each culture has had its own peculiar philosophy, which in turn has affected educational aims. Belief that religion is deeply rooted in man's nature is surely amply testified to by the fact that in every age and in every land religious instruction has been a significant concern of each culture's philosophy. So today, Christian education assumes an important place in our thinking.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to discover the basic educational theory of the present time and its influence on the religious instruction of children, comparing the modern concept with those concepts held in other periods in history and considering their impact on family life; (2) to consider some of the characteristics and religious needs of juniors and to show why the junior age is crucial in religious experience; (3) to consider the responsibility of parents in the religious train-

ing of their children, and the responsibility of the church in preparing parents for this task; and (4) to present a one-year course of Bible readings and memory portions adapted to the religious instruction of juniors.

Importance of the study. Many of the methods and devices of progressive education have been introduced into the religious education program of the leading churches of America. At the same time there is an appalling record of juvenile delinquency, parental delinquency, and disregard for God and the church. Modern methods of education applied to religious instruction in the Protestant churches have not made the impact upon society that was expected. The churches, all too often substituting extra-biblical materials for the Bible itself, and going along with a naturalistic philosophy of life, have likewise come far short in realizing their goal in society. The home is helpless to contribute to the religious life of its children because the parents of today are the product of yesterday's failure. However, there are signs of renewed interest in the importance of religious instruction in the home, and some efforts are being made to aid parents in fulfilling their responsibility. In this study an attempt was made to analyze the problem and present a usable series of Bible portions that would be meaningful and helpful in the religious instruction of juniors.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Primary children. Children who are six, seven, and eight years of age are considered members of the Primary Department in the Sunday Schools of Protestant churches.

Juniors. Children who are nine, ten, and eleven years of age are considered members of the Junior Department of the Sunday School.

Intermediates. Children who are twelve, thirteen, and fourteen years of age are considered members of the Intermediate Department. They are sometimes referred to as the junior-hi group. These are the early adolescents.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TODAY

There is a great spiritual dearth in the world today. Dr. H. C. Mason, in the Moody Monthly a few years ago made the following observation:

Eight years ago, the number of young people and children in the United States receiving no religious instruction was twenty-seven million, or a number equal to approximately one-fifth of our national population. Today, however, the number of those not receiving religious instruction is said to have increased to thirty-six million, or approximately one-fourth the population of the United States.¹

Clarence Benson notes that seven out of ten of the future citizens of the nation are without religious instruction. Between 1926 and 1936 government figures showed an increase in population, but a decrease in Sunday school enrollment of 12.6 per cent. The Methodist Episcopal Church that same decade showed a decrease of 34 per cent, while other major denominations showed a loss as well. The crime wave of the present century is phenomenal, and at the same time religious instruction in the home has almost disappeared. Benson sets the number of unchurched youth at thirty-seven million.²

¹H. C. Mason, "Claiming the Children," Moody Monthly April 1950, p. 529.

²Clarence H. Benson, A Popular History of Christian Education, pp. 8 and 341.

There is more material for Sunday Schools being printed by church publishing houses; there are more people employed in writing lessons for Sunday Schools and Vacation church schools than ever before. There are more Sunday Schools set up with public school equipment and better trained teachers. Yet there has been a serious failure to make a spiritual impact upon the life of the nation.

It is the purpose of this study to discover the causes of failure, and to offer some suggestions toward remedying the present situation. The causes lie within the three major institutions of this democracy: the home, the school and the church. These three institutions are so inter-related that all must share alike in their responsibility for the failure. In whatever institution spiritual life begins to decline, it will cause the same thing to happen in the others. When spiritual life declines, it does not decline in such an impersonal thing as an institution, but rather in the lives of the individuals who make up that institution. Therefore, it is the parents and children who suffer in the home and in the church, and particularly the children who suffer in the school. They are left without a chart for their lives, without purpose, without those disciplines that make for well developed personality. Consequently, there is unrest and conflict; and life becomes an aimless and unhappy existence.

Psychologists and psychiatrists are kept busy trying

to help their patients find release from guilt complexes, inner tensions, and frustrations. Pastors are studying courses in counselling to be able to advise and minister adequately to their church constituency. These facts suggest a basic need in the lives of adults and young people.

Dora Chaplin points out that college students in general have no ruling philosophy of life, no clear values or definite standards.³ She goes on to quote a chaplain in the Pacific following the second World War.

American education lacks any realistic approach to international life and politics, as well as ordinary courses in philosophy and religion, let alone orientation, in the specifically Christian attitude toward self and society. In fact, there is little in American education, whether religious or secular, that can give men a sustained dynamic for a tragic world.⁴

There can be little question that the foundations of social and spiritual security are tragically weakened in our time. Chaplin's suggestion of a way out merits serious reflection:

There is a growing restlessness and inquiry; humanity wants to be guided towards what have been called "the enduring sources of regeneration." We are beginning to understand how the natural processes of the human mind are related to religion.

Noted psychologists have come to believe that religion is the only effective basis for building our integrated personality; so assuredly is it the most urgent

³Dora Chaplin, Children and Religion, p. 7.

⁴Ibid., p. 8.

need of the world today, to utilize all the growing power in the mind and heart of mankind, to find a moral and spiritual reality in so doing, and in working toward the integrated life of the individual to travel toward an integrated world.⁵

From these observations it will be readily agreed that a Christian philosophy and a Christian way of life are urgently needed. Modern liberal theology and progressive education swept away the foundations of Christianity, and have left nothing but naturalism and pragmatism in their place. However, the modern philosopher believes that since we have eliminated all the frustrating elements of the Christian religion, all three major institutions are now in a position to make definite progress.

Raymond B. Johnson writes from this standpoint; and it is his verdict that the church, at last, has arrived at the proper concept of its educational program. He lists six steps in the history of religious education that, in his estimation, represent this progress: (1) theology-centered, (2) catechism-centered, (3) "conversion-at-the-age-of-accountability"-centered, (4) Bible-centered, (5) Child-centered, and (6) experience-centered.⁶

Johnson believes that religion must be freed from

⁵Ibid., p. 9.

⁶Raymond B. Johnson, What Is Happening in Religious Education, p. 10.

authoritarianism if it is to be effective in the lives of individuals without frustrating influences. He fails to see any values in the early educational work of the church.

All through the nineteenth century the purpose of Sunday School teaching was to pass on to children the doctrines of a conservative religion. These doctrines were assumed to have been established by the Bible. Children were required to learn by rote the catechism, with such illumination as the teacher could supply. Isolated passages of the Bible were presented, with a golden text, and the business of the teacher was to expound the passage or the text with due emphasis upon established credal interpretation and with such applications to the moral principles of everyday living as the teacher could suggest.⁷

After touching on the history of the development first of the uniform lessons and later the graded lessons, Johnson continues:

Meanwhile, however, the prime consideration was still the subject matter. The Bible was still the sole source of this subject matter. The truths which must be taught were those essential to the "salvation" of the child. Usually this was expected to take place when the child was "converted." Before that variable assigned age all Sunday School training was preparatory to the great event.⁸

This author points out that "rays of light" coming from such men as Bushnell, Pestalozzi, and Froebel were showing the way out of a dark and foreboding authoritarianism. Horace Bushnell is cited with his emphasis on Christian nur-

⁷Ibid., p. 6.

⁸Loc. cit.

ture as opposed to a crisis conversion experience.

Pestalozzi is heralded as the pioneer in the child-centered approach, with his insistence that the educative process is concerned with drawing out rather than pouring in. Johnson agrees with Pestalozzi that observation and investigation as learning methods are superior to memorizing and reciting; Froebel added something to Pestalozzi when he introduced the slogan, "Learn by doing."

"The light became daylight" when Dewey, appearing with his experience-centered philosophy, repudiated all authority in education. At this point, Johnson says

If the child-centered or experience-centered school is to represent the contribution of the twentieth century to religious education, it can not remain at the same time the theology-centered or authority-centered or Bible-centered school of the nineteenth century.⁹

It is Johnson's belief that the Bible ceases to contribute to right living when it is regarded as authoritative. He feels that the present revolt, as seen in the lives of young people, is a reaction against an outmoded authoritarian attitude toward the Bible. He acknowledges, at the same time, man's natural tendency to lean on authority:

The desire for an authority to refer to is deep-rooted in all of us . . . It makes us feel easier to believe that somewhere there is an authoritative answer to our questions, somewhere an authoritative leader to tell us exactly what we are to do.

⁹Ibid., p. 14.

In this desire for authority, religion is no exception. Here is a safe retreat from the confusion of change. Here is something sacred, solidified with all the answers settled for all time.¹⁰

It was the impact of Dewey's philosophy upon the centers of education, accentuating, as it did, pragmatism at the expense of Biblical authority, that deprived young people of the authority they looked for.

Till almost 1787 general and religious education were one; they were not divided. The Bible was an integral part of the curriculum. The second American period, (1787 - 1847) was marked, however, by a secularization first of life in general and then of education in particular. "The reason for this secularization was due to a new rationalistic view of life which prevented Christianity from having the influence it once did."¹¹

Efforts on the part of eminent Christians to stem the tide were not lacking. George E. Dawson in that same period wrote:

It is, of course, a theoretical, as well as a practical demand of the Christian religion, that the Bible shall be a principle source of religious culture-material.

The children of any given generation of Christians can come to their full heritage, not merely of religious

¹⁰Ibid., p. 18.

¹¹Lewis J. Sherrill, "A Historical Study of the Religious Movement," Orientation in Religious Education, p. 20.

beliefs, but also of literary, ethical, social, and political ideals and usages that have grown up along with Christianity only by being thoroughly familiar with the Bible.¹²

In our own day, Frank Glenn Lankard, commenting on the impact of the Bible on the lives of men, has this to say:

. . . it is our religious classic par excellence. It contains the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, who gave birth to the Christian religion. All of our Christian virtues and standards are either implicit or explicit in the teachings of Jesus. The Bible contains the record of the founding and growth of Christianity from the death and resurrection of Jesus to the culmination in organization of churches in all the vital centers of the Roman Empire. It contains the missionary efforts and thought of Paul, of whom John Lord says: "After Jesus, St. Paul is the most colossal figure of the ages." It contains the history and religious literature of the Hebrew people, out of which Christianity came. It contains the Word of God to man. It is the historical record of God's self-revelation. Thus the Bible is more than a source of good morals; it contains a total religious view about life. The Old and New Testaments together constitute the source of our religious heritage.

There can be no doubt that the Bible has been the most potent influence in the great art, literature, music, and architecture of the Western world.¹³

In order to understand clearly how revolutionary this repudiation of the Bible in education is, it is necessary to survey the history of religious education from its earliest beginnings in Judaism. Sherrill describes family religion then as follows:

¹²George E. Dawson, The Child and His Religion, pp. 53, 54.

¹³Frank Glenn Lankard, "The Use of Our Religious Heritage," Orientation in Religious Education, pp. 116, 117.

The family was the center of this education; (an effective education in which religion was intertwined with the other affairs of daily life). The first teachers of the child were his parents. The religious teaching had to do with the code of conduct, the religious rites, and the beliefs concerning God. Much of the teaching was done by means of ritual acts performed in the household, acts which provoked a child's curiosity, caused him to ask questions, and put upon parents the necessity of answering the questions thus called forth.

But in this early period there was the teaching of adults as well as children. The teachers were such persons as the priests, the prophets, the sages, the poets, and in later days, the scribes . . .¹⁴

It was the parents' responsibility to instruct their children in religion; the synagogue instructed the parents; and the teaching of the synagogue was centered in the Scriptures. The first three years of his life, the Jewish child was exempt from religious duties. From four to twelve the responsibility for his training fell upon the father, who began the formal teaching of the Torah, the Law of Moses. The child learned the shema, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, first of all.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy

¹⁴Sherrill, op. cit., p. 1.

gates.¹⁵

He attended the synagogue with his parents. At thirteen he became subject to all the commands of the Law and personally responsible for observance of the same.

During New Testament times and the period of the early Christian church, the responsibility for training the children still rested primarily with the parents. As the church spread, it was of utmost importance to teach the adult converts. Families were received as a unit into the fellowship of the church. In preparation for church membership, the family assumed the responsibility of catechizing the child over a period of years. As the centuries passed and the church grew formal and lifeless, finally entering into the dark ages, the child was more and more neglected, and apostolic Christianity disappeared.¹⁶

With the Reformation came a new interest and zeal for the Christian training of children. Of the five goals set up for early Protestantism, three pertained to the work of Christian education:

1. The translation of the Bible in the vernacular.
2. Preaching, the genius of Protestantism.
3. *Teaching Christianity in the family, especially

¹⁵Holy Bible, Authorized version, Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

¹⁶Lewis J. Sherrill, The Rise of Christian Education, p. 200.

by means of the Bible and systematic formulations of doctrine."

4. The establishment of Christian schools for all the youth of the community.
5. The recognition that "all education is, or should be, a unity."¹⁷

There is no indication at this period of history that the parents assumed responsibility for the training of their children. Nor, indeed, were they able to do so. Coming out of the dark days of the church, they had received no instruction themselves; they needed to be taught, even as their children. As time went on, the home again became the center of religious training, and continued to be such down to the colonization of America. This emphasis was maintained by conscientious Puritans to the end of the seventeenth century. Kavey says,

The forefathers in America regarded education and religion as the two cornerstones of sound preparation for living . . . For them, education and religious training were inseparable . . . Furthermore, the home . . . made the religious and spiritual life of the family the supreme considerations.¹⁸

When schools were finally established by the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1647, and by the Connecticut Colony in 1650, the primary aim was to teach the Scriptures.

¹⁷Sherrill, op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁸G. B. Kavey, Principles of Teaching for Christian Teachers, p. 36.

CHAPTER III

SOME CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING JUNIORS

The basic characteristics of juniors point to the cruciality of the junior age in the development of Christian character. According to Dora Chaplin,

the adolescent and the little child have received much more attention than the junior. There is a growing conviction that the study of this important age has been neglected, and its bearing upon future development underestimated.¹

It is of the greatest consequence that the junior child be studied with a view to leading him into a genuine Christian experience whereby he comes to know Christ as his personal Savior.

There can be no question that the rudiments of Christian teaching are to be inculcated in early childhood.

The period of childhood is one of perpetual wonder. To the child comes an ever-deepening and enriching vision of the world. Every day adds its own impressions; every hour brings its novelties and subtleties to his expanding mind . . . The child is never a sceptic or an unbeliever. He believes all that he is taught and seldom discriminates between what is affirmed and what is true.²

Since this second period of childhood, the junior age, is likewise fraught with the greatest opportunities for

¹Dora Chaplin, Children and Religion, p. 17.

²W. S. Bruce, The Psychology of Christian Life and Behavior, p. 45.

steering the child aright, some understanding of him is requisite. The junior is a very active, energetic person. He is strong physically. He has increased mental energy, can memorize easily, and likes to read. He has a keen curiosity that must be directed into right ways of living. Habit-forming is very strong now. The junior's world is getting bigger, his home not quite as significant as formerly. Outside interests increasingly attract him. The boy is likely to become a member of a gang; the girl may join a club. Ames observes that seven per cent of children's clubs are formed before ten years of age, and but one per cent at seventeen or later. Eighty-seven per cent are formed between ten and fifteen, seventy-seven per cent of these of an athletic or predatory nature.³

Hartshorne calls attention to other significant phenomena of junior life: individuality, a critical frame of mind, crystallization of ethical standards, and the emergence of leadership qualities.⁴

Children from eight to thirteen are likely to quit choosing characters in the immediate environment as their ideal. One investigation revealed that at eight years, forty-two per cent chose characters close at hand, while at

³E. S. Ames, The Psychology of Religious Experience, p. 206.

⁴H. Hartshorne, Childhood and Character, p. 97.

thirteen only fifteen per cent did so.⁵ The junior age is the time of hero-worship, surely the ideal time to present the great heroes of the Bible.

Even the casual observer cannot fail to note that juniors are beginning to be impatient with authority even though still generally amenable to parents. Rating sincerity very highly, and despising hypocrisy, pretence, and snobbishness, they demand absolute honesty and frankness in their teacher.

This pre-puberty period evidences a maturing of intelligence which is now able to comprehend more adequately the abstractions which are taught at home and in church. The child's theology gradually conforms to that of his elders. He has a strong desire to be identified with the in-group.⁶

Such ideals and habits should be developed in these junior years as will prepare the child for adolescence. It is to be remembered that the plasticity of these years gradually decreases as he enters adolescence:

By the time he is twenty-five, it practically disappears and he is held fast in the iron grip of habit. Capacities which, if they had been rightly stimulated

⁵Ames, op. cit., p. 205.

⁶Gordon W. Allport, The Individual and His Religion, p. 32.

and exercised in childhood and youth, would have attained a vigorous development, have become dwarfed and the individual has become fixed in his prejudices and modes of thought.⁷

The cruciality of the junior age level for Christian education lies in this fact of the child's continuing plasticity. As Chaplin has aptly remarked,

Later (as adolescence takes over) we must sit back and watch the child making mistakes. We had our chance during those earlier years . . . Whether they can discern the real and the false depends very largely on what has gone before.⁸

Annett writes, "The reason you lose your boy at seventeen is because you never gripped your boy at seven."⁹

The very high mortality rate of adolescents in the Sunday School should cause grave concern. Murray affirms that during this period of their lives "approximately seventy per cent of boys and girls forsake the church school. The largest percentage of those who leave never return."¹⁰ Dobbins reports, "Students of Sunday School statistics assert that 65 per cent girls and 75 per cent boys drop out of the Sunday School between thirteen and

⁷E. B. Chappell, Building the Kingdom, p. 82.

⁸Chaplin, op. cit., p. 42.

⁹E. A. Annett, Psychology for Bible Teachers, p. 193.

¹⁰Alfred Murray, Psychology for Christian Teachers, p. 83.

sixteen."¹¹

The adolescent's urge to be free from control and to fight his own battles, again draws attention to the need of laying the right foundations in the years preceding adolescence.

Feelings and emotion play an important part in child development. Edith Mumford says that "a child is capable of religious feeling long before he is capable of religious thought."¹²

Annett points out the important part feelings play. They lead the soul to action. Almost nothing can be done until the feelings have been aroused. The child is largely controlled by them. Emotion operates long before reason can grasp a situation. Love precedes understanding. The Jesuit has said, "Give me a child until he is seven years of age, and you may do what you like with him afterward." His feelings are stirred tremendously by the sensuous ceremonials of the Roman worship, and the appeal is so strong in childhood that when he becomes an adult, he is still bound, even when his intelligence rejects the Roman theories. If the junior is stirred by a vital Christian experience of his own, it is to be expected that he will become fixed in certain

¹¹G. S. Dobbins, Working with Intermediates, p. 170.

¹²Edith Mumford, The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child, p. 12.

religious convictions and an enduring faith. The ideals of the Christian way of life are born in feelings.¹³

Although feelings shape ideals, and the urge to express the ideal is potent in shaping conduct, parents and teachers cannot always measure the growth of ideals by conduct. One is not to look for a perfect, positive correlation between the child's conduct pattern and his ideals. It is because ideals are not always strong enough to control action that feelings must be stirred again and again until the ideal becomes a strong controlling force. It is the ideal that decides for the child's acceptance of Christ:

As Jesus is pictured year after year to the child and youth, with the presentation of His life developing with the developing need, He tends to fill all the canvas . . . Self interest, interest in others and the higher habit of duty are caught up, unified, glorified in the person and teaching of the Lord. Christ has already become the real dynamic, before even the lad is aware of it, and so in religious education, by deliberately, systematically building up the ideal in the heart we are preparing motives that will sooner or later function in life's greatest decision.¹⁴

When Christ is the ideal of his parents and his teachers, the junior's acceptance of Christ is greatly facilitated. A word from Squires is here in point:

The approach to character-building through faith in Jesus Christ sets before pupil and teacher at the start

¹³Annett, op. cit., p. 129 f.

¹⁴Annett, op. cit., p. 164 f.

perfect ideals as to what character ought to be . . . The allegiance of the teacher to Jesus Christ determines what character traits that teacher will seek to develop in the pupil. The allegiance of the pupil to Jesus Christ, when once established, will determine what character traits the pupil shall select and cherish. Thus not only will teacher and pupil work together in the building of a unified personality, but the unity attained will be increasingly complete because it centers in the perfect Christ.

Parents and teachers, in a great measure, select the habits children are to form. If these guardians and guides of children have responded in faith to Jesus Christ, they have touched the source of all high ideals of life and character.¹⁵

Besides the emotions, the religious educator must be aware of his responsibility in the cultivation of the child's will. Those occasions when significant moral choices are to be made must be cherished by the teacher; and the child is to be encouraged to use initiative in making wise choices. He must be taught to recognize external authority where he has not yet developed inner authority.¹⁶

In concluding this chapter, the writer gives the aims of religious education of juniors as listed by Hartshorne:

1. To train in Christian living; specific habits of conduct.
2. To acquire ideals or rules of conduct which embody Christian standards, and which imply

¹⁵Walter A. Squires, Educational Movements of Today, p. 124 f.

¹⁶Annett, op. cit., p. 163 f.

- the moral leadership of Jesus.
3. To give body and color to the Christian standard of behavior.
 4. To anticipate adolescent changes and help children prepare for that period.¹⁷

¹⁷Hartshorne, op. cit., p. 113.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONVERSION EXPERIENCE

The present-day liberal point of view in religious education is founded upon a theory that Horace Bushnell advanced in the early part of the nineteenth century. Bushnell believed that a child in the Christian tradition grows up within the Kingdom of God through participation in the organic life of the Christian family; that is, the child is to be considered a growing Christian. He need not be taught to recognize himself as a sinner. He has no need of a crisis or revival type of conversion.¹

George Albert Coe, in the early part of the twentieth century supported Bushnell's theory, confidently proclaiming the innate goodness of man. The value of the Bible was seen to be in its power to stimulate the religious quest which was to result in the creation of spiritual norms transcending those embodied in the Bible. The doctrine of human depravity was to be rejected; little children were to be taught that they possessed the "life-principle of the kingdom."²

A later religious educator, W. C. Bower, expresses the Christian task thus:

¹H. Shelton Smith, Faith and Nurture, p. 118.

²Ibid., p. 120.

Modern religious education conceives its task to be, not to teach the Bible as such, not to reproduce the religious experience of the past, but, with the use of these resources, to assist growing persons to achieve a religious adjustment to the present world of reality in which they live.³

The aim of the church's program in Christian education, it would seem, is to be akin to that of the so-called "progressives" in the secular field, an aim that is thoroughly naturalistic and anti-authoritarian.

On the other hand, the conservative religious educator believes firmly in the authority of God's Word, insists that children must be taught its doctrines and commandments. He believes that there must come a time in the life of the child when he acknowledges Christ as his personal Savior and commits his life to Him.

Among conservatives generally, there are two branches each expressing its own view regarding the salvation of the child who has reached years of moral accountability. Those of the Calvinistic tradition are not so concerned about a definite crisis experience in conversion. After a period of training, a child of twelve is expected to affirm his faith in Christ publicly. Sherrill thus describes the covenant relation of children:

In Presbyterian theology and in Presbyterian church

³James D. Murch, Christian Education and the Local Church, p. 132.

government, all children of members of the Presbyterian Church are regarded as also being members of the visible church from their birth. . . . When such a child comes to make his own profession of faith in Christ, he accepts for himself the privileges and the responsibilities of a believer and a member of the church.⁴

Dakin interprets the Calvinistic position as opposed to the idea of universal atonement. The mercy of God is not freely bestowed upon all who would come "unto Him by faith." For the Calvinist there is no witness of the Spirit that the work of grace has been completed; not definite assurance or perfect trust. The believer is never cured of his lack of trust, and his certainty is always mingled with doubt. There is no deliverance from the carnal nature; the believer must continually struggle and strive to maintain a firm grip on his faith that God sees him as a righteous soul.⁵

The Arminian-Wesleyan position, on the other hand, stands for a clear conversion experience for every individual, and a full deliverance from the carnal nature subsequent to conversion. According to Mouzon, there are four basic doctrines of Christian experience of central importance for this branch of the church. They are (1) the universality of the atonement, (2) salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, (3) the witness of the Spirit, and (4) the

⁴Lewis J. Sherrill, Lift Up Your Eyes, p. 34 f.

⁵A. Dakin, Calvinism, pp. 59, 82.

possibility of Christian perfection. The Wesleyan position is, then, that Christ died for all men. It involves assurance of sins forgiven, and adoption into the family of God, contingent on repentance and the exercise of saving faith. A crisis experience, it is sometimes spoken of as regeneration, or the new birth. Following this first work of grace, it is the believer's privilege to experience entire sanctification, when the heart is made pure from all sin, and made perfect in love.⁶ These truths, those of the Wesleyan tradition believe, must be diligently taught, and it is the emphasis of this study that they be taught to juniors.

Statistics suggest that conversion begins generally during the junior years or at sometime earlier. Talmadge lists several notable persons in history who were converted in childhood, between the ages of seven and twelve:

Robert Hall, the prince of Baptist preachers, was converted at twelve years of age; Matthew Henry, the commentator, who did more than any man of the century for increasing the interest in the study of the Scriptures, was converted at eleven years of age; Isabella Graham, immortal in the Christian church, was converted at ten years of age; Dr. Isaac Watts, whose hymns will be sung all down the ages, was converted at nine years of age; Jonathan Edwards, perhaps the mightiest intellect that the American pulpit ever produced, was converted at seven years of age; and that father and mother take an awful responsibility when they tell their child at seven years of age, 'You are too young to be a Christian,' or 'You are too young to connect yourself with

⁶Edwin D. Meuzon, Fundamentals of Methodism, p. 61.

the church.' That is a mistake as long as eternity.⁷

John Wesley believed that a genuine and deeply religious life was possible in childhood. He observed that children between eight and ten years of age were frequently stirred deeply with religious impressions and moved toward salvation. He felt that he himself had been ready to be saved at the age of ten.⁸

Gage is of the opinion that there are four peaks of religious interest in the life of a child. The first peak comes at nine or ten when a simple decision might be made. This is during the junior period. This is the decision that needs to be cultivated and nurtured in preparation for the more difficult years of adolescence. Because the child has emerged from infancy, and seems more independent, his religious life is often neglected at this time. However, the initial religious awakening must never be regarded as unimportant. At his age, the child is ready to embrace Bible truths, form right habits in Christian living, and respond to the call of God. The conversion experience that takes place at this time can be a permanent, lasting one, depending upon the training the child receives, and also upon his own natural tendency to respond to religious urges.

If the junior does not come to a definite decision,

⁷As quoted in Henry H. Sweets, Source Book on Spiritual Life and Evangelism, p. 74.

⁸John W. Prince, Wesley on Religious Education, p. 81f.

Gage suggests that the next peak of religious interest should be at twelve or thirteen years of age; the third peak at fifteen or sixteen when most conversions take place; and the fourth and usually the last, is at eighteen or nineteen.⁹ While there may be three other seasons in addition to junior age which are ripe for conversion, the conscientious parent or teacher will never depend upon a later time and neglect the present. Because of the plasticity of the junior, because of the characteristics of adolescence, and because of the high mortality rate of adolescents in the Sunday School, it is of utmost importance that the junior age be recognized as the most crucial period in life for the child's coming into a vital relationship with Christ as Savior.

The fact that most conversions occur at sixteen years of age, according to statistics, does not lessen the responsibility of the junior teacher. If the junior's religious training is neglected, the teacher may well ask himself the question, "Will this junior be available for religious instruction during adolescence? Or will he have joined those who have left the Sunday School and Church? Will he ever return to the church?" Authorities have made some observations that should cause grave concern. They agree that very few conversions occur after twenty. Starbuck says that

⁹Albert Gage, Evangelism in Youth, p. 11.

conversions decline rapidly from sixteen to twenty, gradually falling off after that, and becoming rare after thirty. "One may say that if conversion has not occurred before twenty, the chances are small it will ever be experienced."¹⁰ Thus it can be readily seen that in order to get the greatest number of persons converted, the foundations must be laid during the junior years.

Evangelism and revival has been the genius of the Methodist tradition. But with the emphasis on revivalism, the business of religious education has been neglected. It was formerly felt that since no one could be converted until the Holy Spirit wrought conviction in the heart of the individual, that since conversion was solely the work of God, religious instruction prior to that time was unimportant. And so children were not prepared for that experience.

On the other hand, Calvinists have consistently depended almost entirely upon courses of Bible study, catechisms, and literature for parents. From the day a child is born, the parents look forward to the day when he will be confirmed and publicly recognized as a Christian and a member of the church.

While the means employed to bring the child to a con-

¹⁰Edwin D. Starbuck, The Psychology of Religion, p. 34.

profession of Christ as Savior may differ between Calvinists and Arminians, there may be the same expectancy. The instruction may vary according to the doctrine, but it must never be neglected. The instruction in either case may not always result in a permanent experience of regeneration for the child, but it will undoubtedly stir the emotions to the extent that at least the ideal of a Christian life will be quite firmly established.

CHAPTER V

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HOME

Many children who attend Sunday School receive only thirty minutes of Bible and religious instruction a week. Sometimes much of that time is taken up with extra-biblical material and handwork. In a year the Protestant child who has a perfect attendance record probably gets no more than twenty-six hours of religious training. If he attends Vacation Church School in the summer for two weeks, he receives approximately twenty-five hours more of religious instruction. If he also attends released time classes, he has the advantage of thirty-six more hours. The combined probable total for the year would be eighty-seven hours. The Roman Catholic child receives three hundred hours of religious instruction a year, and the Jewish child three hundred and five hours.¹

If Protestant homes would give half an hour a day, six days a week, plus one hour each Sunday, to Bible instruction, it would all amount to two hundred and eighteen hours. To this number add the eighty-seven hours mentioned above, and the total would be three hundred and five hours. In this way the home could become the first and most impor-

¹James D. Murch, Christian Education and the Local Church, p. 265.

tant institution for the religious training of children.

In our time, children are all too frequently the victims of a thorough-going secular education practically void of religious instruction. Comic books and television shows have so invaded the domestic scene that unless the home regains strong religious conviction and re-establishes the family altar the future of our children and of our country can only be increasingly imperilled.²

Seventy years ago Lyman Abbott wrote as follows:

Parents should be as priests and ministers in their homes, keeping alive "the church that is their house", by keeping alive in their own hearts and those of their children the spirit of devotion. . . . The Home was the original Church. The patriarch was the first priest; the patriarch's altar of rough stones was the first cathedral. . . . A house without family worship has neither foundation nor covering.³

In 1918, Henry Cope wrote that the family was the most important religious institution in the life of that day; that it ranked in influence before the church. It is but natural to regard Christianity as essentially a religion of the family. It conceives of society made up of families. It makes the family the ideal social institution and religion a part of the life of the family. In fact, it makes a religious purpose the very reason for the existence of the

²George L. Murray, Our Hope of Survival, p. 37 f.

³Lyman Abbott, For Family Worship, p. v; title page.

Christian family.⁴

By 1929, however, the religious status of the family was such that Fiske wrote that religious education needed to come back home. "Religion must have a home base," insisted Fiske, "if it is to do its part in meeting the great modern challenge to spiritualize our mechanistic age, to Christianize our complex communities."⁵

In 1947, Vieth expressed the convictions among Christians generally when he said, "There is an increasing awareness that the Christian home is the most important factor in Christian education."⁶

As a result of research and study by the Committee on Religious Education of the International Council of Religious Education, the following observation was made:

Religious education in adult and family life . . . faces an open and challenging field of great promise. More and more it has come to be regarded as a strategic level at which to attack the total problem of Christian education . . .⁷

This concern of religious educators, that character must first be built in the home, continues to be voiced by men in places of responsibility in the church. A recent

⁴Henry Cope, Religious Education in the Family, pp. 37, 43.

⁵George W. Fiske, The Christian Family, pp. 15, 18.

⁶Paul H. Vieth, The Church and Christian Education, p. 47.

⁷W. C. Bower and P. R. Hayward, Protestantism Faces Its Educational Task Together, p. 146.

writer observes, "We are recognizing as never before that parents are the first teachers of religion and that the home is the most effective agency for religious education that we have."⁸

One of America's most influential religious periodicals contains this statement in a very recent issue:

All of us are well aware of the primacy of the family in Christian education. We need no prompting to recall that parents are the first teachers of religion, that the faithful Sunday School pupil spends 90 hours under the influence of his home for every hour spent in church, and that the child is available to the training of parents in those most plastic years of life when he is not in direct touch with the church at all.⁹

There have always been those who have advocated the need of worship and religious instruction in the home, but it seems that little in the way of guidance materials or even suggested Bible readings have been made available to parents. There are notable examples in history where such systematic conduct of Bible study was pursued by enlightened parents. We have the mother of Augustine, the mother of John and Charles Wesley, and the mother of the Comptons, editors of the popular Compton encyclopedia. But for the

⁸Donald K. Maynard, "The Church Helps the Family Build Faith," International Journal of Religious Education, 30:16-18, September 1953.

⁹J. C. Wynn, "Christian Family Living," The Christian Century, LXXI:267-268, March 3, 1954.

rank and file of parents, who are less resourceful or who take the religious training of their children less seriously, there has been almost no published helps for Christian education in the home.

There is another factor of family religion that must not be overlooked, and without doubt it is of prime importance in the religious training of children. This is, of course, the example of parents. All the instruction is likely to be lost if the parents are not themselves practicing what they teach. Fallaw, in suggesting how to teach children religion, makes the following significant comment:

The family must integrate parental faith and works. When adult behavior is consistent with belief, belief articulated at the level of the child's development, the teaching of the family has reached a peak in efficiency. Teaching is primarily a matter of influence. Influence exceeds imparted information in modifying the thought and conduct of the learner. If parental conduct varies from precepts, expect the child to act, and therefore to learn, according to the example of his parents rather than according to their precepts.¹⁰

Sherrill adds to this by pointing out that family relationships produce results that will persist in later life and also condition the effects of Christian training which the child may receive later either at home or at the church.¹¹

¹⁰Wesner Fallaw, "How the Family Teaches Religion," Religious Education, January-February 1948, p. 3.

¹¹Lewis J. Sherrill, Lift Up Your Eyes, p. 62.

Vera Zimmerman, in a recent periodical for parents, strengthens this point of view when she says

Fortunate is the child who is born into a home where his parents act on the basis of Christian principles in all of life's relationships. In their relationships with each other, with their children, with other adults in the home they are loving, considerate, fair, consistent in their responses. In their relationships with people outside the home, they are kind, considerate, respectful, just. In their attitudes toward God and His world they are reverent and happy. In their attitude toward the church they are aware of their own need for worship and Christian fellowship, loyal and conscious of their responsibility for carrying on the work of the church.¹²

Thus Christianity practiced in the home does something for the family. It makes family life holy, sacramental, religious in its very nature. In the words of one writer:

The Christian home is harmonious. There is a sharing of duties and of enjoyments; a unity of purpose; a joint bearing of defeats and glorying in successes. One grows evermore aware that Christ is its Guest and Host. . . . No earthly agency so genuinely represents Christ and so broadly diffuses His Spirit.¹³

Christianity can make the family a church, a branch of the Church Universal, whose intercourse is Christian communion, whose meals are sacraments, whose life is a divine service.¹⁴

¹²Vera Zimmerman, "Religion in the Home," Child Guidance in Christian Living, December 1953, p. 8.

¹³Gerrit Verkuyl, Christ in American Education, p. 144.

¹⁴Henry H. Sweets, Compiler, Source Book on Spiritual Life and Evangelism, p. 185.

CHAPTER VI

THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE HOME

With the growing awareness of the importance of the home in the religious training of children, church leaders are giving attention to parent education. From the standpoint of earlier educational theory, many religious leaders were of the opinion that a church could be built by beginning with a Sunday School for children, who would, when they were grown, constitute a church. It was also the opinion of these leaders that since adults were quite well established in their habits and in their philosophy of life, and since their learning capacities were no longer at their best, it was less profitable to work with them. The major emphasis should be placed upon instruction at the child's level.

However, in recent years the adult education movement has amply demonstrated the adult capacity for learning. It has shown, too, that adults are willing and eager learners. Church leaders, recognizing these things and knowing that churches cannot be built without adult cooperation, are giving a great deal of attention to the training of parents in preparation for the important task of training their own children.

Since the instruments of social and political power rest in the hands of adults whose decisions determine the kind of social world in which the young are reared, . . . it is impossible to educate children for the good

life without having a better society. Educational theorists and practitioners whose work had been almost exclusively with children and young people began to feel that the education of the immature had reached its practical limit until the attitude of adults who are responsible for society are changed. This dilemma led not a few educators to the conviction that the strategic point of attack upon education is at the adult level.¹

In current religious publications there is increasing emphasis being given to the matter of cooperation between the church and the home in the training of boys and girls. The editor of The Christian Advocate, in an early 1954 issue, asks the churches some pertinent questions:

How much effort do church leaders expend in encouraging family worship as over against calling people to come out to meetings? . . . How often is the family brought to church as a unit? How many deacons are introducing church families to the integrating and stabilizing power of family worship?²

Another religious journal in its editorial discusses the plan of a minister who believed that rich religious experiences should be provided right in the family circle in every home. He believed that the church's greatest service to the family consisted not in what happens in the church building but in what the church causes to happen in the home.³ The minister in question had definite convictions

¹W. C. Bower and P. R. Hayward, Editors, Protestantism Faces Its Educational Task Together, p. 133.

²Editorial, "The Family in the City Pew," The Christian Advocate, February 18, 1954, p. 16.

³Editorial, "Church Night at Home," International Journal of Religious Education, April 1943, p. 16.

regarding the role of the home in Christian education. He looked for the development of the spiritual life of the individual members of the family and of the family as a unit. He considered the family an educational unit for teaching the Christian way of life. To realize these objectives, he organized a parents' class for instruction in family worship.

Wesner Fallaw feels that the church's hesitancy in this matter of adult or parent training is now unwarranted. He insists that the preacher's skepticism concerning the interest and dependability of parents is no longer a valid excuse. Nor are we justified these days in saying that pastors and educational directors are ill-prepared to instruct parents. Rather, they are giving more attention to adult education and have, generally, acquired a better working knowledge of adult psychology.⁴ Moreover, parents are showing eagerness to learn how to manage their children. Many of them, anxious to do their task efficiently, are nevertheless puzzled as to how to go about it. They have little idea as to procedure in family worship. Because so many parents of this generation grew up in homes where family worship was unknown, they need the guidance and help of their pastor.

⁴Wesner Fallaw, "The Home and Parent Education," Orientation in Religious Education, p. 239.

In this regard, the church could render yeoman service to the home. Vieth⁵ expresses this conviction:

The new emphasis on the place of the home in Christian education raises acutely the question of the interrelation of the home and the church. . . . The two must work together. It is not a question of "either-or", but of both making a contribution. . . .

The home has virtually abdicated as a purposeful Christian teacher. The Sunday School was never intended to supercede the home as the teacher of religion. . . . But there are few educational guides for the use of families in the home--families in which the needs of children are a paramount concern. And too few pastors and denominational officers seem to have recognized that the home is potentially the major teacher of religion. . . . The national leaders of the churches need to awaken to the fact that a major responsibility is to furnish help in the development of Christian family life. . . .

This (the new family program) will mean that education for family life will assume an equal place with education for church and church school leadership, and that resources for Christian education within the family will be as much the concern of the agencies of Christian education as resources for church-centered religious education. It will mean that local churches in their planning will include the family in making provision for a total program.

Wynn suggests two ways of guiding the home in this matter of religious instruction:

1. Provide a graded curriculum that parents can teach to their children in family living, largely by informal education
2. Organize in every church stimulating classes for parents to help accomplish this job at home.⁶

⁵Vieth, op. cit., pp. 110; 171 f.; 187.

⁶Wynn, Loc. cit.

This kind of program, Wynn insists, would place squarely upon the family its God-given responsibility in Christian education.

Parent education should begin when the children are small. Parents need to remember that the unconscious impressions which reach even the infant are of very great importance in molding the child's personality. Concerning this, Dora Chaplin says,

Kneeling down each night beside a baby's bed and saying a prayer may not seem to us to have important influence upon such a tiny child, but as the months go on, this calls forth, in some mysterious way, a feeling of love and reverence in the child, long before he is able to think.⁷

Pastors should be able to point out to parents the basic needs of each period in the life of the child, and they should instruct them in ways that these needs can be met. As the child develops and becomes more and more aware of the significance of worship, by the time he is a junior he is ready for active participation. Pastors should assist parents in realizing the importance of informal discussion of religion at mealtime, more often in the evening when things are quiet. In this way the home will help the child to understand that all of life is sacramental to the child of God. It will thus teach that religion is basic to all of

⁷Dora Chaplin, Children and Religion, p. 25.

life, that all of life's experiences are to be suffused with the ideals, the motives, the meanings, and the joys of religion. The church will point out that the principles of Jesus Christ are to become the basis of behavior on the part of parents as well as children. The home is to be the place where these principles will be practiced. The growing child will be prepared for lofty living at school, at play, at work, and in all their relationships. Thus the church may challenge the parents with the sacred task of the religious training of their children, and bring to them the conviction that nothing will ever take the place of the parents' influence and comradeship in this task.¹⁰

¹⁰George W. Fiske, The Christian Family, pp. 85, 96.

CHAPTER VII

CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOLS

The American public school is a secular institution. It stands for the separation of church and state, and for religious liberty. It is open to all, requires no religious test of the teachers, does not seek to indoctrinate the youth, and makes no effort to nurture them in any religious tenets or faith.¹ Secularism, according to modern educators, is not to be considered as materialistic or godless; it is not atheistic or hostile toward religion. It is simply an omission of the teaching of particular sectarian doctrines. According to Dawson, the public school is doing that for which it was established: making intelligent, good citizens of dependable character. It professes to do this by teaching principles of honesty, loyalty, democracy, self-sacrifice, cooperation, reverence, and kindness, together with other virtues of the good life.²

Justice Frankfurter's statement following the Supreme Court decision in the *McCullum* case is significant:

The secular public school did not imply indifference to the basic role of religion in the life of the people,

¹John S. Brubacher, The Public Schools and Spiritual Values, p. 58.

²J. M. Dawson, America's Way in Church, State, and Society, p. 44.

nor rejection of religious education as a means of fostering it. The claims of religion were not minimized by refusing to make the public school agencies for their assertion. . . . Designed to serve as perhaps the most powerful agency for promoting cohesion among a heterogeneous democratic people, the public school must keep scrupulously free from entanglement in the strife of sects. . . .³

While secularism did not intend to exclude religion or destroy anyone's faith, that is what has happened, and juvenile and adult delinquency attests to the fact. Gaebelain quotes Dr. Howard Spalding in his article on "Education and the Crisis in Character," taken from School and Society:

We who teach must view these evidences of lack of character with special concern. These adults who wreck their homes, seek wealth by dishonest means, and violate all the laws of God and man are our former pupils. In part we made them what they are. We believe in the power of education, yet clearly that power has not been great enough to build a morally sound nation.⁴

Christian educators have come to regard secularism as a definite threat to democracy: to the social order, to the political system, and to the future of our national life. While democracy stands for the principles of the separation of church and state, that principle is not to be considered an absolute that obscures the moral and spiritual values of education in a democracy. The principles of democracy are Christian principles based upon Biblical standards of morals

³Ibid., p. 46.

⁴Frank E. Gaebelain, Christian Education in a Democracy, p. 5.

and ethics. The training of children in a democracy must be based upon the same principles, or society will lower its moral and ethical standards. Hay quotes H. G. Wells as saying, "Education is the preparation of the individual for society; and his religious training is the core of that preparation."⁵ Those of us who believe this statement to be true, do not question the fact that present-day secularism is a threat to the social order.

Regarding the relation of secularism to the political system, Hay quotes J. Wesley Bratton:

Democracy and Christianity are so closely bound together that democracy has been called the political expression of Christianity on earth. It follows that the inclusion of Christian concepts in the school curriculum is the responsibility of education if democracy is to survive.⁶

True democracy implies spiritual ideals and spiritual strength. Democracy with its respect for the individual must also maintain a faith in the Creator of the individual. Democracy is the setting for Christian education. When Christianity ceases to be the guiding principle of the national government, democracy is in danger of disintegrating and disappearing.

⁵Clyde L. Hay, The Blind Spot in American Public Education, p. 65.

⁶Ibid., p. 67.

Secularism threatens the future of America because it has substituted evolutionary teaching in many of the public schools for basic Christian training, which, in turn, has led to the serious problem of delinquency among the youth of the nation. Those who will be the future citizens and voters in the nation will be neither Christian nor democratic in their way of life.⁷ The modern home, largely the product of this secularism, cannot cope with the problem of religious instruction. The church, weakened by secularistic trends in its educational program, has lost much of its influence on the home. When children must grow up in a society that has considered religion irrelevant to life, and has substituted naturalism for Christianity, future society cannot be stronger or superior in its moral and spiritual quality.

Secularism in the public school is characterized by a progressive education that is decidedly anti-authoritarian. Dr. John Dewey is the author and apostle of progressive education. His philosophy, which is a combination of naturalism, evolution, and pragmatism, is diametrically opposed to the Christian religion and the Christian philosophy of life. It rejects the Bible and Christianity on the basis that it is authoritarian; it frowns upon disciplinary restraints, asserting that a child will naturally follow the

⁷Mark Fakkema, Christian Schools, the Nation's Foremost Need, p. 8.

more ennobling urges as he develops. Clark points out that Dewey's teaching is that parental or adult discipline is a distrust of the child's intelligence and that by discipline the "delightful originality of the child is tamed."⁸ This is to deny that the child has an evil nature that needs to be transformed by the power of God. To fail to recognize that truth is to prepare the child for atheism and despair. Atheism is the preparation for communism, not democracy.

And so, there is a conflict today within the public school system. There are those who are putting forth some effort to find a common basis of religious instruction in a democracy. On the other hand there are those who say that religious instruction in the public schools would simply mean a sectarian controversy, that because of the variety of sects in America it is impossible to find a common core of Bible teachings, and that it would be undemocratic to teach anyone something he did not believe.

The American Council on Education has been working for the last decade on this problem. In 1947 they discovered that there was a growing interest in religion. They found a religious seriousness on college campuses, and considerable discussion going on in educational circles concerning the religious responsibility of schools and colleges.

⁸G. H. Clark, A Christian Philosophy of Education, p. 144.

With this awakened religious interest, educators realized that they must set about to find an answer. With no program of religious instruction for youth in the schools and colleges, authorities were faced with the necessity of trying to meet the need of these youth who were demanding an answer to their religious needs. The council declared that to exclude religion is inconsistent with our American culture; that to negate religion is just as contrary to American freedom of religion as is the teaching of religious dogma. It concluded its report with the following statement:

The exclusion of religion from the public schools . . . results in its relegation in the minds of youth to a position of relative unimportance. . . . We are unable to believe that a school which accepts responsibility for bringing its students into full possession of their cultural heritage can be considered to have performed its task if it leaves them without a knowledge of the role of religion in our history, its relation to other phases of the culture, and the ways in which the religious life of the American community is expressed. An educated person cannot be religiously illiterate.⁹

In 1953 the American Council, still pursuing its problem, sent out over one thousand questionnaires to school officers at all grade levels, and to state officers as well. They discovered from the five hundred and fifty-six replies that there were three patterns with reference to religious

⁹American Council on Education, The Relation of Religion to Public Education, No. 26, April 1947, p. 52.

instruction in the public schools. One pattern was the avoidance of religion, with only general references accidentally or incidentally discussed. Spokesmen here considered religion irrelevant, inconsequential, and even detrimental. The second pattern called for planned religious activities, such as Bible reading, prayers, religious songs, talks, programs at Christmas, grace before meals, sponsorship of religious clubs meeting in school buildings, and elective courses in Bible. The third pattern embraced the factual study of religion; it is characterized by deliberate aim and definite plan to deal directly and factually with religion wherever and whenever it is intrinsic to learning experiences in social studies, literature, art, music, and other fields.¹⁰

Over against the efforts and decisions of the American Council are those who say it is unconstitutional and undemocratic to teach religion in the public schools. Dr. Ernest Chave may be regarded as spokesman for this atheistic approach to religious instruction. Gaebelin quotes him as saying in Religious Education (July-August, 1948):

How can we formulate a common faith that will include atheism? . . . Are we not inconsistent in teaching religious traditions on the one hand and the scientific

¹⁰American Council on Education, The Function of the Public Schools in Dealing with Religion, 1953, p. 12.

approach on the other? Is not naturalism closer to reality? Can we make any real distinction between the religious and the spiritual?¹¹

Elsewhere Chave writes:

Likewise to say prayers of thanksgiving to God for daily food, or other blessings, may be to ignore the many people and agencies who have contributed to our needs. It is not religious to exalt a vague deity and to discount real people and definite processes.¹²

Brubacher, another proponent of secularism, points out that the roots of the secularist movement lie in scientific, political, moral, and religious developments in process for centuries, and which are now a part of our democratic and scientific culture. He argues as follows:

It was because this secularist attitude and emphasis were becoming dominant in our society that it eventually gained ascendancy in the public school. On the whole I believe these so-called "secular" developments are deeply spiritual in character. Taken together these changes have resulted in a movement more in harmony with the moral and spiritual interests of democracy than are the traditional outlooks and the political, social, and educational arrangements which they supplanted. In the writer's opinion, to return to the former would be to lower, not raise the spiritual quality of American life and education.¹³

Brubacher asserts that secularism is itself a religion, a way of life, and the basis of American education.

¹¹Gaebelein, op. cit., p. 87.

¹²Ernest Chave, A Functional Approach to Religious Education, p. 63.

¹³Brubacher, op. cit., p. 64.

Thus the controversy continues.

In the meantime efforts to furnish Christian instruction for children of public school age have not been lacking. One program that is succeeding in some communities is the released-time program. This plan permits children to go to their churches for an hour of instruction with religious instructors or pastors. In the famous McCollum case in Champaign, Illinois, in 1943, it was decided by the Supreme Court of the United States that it was unconstitutional for the school building to be used for any kind of religious instruction. Many classes, therefore, have been moved from the schools.

In many cities today there has come into existence, as a protest against the atheistic bias of the public schools, the Christian day school. Schools of this type are to be distinguished from the parochial and private schools controlled and supported by churches or by a few individuals. Christian day schools are established by a group of parents who want to see to it that their children's education is fundamentally Christian. Parental privilege in establishing schools of this kind is a constitutional one. The Supreme Court of the United States in the Oregon case of 1924 upheld the "liberty of parents and guardians to direct the upbringing and education of children under their control." The Court declared:

The fundamental theory of liberty upon which all governments of the Union repose excludes any general power of the state to standardize its children by forcing them to accept instruction from public teachers only.¹⁴

This court action not only clarifies the status of parents in relation to the education of their child, but also puts grave responsibility upon the home. The child is not a ward of the state. Its parents have the right to train him in whatever religious faith they desire. Therefore, when parents feel that the public schools are atheistically inclined, they have a legal right to establish a school that will conform to the parental moral and religious standards.

In public schools that oppose so vigorously all religious teaching in the name of religious freedom and democracy, there is often a deliberate effort made to coerce the child to take part in certain activities regarded as unchristian by the parents, dancing for instance. Christian parents have felt that their children have at times been unduly embarrassed when certain evolutionary teachings were taught in the schoolroom. If, as some insist, democracy implies the exclusion of religious tenets in the name of religious liberty, then surely it also implies the right of everyone to hold to his own understanding of matters invol-

¹⁴Gaebalein, op. cit., p. 107.

ving religion, and to do so without being made a laughing-stock before the rest.

Where public schools fail to hold to the inalienable right of the individual in these matters, it then becomes the parents' right to establish schools in which their children shall be taught in harmony with the parental concepts of the right way.

These Christian day schools, evangelical in belief, are both interdenominational and nondenominational. They have a God-centered and Christ-honoring educational program. They employ consecrated Christian teachers. Parents pay a tuition of approximately one hundred dollars a year. Efforts are usually in the direction of the erection of modern buildings with modern equipment. The schools seek to maintain not only high moral standards, but also high scholastic standards as well. There is usually a half hour devotional period each morning, and a Bible study class then or later in the day. Verses and portions of Scripture are memorized. Hymns have an important place in the music program. Instruction in art and English is based, in part, on the church year. In general, all subjects are taught against the Christian background. The underlying philosophy of such schools is consistent with the teachings of evangelical Christianity.

CHAPTER VIII

A BIBLICAL COURSE OF STUDY

A course of study for juniors of the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition will be based upon the Bible, with the needs of the children in mind. The modern approach tends to build school curricula around the problems that arise in the lives of children: a curriculum must help the children solve their problems. On the other hand, the point of view of the conservative Christian educator is to present basic truths and fundamental principles that will equip the child to meet problems as they arise. He accepts the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, containing the truths and principles necessary to guide man in the solving of every problem that faces him.

The modern "progressive" approach is likely to place too much responsibility on the child in the matter of finding the best solution to his problem. Surely it is not any more frustrating to a child to receive instruction for doing things in a certain way any more than it is frustrating to a new factory worker to be told how to operate the machinery. The child who is to learn, like the factory worker, needs that sense of security that comes from expert guidance. Being properly instructed by the adult, he is more likely to solve his problems with a minimum of frustration. Thus he will become the master of his problem rather than its victim.

In this way, too, he is learning that power for mastery is to be found not in himself alone, but only as he looks to the Great Teacher. While it is important that he develop initiative and a measure of independence, it is just as important that he learn very early that to find many of the answers to life's problems, he must often look outside himself. Juniors who are beginning to express more independence than they have previously, need to know the true source of wisdom and strength. When a problem threatens to overpower the child, the parents, through the Word, point to Him who can take away sin, and who can impart the strength to live right before God and before his parents. Parents will discover, too, a sense of security and strength as they themselves test the validity of every promise God has made, and as they become increasingly aware of the fact that final authority rests with God.

To the writer then it would seem that a proper curriculum for the religious training of children should have a bi-polar center, the Bible and the child. The Bible will be presented to him as the authoritative Word of God; he can depend upon its promises only as he abides by its precepts. At the same time, Bible lessons will be arranged only with keen awareness of the needs and interests of the child. The educational leaders of the church should see to it that the Book of Books comes alive first for the parents and then for

the children. The Authorized Version, with its superb English, should become familiar to the child. The stories of the Bible are the best instruments for religious training. Indeed, the story method is the best method for family worship because it is a method of Bible study that children and adults may share together. "It is good teaching technique to pass on to the next generation the stories we have loved and continue to love; for in them, in a most effective way, we set forth the virtues and ideals we prize and the practical lessons by which we would guide those for whom we have concern."¹

Juniors are captivated by stories that exhibit heroism and courage. They need also to read those tales that will challenge them to be truthful, dependable, helpful, and appreciative. Lankard gives a few illustrations of Bible stories that might well serve these ends:²

Truthfulness	Micah, II Chronicles 18
Courage and Faith	Gideon, Judges 6, 7, 8
Courage	Caleb and Joshua, Numbers 12:17-14:10
Appreciation	David, II Samuel 23:13-17
Dependability	Joseph, Genesis 27:12-17

The aim of all Bible study is to lead the child into

¹James T. Carlyen, "The Bible as a Storybook," Child Guidance in Christian Living, July 1980, p. 1.

²Frank G. Lankard, "The Use of Our Religious Heritage," Orientation in Religious Education, p. 118.

a personal experience of salvation from all sin. There can be no man-made way of bringing this about. It is the work of God, through the ministrations of the Holy Spirit. Parents and teachers and others are, however, the channels of the Spirit's operation. The Spirit is successful only as these contribute their best to the child in teaching him the way to God. Their lives must speak loudly the lessons they teach. They must pray earnestly and fervently that the Holy Spirit may deal with the hearts of the children. Then they must be alert to every sign that the child is becoming aware of the voice of God. When children reach the age of accountability, usually the junior age, they will be more conscious of right and wrong, and with a quickened conscience, will be ready to recognize sin in their lives. This is the time to point them to Christ who can take away all sin, and who can give them peace within and strength to be good.

Following whatever may be in the nature of a crisis experience in the child's life, parents and teachers must realize that their task has only begun. For the Christian there is no time in life when Christian discipline of one kind or another is not necessary. Since a saved child is by no means a mature saint, parental disciplining may be necessary from time to time. Whatever means of correction are employed, the end must always be to encourage the child in the Christian way and to teach him to grow strong in the face

of temptation. If this is done, self-discipline will gradually take the place of parental discipline, and strong Christian character will be the result.

One part of the biblical course of study for juniors would consist of memory verses, learned accurately and with the exact reference. If the parents have begun to make a habit of learning a verse a week, the juniors will catch their enthusiasm and even earlier will enjoy the memory course. However, if parents do not engage in the same activity, and simply make it a requirement for the juniors, there will be no eager participation by the children. It must be a family enterprise if it is to succeed.

With a view to storing the child's memory with Bible treasures the following verses have been chosen from the Authorized Version. They include material on who God is and what He requires, His promises, the call to salvation, exhortation to a godly life, testimony and statement of purpose of certain Old Testament characters, and prayer. These topics have been chosen with the needs and interests of juniors in mind.

1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Gen. 1:1.

2. And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. Gen. 1:31a.

3. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Gen. 3:15.

4. I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. Gen. 17:1b.

5. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation; Ex. 15:2a.

6. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. Ex. 33:14.

7. Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy. Lev. 19:2b.

8. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, . . . Deut. 5:33a.

9. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Deut. 6:5.

10. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: . . . Deut. 33:27.

11. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. Joshua 1:9.

12. . . . as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15c.

13. Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. I Samuel 3:9b.

14. Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Psalm 16:11.

15. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. Psalm 19:14.

16. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye. Psalm 32:8.

17. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1.

18. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10.

19. For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Psalm 94:11.

20. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Psalm 119:11.

21. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Psalm 119:105.

22. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. Proverbs 9:10.

23. He that trusteth in his riches shall fall; but the righteous shall flourish as a branch. Proverbs 11:28.

24. whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; Ecclesiastes 9:10a.

25. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; Ecclesiastes 12:1.

26. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Isaiah 1:16.

27. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6.

28. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Isaiah 26:3.

29. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. Isaiah 40:31.

30. Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Isaiah 41:10.

31. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Isaiah 55:6.

32. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: Daniel 5:6.

33. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6:6.

34. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. Zephaniah 3:17.

35. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21.

36. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Matthew 5:48.

37. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Matthew 6:33.

38. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28.

39. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. Luke 6:31.

40. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Luke 11:9.

41. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John 1:29.

42. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. John 15:7.

43. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16:31.

44. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23.

45. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: Romans 8:16.

Honor thy father and thy mother.
 Thou shalt not kill.
 Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 Thou shalt not steal.
 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
 Thou shalt not covet.

--Exodus 20:1-17.

2. The Righteous Man, Psalm 1.
3. The Shepherd's Song, Psalm 23.
4. Song of Praise, Psalm 100.
5. The Beatitudes, Matthew 5:3-8.
6. The Two Builders, Matthew 7:24-27.
7. The Christmas Story, Luke 2:8-20.
8. The Greatest Gift, I Corinthians 13:1-6a.
9. The Fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-25.
10. The Christian Soldier, Ephesians 6:13-17.

A third part of the course of study is a compilation of selected portions to be read during the family worship and Bible study period. They include the stories that interest juniors. The following list is planned for a year, one for each week. The readings are arranged chronologically.

- First week Creation and Flood
 Genesis 1-4:16; 6-9:17, 28, 29.
- Second week Abraham
 Genesis 11:1-9, 31-13:33.
- Third week Abraham
 Genesis 19:1-29; 21-25:11.

- Fourth week Isaac and Jacob
Genesis 25-29:30; 30:25-36; 31:1-7, 14-24.
- Fifth week Jacob and Joseph
Genesis 31:25-55; 32, 33, 35:1-20; 35:27-29;
37, 39, 40.
- Sixth week Joseph in Egypt
Genesis 41:1- 46:1-7, 26-34.
- Seventh week Joseph, Ruler
Genesis 47, 48, 49:1-2, 8-12, 22, 28-33;
50.
- Eighth week Life of Christ
Mark 1-8.
- Ninth week Life of Christ
Mark 9-16.
- Tenth week Moses
Exodus 1 - 6:13, 28 - 30, 7.
- Eleventh week Deliverance
Exodus 8 - 14.
- Twelfth week The Law
Exodus 15 - 21.
- Thirteenth week Rules
Exodus 22 - 25:9; 31-34.
- Fourteenth week Tabernacle
Exodus 35:1-5, 20-35; 36:1-7; 39:42 - 40:38.
Leviticus 26.
- Fifteenth week Pentecost
Acts 1 - 7.
- Sixteenth week Paul
Acts 8 - 14.
- Seventeenth week Missionary
Acts 15 - 21.
- Eighteenth week Trial
Acts 22 - 26.
- Nineteenth week In the Wilderness
Numbers 11 - 14; 15:32-36; 16, 17.

- Twentieth week In the Wilderness
 Numbers 20, 22 - 24.
 Deuteronomy 1, 28:1-12; 31, 34.
- Twenty-first week Life of Christ
 John 1 - 7.
- Twenty-second week Life of Christ
 John 8 - 14.
- Twenty-third week Life of Christ
 John 15 - 21.
- Twenty-fourth week A New Leader
 Joshua 1 - 7.
- Twenty-fifth week A New Country
 Joshua 8 - 10:27, 23, 24.
 Judges 6, 7 Gideon
- Twenty-sixth week Samson
 Judges 13 - 16; Ruth 1-4.
- Twenty-seventh week A Good Letter
 I & II Timothy
- Twenty-eighth week The Last Judge
 I Samuel 1, 3, 4:1-10; 5 - 8.
- Twenty-ninth week The First King
 I Samuel 9 - 12; 15, 16, Psalms 19, 23.
- Thirtieth week The King Sins
 I Samuel 17, Psalm 46
 I Samuel 18, Psalm 3
 I Samuel 19, Psalm 9
 I Samuel 20, Psalms 27, 28
 I Samuel 24.
- Thirty-first week The King Dies
 Psalm 51, I Samuel 25:1; 28, 31, Psalms 1,
 24, 32; II Samuel 1, 5:1-5; 6:1-19, Psalm
 26.
- Thirty-second week The New King
 II Samuel 9, 11, 12:1-13, Psalm 51; II Sam-
 uel 12:14-25, Psalm 40. I Chronicles
 23:1-2, 28:1-18, Psalm 91; I Chronicles
 29, I Kings 3, 5, 6:1-14, 37-38.

- Thirty-third week The Wise King**
 I Kings 8, 9:1-9; II Chronicles 6, 7; 9:30-31. Proverbs 1 - 4.
- Thirty-fourth week The Unwise Kings**
 Ecclesiastes 11, 12.
 I Kings 11 - 14.
 II Chronicles 14 - 16.
- Thirty-fifth week A Famous Prophet**
 I Kings 16 - 22:40.
- Thirty-sixth week Quarreling Kings**
 I Kings 22:41-50
 II Chronicles 17-23.
- Thirty-seventh week Another Famous Prophet**
 II Kings 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.
- Thirty-eighth week Later Kings**
 II Chronicles 24, 25:1-2, 14-16, 26-28; 28;
 Isaiah 6; II Chronicles 27:1-8; 28:1, 2, 27;
 29-32.
- Thirty-ninth week A Great Prophet**
 Isaiah 1; 5:1-7; 9, 12, 25, 26, 35, 40, 41,
 53, 55.
- Fortieth week Prophet's Message**
 Isaiah 58 - 66.
- Forty-first week The Last Kings**
 II Chronicles 33, 34, 35, 36;
 Jeremiah 1, 27, 28.
- Forty-second week A Sad Prophet**
 Jeremiah 29, 32, 33, 38-39, 52.
- Forty-third week A Prophet in Exile**
 Ezekiel 1:1-3; 36; 37:1-14; 47:1-12.
 Daniel 1 - 4.
- Forty-fourth week A Prince and a Queen**
 Daniel 5, 6. In a Strange Land
 Esther 1 - 5.
- Forty-fifth week A Brave Queen**
 Esther 6 - 10;
 Ezra 1, 3, 4.

- Forty-sixth week Going Home
 Ezra 5 - 7; Nehemiah 1, 2, 4, 6, 8.
- Forty-seventh week Famous Letters
 Romans 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13.
- Forty-eighth week Famous Letters
 I Corinthians 12, 13, 15.
 II Corinthians 4, 6, 9, 11:23-30; 12:7-10.
- Forty-ninth week Famous Letters
 Galatians 5, 6; Ephesians 1 - 6.
- Fiftieth week Famous Letters
 Philippians and Colossians
- Fifty-first week Famous Letters
 Hebrews 4, 6, 9, 10, 13.
- Fifty-second week Famous Letters
 I John, Revelation 7, 21, 22.

Any course of study or outline of lessons must be adapted to the ones using it. Thus it is with these Bible readings. Whenever it is more satisfactory to continue with the Old Testament sequence, and later follow the New Testament in its entirety, it should be done. If parents or teachers prefer to include some portions that have been omitted, they are at liberty to do so. If more should be included in the Old Testament particularly, and the course extended over a period of two years, that can be done. In that case Matthew and Luke could be the two Gospels included for the second year. At Christmas time, it would be desirable to select the accounts of the birth of Christ, and perhaps some prophecy concerning it. This outline is just one

of many possibilities for arranging an interesting sequence of Bible readings for juniors.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It has been suggested that the religious instruction of juniors is of very great importance. The junior is still immature, and therefore needs wise counseling and guidance. Religious teaching is particularly needful at this age because of the critical years of adolescence that lie immediately ahead. His religious training must be carefully continued during these years to prepare him for adolescent development. While his religious response may not be much in evidence during the junior years, there will be a response either toward religion or away from it, depending upon the training he has received. At any rate, there should always be on the part of adults, an expectancy of religious conversion during the junior years. Parents and teachers need to be alert and earnest in their presentation of the claims of Christ to juniors.

It has been pointed out that the home is the first and most important institution for religious instruction, and for the practice of the principles of Christian living; and that the home needs the support and instruction that the church can give to prepare it for this task. In this connection, it has been asserted that the church has a responsibility in the daily education of the child. It should lend its influence to setting up Christian principles

and establishing courses of basic Bible instruction in conjunction with the public schools, where that is possible.

The writer has throughout this thesis maintained that the Bible is basic in the instruction of juniors. Bible stories of heroism and courage will challenge any junior, and should have real meaning for him in his personal problems, especially those calling for moral courage. A series of memory selections, and Bible stories has been presented that will cover the Bible in a year. This schedule can be followed in the home, or in a Christian day school.

While it is impossible to assert that with the proper religious instruction a junior will always come to a true conversion experience, (because conversion is the result of the impact of the Holy Spirit upon the heart and life of the child), such a conversion should be expected, nevertheless, and everything possible done to prepare for it. There may be difficulties later on, but a clear conversion early in life will set a standard and give direction in youth.

A similar study might be made of the primary-age group, and also the intermediates. The Bible should be basic for each age, but different portions will be presented from a different point of view. With the growing interest of church leaders in religious training in the home, and more attention given to the training of parents by the

church, statistics of juvenile delinquency and church attendance by youth should change within the next generation.

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