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CHILD EVANGELISM AMONG JUNIORS IN BRAZIL

A Thesis
Presented to
the Department of Christian Education
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Religious Education

by
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CHAPTER I

DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

Pagan lands cry out for a religion that will satisfy. There is a justifiable desire in the heart of anyone interested in the work of worldwide evangelism, to know its limits and barriers, and to evaluate all its possibilities.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. This study was an effort to discern: (1) the problems to be encountered in Child Evangelism among children of Junior age in Brazil, (2) the work that has been done there, and (3) the possibilities of child evangelism in Brazil in future years.

What others have written on this subject. It appears that writings on this subject have been limited. Almost every work on Brazil, including those primarily of cultural or political interest was found to contain valuable references to religious, moral, or social conditions which served as partial fragments for study.

II. EXPLANATORY DEFINITION OF CHILD EVANGELISM

Child evangelism. There exists a doctrinal conflict concerning the definition of child evangelism. Evangelism

and education should be united in aim. There is no Greek equivalent of the word "evangelism" in the New Testament. Three kindred words are found which may prove of worth. These are:

1. The noun evangelion. The Old Testament Hebrew meaning of this term was a reward for the good news or the good tidings of the kingdom of God soon to be set up. It referred to Jesus the Messiah, who was to be the founder of this kingdom. Later it came to comprehend all that the Christ meant for the world and the individual. When translated into the English King James version the word becomes "Gospel, derived from two Anglo-Saxon words, one meaning 'good' and the other 'a story'".¹ Briefly defined it is "the glad tidings of salvation through Christ; the proclamation of the grace of God manifested and pledged in Christ; the Gospel."² After all the things that Jesus had said were proven, the narrative came to be called evangelion; thus we have the titles of the Gospels. The word evangelion is mentioned seventy-four times in the New Testament. Evangelism therefore means preaching the gospel and calling the

¹ E. B. Chappell, Evangelism in the Sunday School, (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1925), p. 10.

² Joseph H. Thayer, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament, Corrected Edition, (New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 257.

attention of the unconverted to the "good news" it contains.³

2. The verb evangelidzo, which means to spread the glad tidings, is used fifty-two times in the New Testament. The verb evangelizein is generally used as a deponent middle in Greek, either with or without an object; it refers to proclaiming something as good news. For example, I must preach the good news of the Kingdom of God to the other cities also,⁴ or when spoken of Paul the missionary in Lyconia, "and there they preached the gospel."⁵ Without an object it simply means to proclaim the good news. "The disciples went throughout the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere."⁶ Paul says, "Thus making it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named."⁷ It can also mean to bring to one the good tidings concerning Jesus as the Messiah: "But even if we or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accused."⁸ One always announces the Gospel as authority, something

³ Chappell, op. cit., p. 11.

⁴ The New Testament, Revised Standard Version, (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, A.D. 1946), Luke 4:43.

⁵ Ibid., Acts. 14:7.

⁶ Ibid., Luke 9:6.

⁷ Ibid., Romans 15:20.

⁸ Ibid., Galatians 1:8.

known, something proclaimed because it is known.

3. The Greek noun evangelistes, meaning "a bringer of good tidings", is mentioned only three times in the New Testament. The original meaning was angellos a messenger or envoy, one who was sent.⁹ In the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, it means one of that host of heavenly spirits that according to Jewish and Christian opinion alike, wait upon the monarch of the universe, and are sent by him to earth to execute his purposes and to make them known to men. From this is derived the expression angel. They are the messengers of God. The term was applied to prophets and pastor-teachers other than the apostles in the Apostolic Church.

In the New Testament Philip was spoken of as an evangelist.¹¹ In the reference to Philip and Timothy recorded in Acts 8:5-40, is found a striking similarity between their work and that of a modern evangelist. They had no fixed field of labor but preached to unbelievers in a series of religious services.

Evangel means "good tidings"; Gospel means "God-story". Therefore evangel and Gospel are in reality the

⁹ Thayer, op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁰ The New Testament, Revised Standard Version, op. cit., Acts 21:8.

¹¹ Ibid., II Timothy 4:5.

same thing. "Ism" means doctrine, therefore "evangelism" means the doctrine of the Gospel.¹² "The evangel is not denunciatory of sin, neither pronounciatory of punishment, but annunciatory of salvation."¹³ The Christian evangel as revealed in the New Testament has four essential notes. The evangel proclaims the Lordship of Jesus, his Cross, and its meaning, His resurrection, insuring eternal life, and finally an indwelling Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit. Evangelism apart from Christ is not evangelism. Anything calling itself evangelism which is not the outcome of that new life in Christ, realized in the souls of men, and spoken through men by the Holy Spirit fails to realize the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come".

What it means in America. "In one sense of the word, evangelism is the process of making Christians."¹⁴ Men are enabled to live as Sons of God, and citizens of His Kingdom only through union with Christ. Should not the fundamental aim of all evangelistic efforts be to bring people of all ages, classes and conditions into a vital personal relation-

¹² William E. Biederwolf, Evangelism: Its Justification, Its Operation and Its Value, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company), p. 11

¹³ G. Campbell Morgan, Evangelism (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1904), p. 13.

¹⁴ Chappell, op. cit., p. 30.

ship with Christ? This conclusion is in complete accord with the Great Commission. Making disciples of all men literally means making "learners" or followers. The child evangelist is one who is sent by God to tell the glad tidings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He should have as his chief concern not only the making of "learners" of the children to whom he is sent, but bringing them into a personal "born again" experience. Child evangelism then is the good news of Jesus, his Lordship, his cross and its meaning, his resurrection and indwelling Spirit for every child.

Foreign missionaries confess their feeling of utter lack of hope of ever converting the world through their own efforts. This can only be accomplished through a vast multitude of lay workers in house to house personal evangelism, the winning of others for Christ by personal appeal. Jesus taught that personal evangelism is "a process of leavening."¹⁵ Therefore the urge of every Christian, ordained or unordained, trained or untrained, must be to win others; it is imperative. Foreign missionaries are training Bible women, lay teachers and all converted Christians on the field for this effort, for they alone can leaven the huge masses of yet untouched souls in these lands around the world.

¹⁵ John F. Cowan, New Youth Evangelism for Workers Among Young People of Today, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1928), p. 13.

It is only through a personal faith, trust, and love in and for the person of Jesus Christ, and not mere intellectual acceptance of a creed, that God is enabled to impart His life to us. If this is necessary, what is the spiritual nature of man, and consequently, what is the spiritual nature of the child?

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."¹⁶ Is every child enabled to grow in favor with God as did Christ, or has sin in the life of the race made its restriction upon every child born into it? Among those who accept the Scriptures as authoritative there is agreement that sin does affect every person in the human race and that ultimately this sin must find its cure in the saving work of Jesus Christ. Sinners are judged according to the deeds done in the body. An infant does not have moral sense sufficient to make him accountable before the law of God or man. Some have said that the work of Christ cancels all guilt of sin in the infant and child until the child knows the difference between right and wrong and is able to choose for himself. Others teach that baptism spans the tide of infancy and introduces the child to the sphere of grace until a conscious acceptance of Christ is made. Still

¹⁶ The New Testament, Revised Standard Version, op. cit., Luke 2:52.

others believe that the covenant arrangement in the Old Testament still carries over in the New Testament. All believers in total depravity teach that children are members of a lost race incapable of doing anything acceptable for salvation in God's sight.¹⁷ All who teach regeneration agree that someday, somehow, children are subject to Christ's regenerating work in their hearts. All believe that the infant who dies before the age of accountability receives the grace of God through the finished work of Christ on Calvary. Christ taught, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."¹⁸ Let the children come; heaven is composed of those with childlike faith. The next verse states that the kingdom of God is composed only of those who come to Christ while they are children, or after they have become as children in attitude and faith. Definite opportunity should be given to every child to know and receive Christ, for children are not saved because they are children but because God's grace is afforded to them also.

The child comes into the world so constituted that he can live his life entirely apart from God. He may have

¹⁷ Alan H. Hamilton, "Understanding Boys and Girls", Child Evangelism, Chapter II, (June 1946), p. 18.

¹⁸ The Holy Bible, Authorized King James Version, Mark 10:14.

all the opportunities and influences that help him to become a moral citizen, but his life is still characterized by independence of God's will. Even though sin may manifest itself infrequently, this relative infrequency does not remove the need for saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Does every child have the same opportunity to grow in favor with God as Christ had? Romans 3:23 states that the sin factor is active in the life of every unconverted soul inasmuch as "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."¹⁹ This sin factor alters the situation of all children of the race. There must be a genesis, a beginning of spiritual life for everyone. Without the child's conscious acceptance of Christ there can be no foundation for the superstructure of Christian character. What then is the right time in childhood for the acceptance of Christ? The Bible does not specify a definite time of childhood, or age of accountability but the genetic term used in Mark 10:14 suggests that the child of any age should be allowed to come to Jesus. It implies that this coming should be as soon as possible.²⁰ The secret of all spiritual attainment is the cleansing of the soul and the quickening power given by the spiritual birth from above, by which a person comes into

¹⁹ Ibid., Romans 3:23.

²⁰ Hamilton, op. cit., p. 26.

possession of God's gift.

What some authorities mean by the term. There is another school of thought concerning the spiritual status of the child, which, however, does not consider the Word of God the basis of its philosophy. It should be considered, for it suggests that some have been laboring under a theological burden concerning the status of the child which has made the work of child evangelism much more complicated. It stands opposed to the Biblical teaching that all children come into the world under the curse of inherited sin, and hence are unable to meet the demands of the moral law, and must continue in sin until relieved from the curse by a special act of God in conversion.

This new philosophy considers itself to be much more wholesome in its attitude toward childhood and youth. Its exponents have turned to humanitarianism and modern psychology for their belief in the innocence of childhood, and have used this underlying assumption as the basis of several present day series of graded lessons.²¹ This philosophy had its beginning with such men as Horace Bushnell who wrote that "the child is to grow up a Christian and never know himself as being otherwise."²² It was fostered by George

²¹ Lin. D. Cartwright, Evangelism for Today, (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1934), p. 62.

²² Horace Bushnell, Christian Nurture, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895, p. 10.

Albert Coe, who states that "normal child development, takes place entirely within the kingdom of grace."²³ It consists of apprehending the principles of the kingdom and then increasing one's responsibilities and activities therein. Others have suggested that "a rich vital religious consciousness can be developed by a process of normal growth without the necessity of conversion or any emotional upheaval."²⁴ One author suggests that it is not only possible but entirely natural for a child to grow gradually into a religious experience. The aim of Christian education, therefore, according to Dr. Coe, is "growth of the young toward and into a mature and efficient devotion to the democracy of God, and happy self-realization therein"²⁵ for "children are to grow up in Christ."²⁶ The child should learn that life is not dark and depressed with a sense of evil or danger, but lifted up with a feeling of the nearness of divine things.²⁷ The

²³ George Albert Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1904), p. 47.

²⁴ George Herbert Betts, The New Program of Religious Education, (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1921), p. 45.

²⁵ George Albert Coe, A Social Theory of Religious Education, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 55.

²⁶ Bushnell, op. cit., p. 15.

²⁷ Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, op. cit., p. 45.

contemporary view of the child's heritage, or as the psychologists would call it, original nature, affords the child limited capacities both for good and evil. The child comes into the world with a morally clean record, for he has committed no wrong, therefore, he is a child of God. If his evil propensities be allowed to grow, they will bear a harvest of sin and evil. In that case the child will need conversion. On the other hand the seeds of goodness when properly cultivated will crowd out the sinful sprouts, and if carefully nurtured from the first will bring forth a harvest of spiritual good-will. If this be the case, no conversion will be necessary, for there will be no spiritual death from which to be resurrected.²⁸ Along with such a philosophy is also taught the theory that if these seeds of holy principle are not discovered in childhood, because the child acts out his present feelings without justification, they will surely be manifest in later life. When such a one has taken a lesson of sorrow and emptiness or perhaps gone through a rough mental struggle, he will have entered into the Christian life. This is nothing more than the manifestation of the right principle established in childhood.

Along with this emphasis upon religion as a natural

²⁸ Betts, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

phenomenon is often associated a type of humanist philosophy. While man expresses his reaction to his own environment, he can find in nature no all-embracing standard or absolute. He is the discoverer of his own values and must rely upon himself for their achievement. His goal and its realization are determined by experiment, for he can set no limits as to what he may achieve if he will be true to what is the best in himself.²⁹

Evangelism in terms of salvation. If the errors mentioned in this new philosophy are escaped and salvation is thought of as positive moral and spiritual attainment by free personal agents, and religion as a means through which Christians are enabled to fit themselves for Christlike character and service, then there is a deep sense in which salvation is the free gift of God. It would be very unreal to say that any child could always be shielded from the evil in the present world, or evil in his own nature be kept under submission. Here as in every other problem of child life it is necessary that the child be brought to the saving knowledge of Christ as his Savior and be instructed in the will and ways of God. When life confronts him with "that language

²⁹ William Adams Brown, "The Contribution of America to Ecumenical Theology", The Journal of Religion XVIII, (July, 1938, No. 3), p. 271.

and literature which one god of this age has appropriated for his evil purpose"³⁰ the child may turn aside from this temptation in favor of the choice that has abundantly met his heart's need.

The Bible presents a plan of salvation that is suited to the situation of children of all ages. An example is recorded in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel.³¹ Jesus is talking to a sin-hardened adult, but the plan presented is the same for even the most tender young mind.

Salvation is a gift (verse 10). If becoming a Christian meant the intellectual acceptance of an involved doctrine, or the understanding of a code of ethics, the child would miss salvation because of his lack of understanding. Here God pictures his grace as a gift. This comes within the understanding of any young child. The way is opened; he can receive a gift.

Salvation means new life within (verse 14). That source of virtue, that standard or "absolute" that was lost to the child as a member of a sinful race is now his as he accepts the gift of God. The deepest longings of love and security buried deep in the child's heart can be satisfied;

³⁰ Alan H. Hamilton, "Understanding Boys and Girls", Child Evangelism, Chapter IX, (April, 1947), p. 29.

³¹ Holy Bible, op. cit., John 4.

he no longer need thirst. The outward life will be motivated by the new life within.

Salvation requires a solution to the problem of sin (verses 16-18). Sin has separated all from God, who is love and also light. Jesus was sent to give that light. He was the "true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."³² The awareness of sin provides one of the strongest motives to receive the Saviour. The child desires to be rid of sin and is usually much more responsive to this awareness than the adult.

Christ is the answer to the sin problem (verse 26). Verse 10 shows that salvation is a gift. This gift is found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The child's nature allows him to be trustful. Christian education provides opportunity for the child to trust the person of Jesus Christ.

Once the child has been initiated into the kingdom of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he is subject to the development in grace which God expects of his children.

What child evangelism does not mean. One must remember that becoming a Christian has not made a man of the child; neither in child evangelism are children treated as young

³² Holy Bible, authorized King James version, John 1:9.

adults. They are still childlike in play activity and attitudes. The child's world forms the necessary factors for growth into complete adulthood. The fruit of the Christian life in childhood will be the fruit expected of a child convert. His new standards of ethics and conformity to the standard of adult society will be based upon his ability to learn, but the child will desire to do the right even though he does not know right. His temptations may seem trivial to the adult, but they are very real and can be overcome by prayer and instruction in the word of God. This is necessary for growth in grace for the child as well as the adult convert. The child may have difficulty in finding real friends, or his environment may be a hindrance to him; therefore, the Christian leader should provide any help needed to establish devotional life and make real Christian friends.

Thus it is recognized that the spiritual is the most important aspect of the child's life. His relationship to God, ideally established in childhood, determines his eternal welfare. The spiritual, though, cannot be divorced from other aspects of the child's life. This fact must not be overlooked by parent or children's worker. The child must be dealt with as a whole.³³

³³ Alan H. Hamilton, "Understanding Boys and Girls", Child Evangelism, Chapter III, (August, 1946), pp. 6-7.

In Brazil the characteristics of childhood are, of course, the same as elsewhere. There is, however, the difference in background and environment.

CHAPTER II

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE JUNIOR

Age limit. The years now to be considered are among the most interesting of all the period of childhood. The junior age level, ages nine to twelve, is the most exacting because of the problems it presents. Knowledge and practice have almost been exhaustless in dealing with the solution of the junior age problems.

Characteristics of this age child. Children up to nine years old do not have a very clear conception of the fitness of things, and are apt to make inappropriate decisions. Now some of the winsomeness as well as the dependence of earlier childhood are gone. Early adolescence is considered by many to be the most difficult period of development. Later childhood, or the period of nine to twelve, is perhaps the most important.

At the junior age level growth is very slow - almost at a standstill. Height increases gradually but there is a marked increase in weight. "In three years the boy gains twenty-nine per cent in weight."¹ The girls begin to grow more rapidly than boys, so that at the end of this period

¹ Clarence H. Benson, An Introduction to Child Study, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1942), p. 148.

the boys seem younger than girls of the same age. This difference in growth accounts in part for the tendency of boys and girls to hold one another in seeming contempt. Organized group life dominates the interest of juniors. Boys and girls no longer share the same interests or enjoy the same games. Boys dislike the quieter ways of girls, and girls can see nothing refined about the boisterous, bullying ways of boys. The boys of ten or eleven learn lessons of group loyalty with greater ease than the girls. Boys' "gangs" are organized in which to expend their overwhelming energy, lawfully or otherwise, and usually this energy finds expression in athletics. On the contrary, certain petty jealousies of girls hinder the full co-operation of their "set". The set meets for social rather than athletic goals. They are exclusive, undemocratic, and are governed more nearly by adult motives than is the gang. The set has no history or leader. It is an organization that snubs its rivals, whereas the gang fights them. The girls snub one another and quarrel among themselves, for the deep-seated instinctive loyalty found among the members of the gang is missing in the girls' groups.²

Abundant health and unlimited energy dominates the later years of childhood. Every action spells noise, and it is impossible to measure the amount of energy exerted.

² Ibid., p. 157.

Active sports of all kinds are attractive especially in the later years of this period. The power to resist disease is greater now than at any other period of life.

The junior finds his keenest enjoyment in nature, for he is not only physically adapted to the rigors of nature, but also he enjoys the struggle with the elements. He delights in encounters with nature. It should be remembered that this wanderlust is not a tendency toward moral delinquency. It is rather a natural impulse, part of his very makeup.

Children of this age become collectors. Girls acquire household trinkets and jewelry of all kinds. In the summer, boys collect things from nature. They like to exchange picture cards, stamps, candidate buttons and the like. There is no apparent attempt at classification or arrangement; the largest collection is the goal of all participants. These collections are often the basis of many useful hobbies in later life.

Mechanical toys will be enjoyed, for their operating principles must be investigated. Therefore, the destruction of any mechanism is not wilful, but satisfies the desire for discovery and reconstruction.

A marked literalism is noted in this age. Juniors desire exact statements. There is also a rapid development of social feelings; one or two playmates are no longer enough.

The bonfire, with its circle of bosom friends, the cave and password, the recruiting whistle, all have a fascination beyond description. The gang works as a whole rather than as individuals for in unity there is strength, with honor one for another. These individuals become chums, and in later adolescence they become fewer in number although they are still of the same sex.

The gang cannot be ignored by parents and teachers. The child is still under the authority of adults, and while this is still possible, every effort should be made to strengthen the bond of sympathy and confidence.

In this new interest in his friends as individuals, not all stand out in equal proportion to the junior. Some become heroes in the sight of these "worshippers" and "in the inner chamber of the soul, incense is burning at their shrine."³ In early years the child imitated persons because of their actions, not as ideals, for he had no thought of ideals. Now all his ideals are centered in some known personality, his hero. Boys always choose a man as their hero, and place him on the pedestal of their hearts. Girls find their ideals in either a man or woman. They find their ideal in books or heroes of nature. The hero must excel in

³ Antonette A. Lamoreaux, The Unfolding Life, A Study of Development with reference to Religious Training, New and Revised edition (London: R. H. Allison, n.d.), p. 118.

the thing most admired at the time. Physical strength and skill, courage and daring are the traits a boy seeks in his hero. One of the greatest problems of the parents at this time centers in the wise use of this boundless energy in the home during unoccupied hours. Hero worship will aid here because the proper example in the home will carry weight.

There are three periods in life when the soul is seemingly more sensitive to the voice of God. The ages of nine to twelve mark the first of these periods. Later this interest is awakened at fifteen or sixteen, and again at about eighteen or nineteen. At these high points one does not have to create religious interest; it is there already. One should be reminded that the majority of Sunday School officers who are really born again Christians accepted Christ when they were very young and that they have continued in the Christian way and have grown in grace ever since. As the young people become older the number of definite decisions for Christ becomes considerable fewer. The "world" and the devil holds the restraints on those above teen age so that the number of conversions in this group is considerably smaller.

The fact that eighty per cent of the boys and girls in the Sunday School go out without finding the Lord as their personal Saviour should convince the church that the first impressionable period of evangelistic effort may be the last.

The age oftweleve was important in the life of the Jews. The Word of God reveals that it was approximately at this age that Moses left the house of Pharosah's daughter; Samuel heard God's call that summoned him to the prophetic office, and Solomon gave judgement which revealed his wisdom. Thus the Jewish age of accountability suggests the most timely age for Christian decision.

The well known characteristic of reserve in the adolescent causes him to hide much of his eager interest in religion. The gang spirit weakens the previous control of parent and teacher. The physical changes that take place during these years tend to unsettle him. Even with all this growing feeling of independence, the child of this age lacks many of the elements of maturity. He is irresponsible, yet pleased to be noticed or to be given responsibility. He desires prominence. Badges, buttons and recognition of all kinds delight them. Boys are frank almost to the point of brutality; they do not lend themselves to the politeness girls learn from society. Boys of this age respond negatively to pious affection on the part of interested teachers who are trying to win their love and respect. This has its counterbalance in genuineness and freedom of thought. With all this apparent indifference to love there is still a strong tendency to fondle and care for pets of all kinds. Anything alive, snakes, turtles, canaries, rabbits, cats, dogs, re-

ceive attention. This parental love, covered over as it may seem by outward actions, is still manifest in the care and attention even the worst bully will give his pet. Here is the basis in human nature for the real Christian character that is love.⁴

These years of nine to twelve afford the greatest opportunity for habit formation. During early childhood every act made an impression on plastic brain cells; thus, habit formation either right or wrong is constantly taking place. Every action leaves its impression and makes repetition easier. This characteristic, along with an enlightened faith, presents the greatest evangelistic opportunity.

The attention received by the teacher in the primary department should be shifted to the Bible in the junior department. The teacher who feels that she is losing the affection of her junior group should shift that attention and love to God's Word, the Bible. Nowhere can be found such a great hall of fame as in the Bible. To a boy the experiences of Joseph, David, and Daniel become real experiences in his own life. Any girl would be challenged by the courage and faith of Esther and Ruth.

"As all Roman roads led to the imperial city, so all

⁴ Hugh Hartshorne, Childhood and Character, an Introduction to the Study of the Religious Life of Children, (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919), p. 109.

Bible ideals should lead to Christ. Jesus is the hero of heroes."⁵ The heart of a junior, who longs to be understood, finds comfort in Jesus. He understands youth and can give guidance to its idealism, its daydreams, its misunderstandings and its heart longings.

These years open new horizons in the life of the junior through his desire for reading. The heroes and heroines whom juniors find in the books they read strengthen ideals of their own type. In these years good and poor taste is being formed not only in reading but also in living. A personal copy of the Bible should be placed in the hands of every child. When children crave to have possession of their own Bible and delight in reading is at its height, a personal Bible for every junior should not be overlooked. This delight in reading makes the habit of daily Bible reading comparatively easy.

This period is often called the "golden memory period". Understanding is unessential to memorization. The mind is less preoccupied and burdened now than it will be in later life. Mechanical repetition will fix anything in the mind, the uninteresting, the abstract, all are memorized with exactness and precision. Boys remember descriptions and logical impressions, while girls dwell on novel impressions and

⁵ Benson, op. cit., p. 160.

single occurrences. Instead too often lesser reading material is substituted for the word of God.

This religious interest of later childhood is usually followed by a period of temporary religious decline. The majority of boys and girls drop out of Sunday School during these months of early adolescence. There is a reason for this. God is concerned most of all in the physical aspect of their nature. The body with all its powers and functions take first place, and religion and education fall to the background. During this period every effort should be put forth to see that these young people develop good strong clean healthy bodies, with a mind that has complete control over these powers and passions. Religious life will again come to the front during the second period of religious awakening. Just now they are interested in religion, but religion is not the primary thought.⁶

II. THE PROBLEM OF CHILD EVANGELISM AS APPLIED TO BRAZIL

The junior children of Brazil possess the same basic characteristics as do children around the world. They are as intelligent as juniors in any other nation, but many have not had the chance to learn. The Brazilian child is very

⁶ Albert H. Gage, Evangelism of Youth, (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1922), p. 16.

polite. He will go out of his way to help a stranger. "The Brazilian's sense of politeness supercedes his sense of rightness."⁷ He had rather tell you that he will be at a certain place or do a certain thing, even though he has no intention of doing it, than to tell you "no". To him that is rude. The Japanese children in Brazil are very polite also, but they have a way of hiding what they really think. Their word is, however, more reliable. These Brazilian-Japanese children offer less disciplinary problems. Their respect for teachers and parents dates back to centuries of Japanese teaching. From earliest childhood to old age they are taught to respect their elders and people of position.

Infants and children of the Indian mother, who are unable to walk are carried on her back in slings made of cotton and other plant fibers. The older children are shy and remain in the hut when strangers are present, but when alone are boisterous and irresponsible as other children of their age. Their games and toys are very much like those of any child. The Indian girl has her doll, and the boy has his toy

⁷ Letter of Helen L. Voller, Child Evangelist in Brazil, to Doris Metz, March 20, 1950. Campos do Jordao de Sao Paulo, Brazil, South America, p. 2.

animals. The mother obtains quiet and secures good behavior by threatening to bring in a wild man, either black or white. The use of fear is instinctive in securing good behavior patterns. Fear is not recognized as an ideal method but it is all these children know. They are taught fear from the priests almost as soon as they know its meaning. It almost becomes their basic philosophy of life.

In a great city like Rio Janeiro the full realization of poverty and riches is clearly distinguishable. Some children are very rich, dress and eat well and have fine homes. Others, poverty stricken as they are, do not know from where their next meal is coming. They live in shacks on the side of the mountains, made of every conceivable kind of material. Some live in hovels built under railway bridges, dressing in rags, and eating little more than the customary rice and beans. Thousands of children in Brazil are illiterate, underfed, and undeveloped. The children in the interior find life affords them practically nothing, but the lot of the poor child in the big cities is if anything worse than that of the child in the interior.

At the moment the daily papers of Brazil are crying out concerning the juvenile delinquency in the big cities, for crime is on the increase. One of the daily papers came out with this headline just a few days ago: "80,000 abandoned

children in the city of Rio de Janeiro."⁸ One reason for the appalling number of abandoned children is the fact that among the poorer classes marriage and the establishment of a home is too often financially insecure. Many of the homeless children are born out of wedlock. Their father may or may not be known to them. It follows that neither parent will assume much responsibility, and the child is likely to be left for himself. Lured by a sense of adventure, that is a natural characteristic of the junior age child, they run away from their thatched homes in the interior and walk miles begging or stealing food as they go. They sneak rides behind carts or trucks arriving at last in the big city hungry, homeless, and dirty. These homeless juniors sleep wherever they can find a corner, feed on whatever they can pick up or steal, and sometimes drift into organized gangs of petty thieves. They are then picked up by the police if caught and thrown into the common jail with adult criminals of every sort.

These children are physically and mentally abandoned, but what shall be said of those who are spiritually abandoned? Their number is legion. The children are accessible and if they are won for Christ today the nation of tomorrow is won. The Catholic church teaches their children through the catechism to avoid any contact with the Protestant Bible, worker, or child. They are taught by the priests to destroy the Bible if by chance one should come into their hands. Some

few children will tear up a tract when it is received. This teaching has not worked too great a handicap on the work of child evangelism there for the majority are too interested in the Gospel message to always obey the priest.

CHAPTER III

PECULIARITIES OF THE BRAZILIAN SITUATION IN RELATION TO CHILD EVANGELISM AMONG JUNIORS

I. NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEOPLE

Brazil takes its name from the trees that produced a deep red dye resembling that known in Europe as "basil". It is the fourth largest country in area in the world, exceeded only by Russia, China, and the United States including Alaska and the American insular possessions. Included within her boundaries is nearly half the territory of South America. Within this territory there are approximately 45,000,000 people. Nine-tenths of the population live in the coastal zone. If all the jungle area is included, it is one of the least densely populated and undeveloped countries in the world.¹ The language of this great country is primarily Portuguese with other languages spoken by smaller groups.

In order that the child evangelist in Brazil may better understand the child whom he is trying to help, it is desirable to know something of the child's background. Thus a brief outline is here developed.

¹ W. Reginald Wheeler, and others, Modern Missions in Chili and Brazil, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1926), pp. 183-184.

The race. If the Brazilian child belongs to a race, it includes a thousand year-old mixture of blood combinations and history. The majority of the Brazilian population presents a mixture of breeds of the most diverse kinds.

"There is no known date in the history of the country earlier than 1500."² Four hundred years has brought about a constantly changing proportion of all races mixing, mingling, and intermarrying. Is there in this country today a race these junior boys and girls can call their own? The early settlers came from many diverse lands and no one country could be called the mother country of Brazil. Everything called Brazilian is but a creative transformation of everything foreign. Religion and customs cannot be dated back to the native land. All cultural values have been brought across the sea in ships during several centuries.

The Brazilian child is different. He represents a psychological type that, because of its many sources, presents an enormous variety of characteristics. Each representative race and group contributes its sentiments, ideas, tendencies and aspirations. Thus with such a fusion of ideas, the "race" moves according to many forces which are not always harmonious. The Latin features predominate, but mingled with these are

² Arnold E. Hayes, "Religion in Brazil", (Unpublished Doctor's thesis, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, 1940), p. 9.

found the Indian and Negro, along with many representative other races in smaller groups.

Racial intermarriage, and the conflicting cultures of immigrant people with their primitive beliefs, present moral and social situations which have filtered into the dominant religion now being presented to the children of Brazil. Marriage of the Portugese to the Indian women, without the benefit of clergy soon brought an exchange of cultures better adapted to the new climate. As a result the children of Brazil today have a wide variation of skin colors. They range from light to very dark or black.

The early religious situation in Brazil has its origin in the early history of the country. Religion in one form or another has always played a dominant part in the life of every child there.

A desire to know the unknown, and a strong urge for easy wealth, coupled with the missionary spirit to possess these newly discovered people for the Holy Catholic Church, dominated the thinking of early adventurers and explorers. At one time the Jesuit Order held full control of the country, and protestant colonists were expended after a very short stay. Political reaction subdued the power of this order and for a while even expelled them from the country, but they returned in a few years and Brazil has continued to be a Catholic country in name and very largely in spirit

also.³

The early Jesuits were humane toward the Indians and endeavored to protect them from injustice. They exhorted the Indians to put aside polygamous marriage and cannibalism and adopt the new faith. The Jesuits took advantage of every opportunity to harmonize the Indian's native religion with Catholicism. They appealed to the Indian's childlike nature with pomp and ceremony. The Indian was charmed, for his ritual was a poor thing in comparison to this. They substituted names of Christian deities and saints for the heathen gods. Thus the priest, with his magic was able to induce the Indian to adopt at least the external forms of religion.⁴

The Negro was brought over from Africa to work as a slave in the fields and mines. The Jesuits insisted that the black man take the place of the red man in the work on the plantations. These people offered little to Brazil except their sweat and blood. To them may be attributed some of the instinctive love for music that persists among the Brazilian Negro children to this day. The black man

³ Austin Crouch, Executive Secretary, Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention Eighty-Eighth Session (Nashville: Executive Committee Southern Baptist Convention, 1944), p. 240-241.

⁴ Nevin O. Winter, Brazil and Her People of Today, (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1910), p. 290.

also brought with him a great deal of superstition and idolatry which the priest incorporated in the religious pattern. "Our Lady of the Rosary" took on the color of the Negro and became the patron saint of these baptized pagans. Many of their offspring still follow the superstitions and fetichism of their African ancestors. The old heathenism has persisted in spirit although today is modified and mixed with European ritual and African fetichism. The general belief prevalent among the Indian tribes was that there are three great deities: "Guaracy, the great god of all animal life; Jacy, god of vegetable life; and Ruda, the god (goddess) of reproduction and love".⁵ Along with these there were numerous other gods subordinate to the powerful three.

These aboriginal beliefs are closely associated with the faith of the people today who materialize their three deities. First, there is the patriarchal god, the bearded man, feared, but not loved. Second, the Creole Christ, pictured in two roles: that of the infant in his Mother's arms, and the suffering and bleeding victim.⁶

⁵ Hayes, op. cit., p. 48.

⁶ John A. McKay, The Other Spanish Christ, A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America, (New York: The MacMillian Company, 1933), p. 110.

Thus the form of Christianity, or the Creole Christ lacks humanity. The two central truths of incarnation and atonement are lost because the manhood of Christ with all of its ideals for the junior hero worshipper is not revealed in the patronized infant, and suffering victim. The reality of the incarnation is seen in the life of Christ and the atonement is made possible by his sinless life and death. These junior boys and girls need a Christ who is equal to the problems of their everyday life, but as yet they have only a patron saint. The most beloved and honored is Mary, "the mother of God". Mary was transformed to Ruda of the savage world without too much loss of meaning. Thus the Tupytheogany, with its indigenous beliefs and superstitions, has passed over into the Catholic religion, which is being taught to the children. Today the superstition still prevails of Tupy gods who live in the fields of the interior and children up to the age of ten or eleven believe in them. They must also take part at processions where fetish beliefs are mixed up with Christian rites.

No idols are found in the villages or temples in the area of the Indian children. Consequently it is assumed by some that they have no religion. The early European settlers found that the Indians believed in and taught their children of a spirit that separated from the body. The existence of a future life, a Supreme invisible ruler, the

reward for a good life and punishment of a bad one, were all part of their religious education. Tradition tells of a white man, wearing a long beard who came over the sea and lived with them a long time. They refer to him as "Sume". He taught them many useful arts, as well as the art of living peaceably with one another. "Sume" escaped when wicked Indians tried to kill him. He never returned. It is generally accepted that this man was St. Thomas or one of the apostles. The Indians also have a tradition of a great flood that covered all of their land and drowned all but one family. They believe in a Great Good Spirit who proceeded from immaculate conception and was made incarnate. They also believe in an evil spirit whom they call "Jurupary".⁷ It is very difficult to get any information regarding their beliefs, for they are extremely reluctant to talk about their gods. The absence of images in their midst indicates that they dread what they do not understand. As junior children in play activity, they imitate that which they ridicule. Their deep respect for invisible powers finds expression in silent reverence, which has no place for ritualism. The Indian child may not be able to explain why he believes in a spirit within him skin to some great spirit without, for such thoughts have

⁷ J. B. Bruce, Brazil and the Brazilians.

come to him through generations of religious teachings. Therefore, the Indian of Brazil has always welcomed good influences.⁸

General characteristics. The true Brazilian type is found in the "latifundia", of common man. He lives in the overcrowded urban areas, or scattered throughout the interior. Then, there is the "jagmuco" who lives on the dry, sun-scorched plains of the northeastern plateau. He is a cowboy, whose countenance is sad, for he endures hardship and drought. He is ungainly, strong, and loyal to his landlord. His superstition far exceeds his religion. The "caboclo" of central Brazil is retiring and lazy. The "goucho" roams the southern prairies and lives on the rolling hills spending his time caring for the large herds of cattle to be found there. He is daring and proud and could justly be called a cowboy. The recently built motor roads and the new advancing tide of industrialization have hastened the absorption of many of these types. The abolition of slavery brought many and far reaching changes to the life of the latifundia. Labor was disorganized, and manual labor took on new potentialities. Today the situation in Rio Grande do Sul is typical of what is happening. Those that have settled in the "colonies" are immigrants and their children. They are orderly, hard

⁸ Ibid., p. 88.

working, and openminded to true religion. They usually own the property on which they live. The latifundia, on the other hand, live a wandering life; they are underfed, discontented, ignorant, indifferent to religion; without ambition, and worst of all unnoticed.⁹

"The inhabitants of Brazil have doubled in numbers every twenty-three years."¹⁰ It is estimated that, if the present rate continues, Brazil will have a population of three hundred million, by the end of the century. The ethnological record reveals that the majority of whites are located in the southern states, from Sao Paulo south. The Negro is massed principally in Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, and Minas Geraes. About half of the Indian population lives in the Amazon valley. These figures are based upon the national census report of 1938.¹¹

The Brazilian boy is characterized by his delicate physical qualities and gentle nature. The massive, strong-boned type, characteristic of the European, is not in evidence here. Here his people are thoroughly gentle, unprejudiced, amiable, and without capacity for brutality or cruelty. They

⁹ Erasmo Braga, and Kenneth G. Grubb, The Republic of Brazil, (New York: World Dominion Press, 1932), pp. 14-15.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 7.

¹¹ Oliveira Vianna, Evolucao do Povo Brasileiro, (Sao Paulo, 1938), p. 138 seq.

are quiet, dreamy and sentimental. This trait often manifests itself in melancholy. For this gentleness of nature the Brazilian child pays in other ways. Every Brazilian has a most vulnerable sense of honor. This honor is not affiliated in any way with moral responsibility, but it is rather a very special kind. Just because he is so exceptionally modest, he immediately takes the most incidental impoliteness as an offense. If an invitation is refused, no matter how politely, it will never be repeated. He would not react violently to such an insult like a Spaniard or Italian, but swallows the offense in silence. It is unlike these people to stand up for themselves, to demand justice or to complain. This silent, mysterious, mute pride, found everywhere, is their natural defense. One never hears of cruelty to animals or pagan bull fights or cock fights. The Brazilian would be shocked by such brutality. "It is a statistical fact that intentional premeditated murder hardly ever occurs, and that such crimes are always spontaneous."¹² In this country of racial intermarriage race-hatred has not found its way into the minds of the people. One seldom, if ever, feels any suspicion toward the foreigner, the person of different race, or class; neither is there any tendency to isolate themselves.

¹² Stefan Zweig, Brazil Land of the Future, (New York: The Viking Press, 1941), p. 141.

The black and white adults as well as children work and play together without restriction, or even private boycott. They will go out of their way to help a stranger, and a foreigner wandering in this corner of the earth is a welcome guest.

These people are not anxious for this world's goods, they do not want much. Their only pleasure is the companionship of friends between or after working hours. They enjoy their hours at home with their family. They are not impatient or greedy. This lack of impetus, which at first seems to be such an asset, may prove to be a drawback in the economic world. The large majority of "caboclos" in the tropical climate do not work to economize and save for the future, but rather to keep alive during the next few days. This is particularly true in countries where there is no hard winter, and nature offers all the necessities of life. There is no need to do today what can successfully be done tomorrow. This general characteristic filters into the very philosophy of their children. This cannot be called total laziness, for the Brazilian is an excellent workman, and can be educated to do most anything.

Both geographically and socially, any craftsman or laborer will find an open door in this new country free from color, or race prejudice. Intelligence in any field is admired even though it may be actually a shrewd mental ability that hides total lack of character. This so-called high

degree of intelligence contributes nothing to the standard of living of the country. Brazilian junior boys and girls love to approach any problem rationally, and with their well-reasoned plan in mind, make no effort for accomplishing the task at hand. This quick intelligence serves to mask the lack of real knowledge in later life. The Brazilian young people never really thoroughly learn any new subject. They learn only enough of the vocabulary, and a few superficial facts to make any foreign specialist or teacher feel that they are well versed in the subject. Behind the glitter there is nothing solid, and one must be constantly aware of incompetent "experts". One sad aspect of this mental alertness is the element of total skepticism concerning any information that shows the least bit of earnest appeal.¹³ Teachers find that their pupils tend to transform everything into a big joke. For this reason "information" is taken cautiously and truth is not readily accepted.

Junior children show an astonishing amount of innate gentleness and always display their good manners. The various classes meet, show their courtesy and affection in ways that are astounding to the North American. Courtesy is the basis of human relationships and anyone asking a favor of a

¹³ Hernane Tavares De Sa, *The Brazilians, People of Tomorrow*, (New York: The John Day Company, 1947), p. 26-28.

child will find it granted with the utmost graciousness. In high society the ritual of politeness is carried almost to extremes. The custom of calling, leaving cards, and returning calls is most exacting. Foreigners are received with the utmost courtesy and every comfort is afforded them. One seldom hears anyone talking loudly, or in anger. Even in crowds except at carnival time, just before Easter, everything is carried on with subdued manners. At the fair where thousands of people gather with their children, there is no crowd hysteria, no mutual encouragement for wild celebration. Everyone remains quiet and discreet. Under ordinary circumstances the roughness and brutality coupled with wild gaiety known to other nations is not known to the Brazilian.

Brazil's need is great and deep-rooted, even though statistics seem to show that moral conditions are better there than in most South American countries. Even a Catholic priest recognized the fallacy of celibacy, and blames his own church for the immorality of the country. He held that if the church would do away with prohibition of marriage among their clergy the country would be healed of its immorality.¹⁴

¹⁴ Robert E. Speer, South American Problems, (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1915), p. 77.

The urban population of Brazil is very similar to that of Southern Europe, and the Brazilians have made every attempt to conserve their cultural heritage. For three hundred years the Roman Catholic Church dominated the land and its influence is still seen and felt in double towered churches and evening chimes which suggest its powerful sway over every individual, to the smallest child. One notices the dress of the people, the lower as well as the upper classes. Many gay colors are seen on the street. Often those who have lost loved ones wear black an entire year. The dress of the boys and girls of the lower class is different, not because of caste, but as the result of poverty. The most striking feature is the wooden-bottom sandals held on by a covering over the toes. The wearer goes flapping down the street in a fashion much like the younger "set" in America, dressed up in Mother's clothes. Their eminent fear is the risk of losing their shoes. The remaining clothing worn by these "beslippered people" is two thin garments.¹⁵ There is no middle class as we know it in the United States.

Family life. In Brazil the family is the center of family life. People live together in the smaller circle during the week and on Sundays the family includes the wider

¹⁵ T. B. Ray, Brazilian Sketches, (Louisville, Kentucky: Baptist World Publishing Company, 1912), p. 19.

circle with all the relatives. The professions of the youth are decided for them by all. The father, or the man, still holds complete charge over the entire family and obedience to him is taken for granted. In rural circles the custom of children kissing the father's hand, as an act of respect, still prevails. The men, because of their superiority and authority, are allowed many things denied women. Even today when women are not so restricted as they were a decade or so ago, their main sphere of activities is confined to the home. The position of the young girl is limited even more. There is no such thing as friendly relationships with men, without the idea of marriage from the very first. The "flirt" just does not exist in Brazil. Generally speaking, the people marry very early, usually at the age of seventeen or eighteen. The usual Roman Catholic custom of a large, quickly acquired, family prevails. Wife, home, and family are to be desired even if one cannot feed them all. The wife usually remains in the background and finds social expression only occasionally at charitable organizations.

The situation prevailing among large masses of the Brazilian population presents grave social problems. The condition of the children among the lowest classes of people in the slums of the cities presents a challenge to educators, social workers and especially to Christian workers. About four-fifths of the population of the lower classes including

adults and younger members, wander about as strangers in the land where they were born. They go from town to town, and from farm to farm, underfed, tortured by numerous diseases, and left physically unfit by malaria, they reek with the odors of the quarters they have occupied. Suffering from the evil effects of drink, they are unconscious of their ignorance. They are a mere herd of individuals devoid even of the reason of normal men. They become the prey of their more fortunate friends who despise them in the spirit of Cain. They know nothing of real life, liberty, health, good food, or personal ownership. Life for them would have little enchantment except for the deceitful effects of drink. They have no ambition or incentive for progress. They just live. When large numbers of these people, hungry for the enjoyment of life, migrated to urban centers, they created the now grave problem of public health.

Education. In about the year 1900, official statistics showed that approximately fifteen per cent of the entire population could read.¹⁶ At that time it was terribly depressing, to one engaged in distributing the Scriptures to children, to hear the reply, "I don't know how to read". "The 1920 census

¹⁶ Hugh C. Tucker, The Bible in Brazil, Colporter Experiences, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1902), p. 10.

gives the percentage of illiterates as sixty-five per cent."¹⁷ In 1948 the number of illiterates in Brazil comprised sixty per cent of the population. This condition is always aggravated by the rapid increase in the population, and the majority of immigrants from Southern Europe at that time were illiterate. Only twenty per cent of the children of school age attended school.¹⁸ By 1930 several Protestant secondary schools were recognized by the National Department of Education and these ranked high in public estimation for they did make a definite contribution to national education. Sixteen Protestant schools of all grades formed the Federation of Evangelical Schools of Brazil, with an enrollment of some 2,500 pupils. Evangelical schools which offered part, at least, of a secondary education, showed an enrollment of 9,276.¹⁹ From 1930 to 1947 "the number of elementary schools has increased from 27,000 to 47,000; high schools from 300 to 860; vocational schools from 1,000 to nearly 2,000."²⁰ In 1932, the population was 39,000,000; the total enrollment in Brazilian schools was about 2,200,000. In 1942, the population was 42,000,000 and the enrollment was 4,000,000.²¹

¹⁷ Erasmo Braga, and Kenneth G. Grubb, The Republic of Brazil, p. 31.

¹⁸ Braga, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 33.

²⁰ Lawrence F. Hill, editor, Brazil, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1947), p. 145.

²¹ Loc. cit.

This period was unparalleled in the educational history of Brazil. In 1938 the National Commission of Primary Education was established, and in 1940, the National Department of Child Welfare. The National Council of Education is a co-operative agency which helps the minister in the drafting and application of laws.²²

The school organization provided for the elementary child differs according to location and economic resources. Urban schools have courses lasting four to six years, while rural schools have only a three-year course. The ages of pupils in these schools range from seven to fourteen years.

Today the schools are overcrowded and all do not have the privilege of attending. The courses are more advanced in Brazil than they are for the corresponding year in the United States. There is little preparation given pre-school children. Kindergartens are in private hands, and the privilege of attending them is for only those few who can afford it. A state examination is given each pupil, and if the child does not pass, he is retained in that grade no matter what has been his previous academic standing. Brazil lacks in the material facilities which children in America take for granted. They do not have attractive books, and in many schools the work is written on the board and copied by

²² Ibid., pp. 145-146.

TABLE I

ILLITERACY

Protestant Countries		Catholic Countries	
	per cent		per cent
Denmark	0.0	France	8.9
Holland	0.0	Belgium	13.1
Switzerland	0.0	Italy	27.0
Germany	0.03	Cuba	27.0
Australia	0.2	Poland	30.0
Scotland	0.2	Uruguay	39.0
England	0.8	Nicaragua	40.0
Finland	1.0	Spain	45.0
Union of South America	1.2	Chile	50.0
Estonia	3.0	Porto Rico	55.0
New Zealand	4.2	Mexico	62.0
Norway	5.0	Columbia	69.5
Sweden	5.0	Portugal	75.0
Canada	5.1	BRAZIL	75.0
United States	6.0	Bolivia	80.0

Tables of Dr. Mario Pinto Serva, Sao Paulo, 1932

Illiteracy in the United States has dropped to 3% according to "Time", October 1939.
 Illiteracy in Brazil has dropped to 60% according to the report of the Southern Baptist Convention 1948.

the pupils. The few books they do have are kept at school.²³

Foreign languages are introduced at a very early age, and by the time the children are in the fifth, sixth, and seventh years they have become acquainted with English, French, and Latin. This study of languages is necessary, for in later years they must study from textbooks written in these languages if they continue their education at all. Many of them stop at the end of the grupo which included the first four years. A large proportion of them go on to the "ginasio" which is comparable to junior high school in the United States. From here the struggle to continue an education becomes hard especially from the financial point of view. The schools are not located at convenient distances and the lack of text books in the native tongue also adds to the problem. Some few brave transportation difficulties or leave home and board out while they are yet so young.²⁴

The present organization of secondary schools, with its own specialized objectives, was organized by decree of the federal government in 1942 and it is uniform throughout the country. Its objectives are these:

²³ Voller, op. cit., p. 1.

²⁴ Voller, op. cit., pp. 1-2.

(1) to make complete the personality of the adolescent. (2) to strengthen his patriotism and humanitarianism, and (3) to provide general preparation for specialized higher education.²⁵

Both private and mission schools offer courses in home economics which include sewing, cooking, health education, and child care, as well as social service. This is a departure from the traditional curriculum, but meets more than anything else the needs of the young girls in these rural communities.

II. THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN BRAZIL

Certain other features of the religious life need to be analyzed if the spiritual and moral attitudes or even the unrest of these indifferent people is to be understood. Apathy is the term which best describes the religious situation in Brazil.

The national church. The Catholic church has left the people of Brazil in a torpor and has done nothing for the salvation of their souls. This action is giving way to a new sentiment, because the younger generation are being educated and can better understand the false doctrines being set forth. In the psychological outlook of the Brazilian people there is the existence of a vague Messianic hope which manifests itself in a newly appointed "saint". The real religion

²⁵ Hill, op. cit., p. 148.

of Brazil is saint worship. The juniors there are taught that Mary is the chief saint, the intercessor to all others. The saint intercedes for man before God; because of his holiness the saint has favor with God. Very few children consider the saint any lower than God for they offer sacrifices to the saint and pray to him. The confessional and penance play a large part in the life of the common people. The educated classes have long deserted the confessional but it holds full sway over the common people. The Catholic historians do not claim a Biblical basis for the use of the confessional and admit that it was invented by the Bishop of Metz in 763. Through the confessional the priest learns of large gifts and wills, and suggests their use for the payment of masses. Many of the questions the priests ask put positive suggestions of evil in the minds of young people and even children.²⁶ Along with the confessional the act of penance goes hand in hand. The people parade through the streets wearing a crown of thorns on their heads, barefooted, with ropes around their necks. All this is done in an endeavor to ease a guilty conscience. The priests in the last four hundred years have exploited the wealth of the country until the people are beginning to see that even the

²⁶ Ruth M. Randall, "From Darkenss to Light", Brazilian Snapshots I, (September, 1932), No. 5, p. 3.

best of the priests are worthless.

The contents of the catechetical instruction carried on by the priests, and taught to the children contains, among other things, information on how to make the sign of the cross, the teachings of the creed, the Lord's Prayer, two prayers to the Virgin, the commandments of God's law, the shorter version that omits the second commandment, the commandments of the church, the list of sacraments, and the acts of faith, hope, charity, contrition and confession.²⁷ Thus the doctrine of the church is developed around these subjects. Supplementing the doctrinal instruction the child learns a treasury of prayers for daily use, the litany to the Virgin Mary and the preparation for communion. Many Catholic churches also include in their services some of the invocations to the spirits of African and Indian witch doctors. The Roman Catholic church claims these many cults as their own. Belief in the powers of saints, whatever may be their character, is latent in almost every person. They fear pain, terror, and impending suffering. This alone sends them on long pilgrimages rather than the ethical motive of seeking after God. The proper approach to the junior age group who have been reared in such an atmosphere is

²⁷ Erasmo Braga, and Kenneth G. Grubb, The Republic of Brazil, p. 40.

one of the difficult problems of child evangelists.

It would be difficult to say just what proportion of the people who go on long pilgrimages are really devout, and how many go simply for the opportunity of social contacts. Many enter the services with little or no religious sentiment. This decline of Catholicism is especially noticeable on the frontier. Those who turn from familiar scenes to pioneer life are likely to be of strong physical makeup and character. These who are orientated toward the future rather than the past will probably investigate any new religious ideas. Even the children will not have to fear persecution by the priests if they investigate such strange things as open air services or object lessons presented by child evangelists on the streets. Those who openly rise up against the Catholic Church are offering more opposition to the priests than any other group. They scornfully reject such dogmas as papal infallibility, transubstantiation; they question the efficacy of the mass, and express disapproval of many of the church's ceremonies.²⁸ Even the authorities in the government have felt that the Christian education of their children and young people, especially the girls, is nothing more than pure heathenism and idolatry in which the idea of God has

²⁸ Mrguel Rizzo Jr., "Brazil Welcomes Protestantism", The Christian Century, LX, (March 31, 1943), No. 13, p. 391.

disappeared.

The sects. In addition to the orthodox mysteries of the church, and the numerous elements of African and Indian cultures, the world of the Brazilian country child abounds in mysterious occurrences and supernatural beings, which have no peculiar connection with any organized religion. Many of these supernatural beings are decidedly dangerous and these rural folks must continually be on guard. There are, for example, mysterious beings shaped like a man, except that they have only one leg, and a hoof shaped like the bottom of a bottle. Their bodies are covered with long black hair. This mysterious being, it is told, seeks to lure the root and herb collectors into the depths of the forests by continuous and confusing sounds resembling that of a fellow worker or playmate. There are many hundreds of supernatural beings who live in the thought of Brazil's rural masses. These must all be taken into account in connection with their daily routine. There is the headless mule, or "The Negro of the Water", the "Bicho that eats tongues", the Boitata, a wandering spirit which sometimes protects pastures and sometimes destroys them. Then there is the curupira a little known man whose feet are turned backwards so that anyone seeing his tracks and trying to run away from him will speed to destruction under his power. The world of peasant child-

ren is thickly populated with these beings who have it within their power to aid, but especially to destroy their prey.²⁹ Every society uses environment to pass on to the oncoming generation its particular ways of believing and behaving.

The cults. Besides the one main religion of Brazil there are other religions and numerous cults which should be mentioned in this study, for they play a definite part in the lives of some of the children with whom child evangelists must reckon. The Greek Orthodox Church is represented there by two orthodox groups. The Arabic-speaking Syrians have organized a few churches, and many of the educated Russian refugees have established a church in Rio, under the direction of a superintendent.³⁰

The great popular religious movement in Brazil is spiritualism. The first society was organized in Brazil in 1873. In 1920 there were one hundred and three societies, with 10,666 affiliated members. In 1930 the federation had 308 societies and many small groups meeting regularly in private homes. Many of these are also faithful members of the Catholic Church. For lack of a better remedy those who

²⁹ Lynn T. Smith, Brazil: People and Institutions, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1946), pp. 724 ff.

³⁰ Braga, op. cit., p. 43.

are suffering disease and depression are drawn to these seances for help and in this way the cult spreads. Its leaders find the remnants of animistic beliefs and build on that foundation.³¹

The first Theosophical Lodge was founded in 1902 and its first converts were army officers and intellectuals. There are only fourteen lodges in the whole country, but the society's influence is far reaching. Theosophy has an appeal to the Brazilian mind and therefore is gaining ground. In this group are also intellectuals studying Buddhism, and Hinduism, NeoPlatonism and other ancient and Eastern forms of religion.³²

Compt's religious philosophy of Positivism has been introduced in Brazil. The first society for the study of this philosophy was organized in 1870. A church was organized in 1878 with five members. It has steadily increased in membership ever since and there has been a recent revival of interest in Positivism. This small group of Compt's disciples have been very influential in the intellectual and political life of Brazil.³³

31 Ibid., pp. 43-44

32 Braga, op. cit., p. 44.

33 Ibid., pp. 44-45

The number of Jews in Brazil has been increased by immigration. Some Hebrew-Brazilian civic associations feel that the Israelites may influence wider circles in the country. At present the Jewish youth are organized well into boy scouts and girl guides. Their religious activities have not been missionary minded, but rather restricted to the religious education of their children and the growth of their community.

Buddhism was introduced into Brazil by Japanese immigrants, but the tendency of the Japanese is to become accustomed to their new environment. They are bewildered, however, when new forms of Christianity are offered them by western cultures.

Islam has been introduced by African slaves, and immigrants from Syria have increased their number. Few if any observe Islam holy seasons and if they do it is very inconspicuous. Islam has lost its missionary enterprise in Brazil.³⁴

Other eastern religions exist in smaller groups of immigrants, but these are fostered primarily within the family groups. A new environment, and a new climate unfavorable to the cultivation of other religions soon discourage momentum. Secularism and the growth of a new paganism is the predominant trend in Brazil today.

³⁴ Loc. cit.

The awareness of the many factors that go to make the junior age, Brazilian child "different" should also give the child evangelist there a great deal of patience in dealing with the child who has grown up in a non-Christian environment. It is to be remembered that some of his wrong ideas have been as deeply ingrained in his life as were the right ideas that the Christian child learned under guided religious education. Just telling the child he is wrong will never convince him. Only the clear teaching of Word, mingled with much love and patience may be used of God to bring the child to the truth. One must be sure that the child's beliefs are anti-scriptural rather than just anti-American before they are condemned. There is not always a true correlation between customs and the essence of Christianity.

CHAPTER IV

PECULIARITIES OF THE BRAZILIAN SITUATION IN RELATION TO CHILD EVANGELISM AMONG JUNIORS

I. THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED IN THIS FIELD

A century ago the liberators of South America threw open the doors of the new republics to new influences which have brought them to their present position economically. These changes have brought great opportunities to evangelical missions, but in Brazil they have been slow to take advantage of them. Only recently has the Protestant world perceived the dire need of the neglected population of this nominally Roman Catholic nation. Japan and Brazil are considered to be the greatest mission fields today. They are open and ready to receive Christianity as never before.

For years many Europeans have felt that conversion in Brazil was a simple question of good will, but the beliefs of the Indian and Negro are as ingrained as the beliefs of the white man.

Methodist Work. The Methodist Episcopal Church has a great number of missionaries at work in Brazil. Missionaries of this denomination are stationed in several states, and in

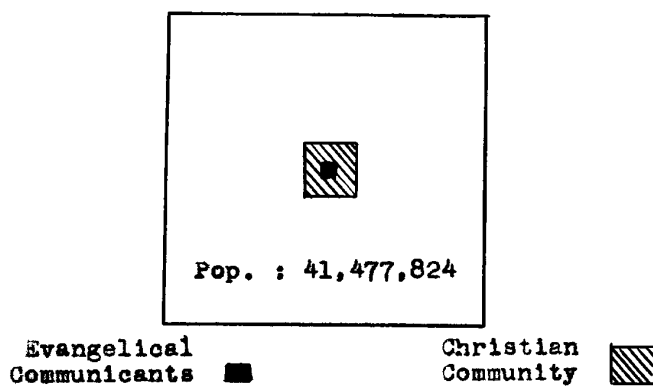


FIGURE 2

EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS AND POPULATION

¹ Erasmo Braga, and Kenneth G. Grubb, The Republic of Brazil, p. 86.

many places they have a large following. In Sao Paulo alone there are fourteen organized churches at present with eleven church buildings, and nine other preaching points where groups meet regularly. The leaders of this district feel there is a need for thirty more preaching points in the city. There is, however, one thing to be regretted. These churches are the product of the love and sacrifice of their members, but in nearly all cases the provision for Sunday school and children's work is inadequate. This situation restricts the main source of growth of the churches.²

In 1941 Bennett College in Rio de Janeiro had 386 students in all grades beginning with the primary age. Ten of the girls in high school were preparing for junior college in March of 1942. The three departments of the school are:- Nursery School Education, Home Economics, and Religious Education and Social Work. The government does not officially recognize the school, but it does favor it. These experimental courses are to prepare girls for lives of definite Christian service.³

² Elizabeth M. Lee, and Alfred W. Wasson, The Latin American Circuit, (New York: Joint Division of Education and Cultivation, Board of Missions and Church Extension, The Methodist Church), pp. 98-99.

³ Ibid., p. 105.

The Peoples Central Clinic, established in 1906 by Dr. H. C. Tucker, nestles among the palm trees on the "Hill of Thieves". It extends the facilities of pre-natal and dental clinics to the people of the surrounding territory. The Department of Education offers primary education for four hundred poor children. These children carry the message they receive at school, the message of Christ's love, back to their homes, and thus the evangelical message spreads.⁴

The General Division of the Methodist Church of the United States makes a yearly appropriation of \$500 for special evangelistic work in Brazil. This money is used to hold a series of special services of the three Conference Boards of Missions. The way is prepared by a series of prayer meetings in each church, announcements made in the daily papers and invitations given by letters, handbills, and personal word. The pastor from another charge is the evangelist. A yearly report from nine churches showed that 371 persons made decisions for Christ.⁵

The church schools are a valuable ally of the "forward looking" forces at work in Brazil. These schools supply leaders of the community, if those trained leaders were taken out of all the responsible positions they now hold, there would remain only a mob without a leader.

⁴ Ibid., p. 105

⁵ Ibid., p. 110.

Nothing breaks down the prejudices of the Brazilian children against the Gospel more effectively than the schools which are conducted by the mission boards. Missionaries must have friends among the younger set. The schools afford opportunity at this point. They are also effective in the work of direct evangelism among junior children.

The evangelical churches in Brazil have in some cases accepted the primary schools as the ordinary means of providing education for their children. Since the separation of church and state these lay schools have been patterned after the French idea of a public school. This has deprived Protestantism of a powerful agency in religious education. Illiteracy has been a hindrance to the propagation of the Gospel, therefore, evangelical schools have an important role to play. The types of evangelical schools needed in Brazil are: schools which illustrate the kind of education developed in a community where the ideals of Protestant Christianity are set forth, and schools to provide for religious education. These schools should be open to all who will accept this opportunity for their children, even though they may not be members of the church which sponsors them. These institutions should provide opportunity for every pupil and student to seek and to find a definite personal experience of regeneration. Thus leadership may be ultimately provided for the evangelical movement of the country.

Baptist Missions. Evangelism has been the first aim of the Baptists in Brazil for nearly three-quarters of a century. The influence of evangelism is to be seen in the study of the life of the people. Some of the early evangelistic workers used a tent for their children's meetings. The great majority of these little image worshipers would not dare to put a foot inside a Protestant church building, for they have been taught that it is next to an unpardonable sin to do so. The Gospel tent looks somewhat like a circus tent, so it is not a sin to enter it. There they hear the Gospel messages told on their level of understanding. After one series of meetings the tent resembled something of an art gallery. The display consisted of pictures and images of "saints" which converts brought and turned over to the evangelist. When they are converted they are through with these things which previously they actually worshipped.⁶

The seed of the Baptist Young People's Union movement sprouted in Brazilian soil almost as soon as it did in the United States. In 1903 the older children and young people of the Brazilian Baptist churches began to organize societies. Their difficulties were many resulting from lack of material

⁶ W. E. Allen, "A Gospel Tent in Brazil", Brazilian Snapshots I (September 1931) No. 1, p. 3.

written in their own language and having no trained leaders to guide them. The work of translating and adapting the training manual began in 1932.⁷ In 1935 the Sunday school and Baptist Young People's Union Board of Brazil reported an increase in the use of all periodicals. The number of scholars was almost 4,400 and the number of older children and young people enlisted in the unions was above 7,000. They held 52 Daily Vacation Bible Schools with an attendance of 3320 children.⁸ This work has been steadily increasing over the years and more and better equipment has been supplied for its continuing success.

The work of evangelism is most successful in those places where educational institutions are found. These Christian schools provide a stabilizing force in training and educating those who accept the Gospel. The Baptists maintain three schools in the north, which offer high school courses, and there are numerous primary schools and church schools carried on under the direction of the missionaries and native Christians which serve as forceful agencies of the Gospel. When the government decreed that the schools must be under national directorship, capable Baptist Brazilian leadership

⁷ T. B. Stover, "B.Y.P.U. In Brazil", Brazilian Snapshots, I (September 1932) No. 5, p. 2.

⁸ _____, "Brazilian Baptist Convention", Brazilian Snapshots IV, (May 1935), No. 1, p. 3.

was secured and the work has progressed in a remarkable manner. The leaders have cooperated whole-heartedly with the mission.

The Escola Trabalhadoras Cristas of Recife recently has added two years training after high school. While in training school the girls are given the opportunity to do practical work. On Sundays they work in the Sunday schools, teaching classes and directing children's work and taking part in the Training Unions. One summer a special course in child evangelism was offered by Miss Esther Blowers of the Child Evangelism Institute. After taking the course, the trained girls went out in churches and "congregations" to work with the children. They held thirty-two weekly classes from August to November with a total attendance of 7,150. From this number 225 children accepted Jesus as Savior. Many verses of Scripture were memorized by the children. With the aid of flannel-board pictures and stories, which the girls had prepared beforehand as a part of their course, the plan of salvation was clearly and simply presented. Missionary study courses were part of the curriculum and during the summer the girls went out into the interior of the state doing itinerant work especially conducting Vacation Bible Schools. Untold numbers have been won to Christ by the

influence of this institution.⁹ One Baptist pastor wrote to the director of the Child Evangelism Institute in Brazil saying, "Child Evangelism is revolutionizing the evangelical work of Brazil".¹⁰

The absence in Brazil of anything that makes for wholesome family life is one of the most serious problems in the evangelical church. Parents need to be trained because all the children will never be reached just by the missionaries. Mothers need to learn the care and nurture of children. These matters, together with the spiritual condition of the home are the supreme task of trained women leaders. The Baptist Convention has set up a well equipped women's Bible Training and Home Economics School at Recife. The two departments of the school train girls to become efficient Christian workers in the church and to be efficient home makers. This school is supplying thoroughly trained wives who are able to supplement their husband's pastoral work.¹¹

⁹ Austin Crouch, executive secretary, Annual Southern Baptist Convention, (Nashville: Southern Baptist Convention, 1944), pp. 234-235.

¹⁰ Harry G. Briault, "Child Evangelism in Brazil", Child Evangelism (January, 1949), p. 9.

¹¹ Merle J. Davis, How the Church Grows in Brazil, (Concord, New Hampshire: The Rumford Press, 1943), p. 85.

With such capable leaders being trained for the work of the Lord, junior boys and girls in Brazil have a brighter outlook for the future.

Baptists in North Brazil have eighty-five schools, either national, state, or church schools or church projects, seventy-eight of which are on the elementary level. The junior boys and girls in this area are receiving some instruction, but the need is still grave. These Baptist schools are laying the foundation for a literate, informed constituency in the next generation. The Baptist work in South Brazil has grown from a tiny seed to a great work in sixty-seven years.¹² This sector offers rich and varied opportunities to young people who feel called to invest their lives in the work of child evangelism.

Some special features of Baptist evangelistic work in Brazil should be mentioned, for open doors exist everywhere. The Catholic church is more active lately than before, but there is no open persecution of the Protestant work except in sporadic instances in backward sections. People everywhere, especially the children, are ready to hear the Gospel. It is a time of great opportunity and the churches everywhere are

¹² Dule K. McCall, executive secretary, Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, (Oklahoma City: The Executive Committee Southern Baptist Convention, 1949), p. 107-109.

making every effort toward securing a great harvest of souls. Open air services, in which loud-speakers attached to the cars of the missionaries are used, seem to give excellent results. The Baptist school in Belo Horizonte has a public address system on the roof of the building from which thirty minute programs, composed of music and a short sermon are broadcast. After a broadcast many requests come in for literature and New Testaments. The radio is an excellent means of sending out the Gospel. Censorship is lenient if no direct attack is made on Catholicism.¹³

The basic endeavor of 300 Baptist churches with pastors, evangelists and field missionaries, is to win twenty five million people in Brazil for Christ. To this end the churches are organized in state conventions and the officers of the conventions work with the state mission boards who plan the strategy for each year's work.¹⁴

Presbyterian Missions. The Presbyterian Church of the United States was one of the first denominations to begin work in Brazil. The work was successful and there were a large number of adherents. Local disagreement among the national workers split the church and one group broke from the parent society in the United States.

¹³ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 105.

The two main educational institutions, one of which is the Curso Jose Manael da Conceicao, has been directed by a Presbyterian missionary. The largest number of its boys and girls come from Presbyterian churches. It is fast becoming a pattern for other Latin American countries in the development of Christian workers. The school gives an intensive course to those who have not had the opportunity of an earlier education, and prepares them for college or theological seminary. This institution is also interested in the possibilities of lay service and has proposed an ambitious building program to care for its rapidly increasing student body.

The primary and high school course offered by the Mission at the Institution Dois de Julho at Salvador (Baia) has outgrown its present facilities. Boys and girls here are given the best in Brazilian education, and are brought under influences that present Christ to them in a new and living way.¹⁵

Brazilian pastors, evangelists, and young people work together with laymen to spread the Gospel in their country. There are opportunities for everyone in Brazil who is willing to let the Lord use him. Cooperation with lay workers is very encouraging. Without them, the work of child evangelism

¹⁵ "Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, Fourth Series, 1946", Volume 8, Part 2 Reports of the Boards (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1946), p. 76.

could hardly go on and certainly not as effectively. Eight parochial schools were started in 1945 with consecrated Christian teachers. These schools had 242 children who learned to read and write, study the Bible and hygiene. Such schools are a means of opening many closed doors, and of giving real testimony for Christ to these older boys and girls.

The present Presbyterian Missions in Brazil are not the equal of the established church, but they are an instrument of the board in aiding the church in the evangelization of Brazil and the strengthening of the national evangelical foothold. The mission is not the instrument of the church, but an autonomous body which cooperates with the church for a common purpose. "The Church should grow, the Mission diminish and eventually disappear."¹⁶ The greatest difficulty the church is experiencing is in getting capable missionaries to go into the interior. For this reason the over-all work of the church is being held back.¹⁷ Fresh enthusiasm coupled with

¹⁶ "Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, Fourth Series," Volume 9, Part 2 Reports of the Boards (Philadelphia: Office of the General assembly, 1947), p. 76.

¹⁷ "Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, Fourth Series", Volume 10 Part 2 Reports of the Boards (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1948), p. 94.

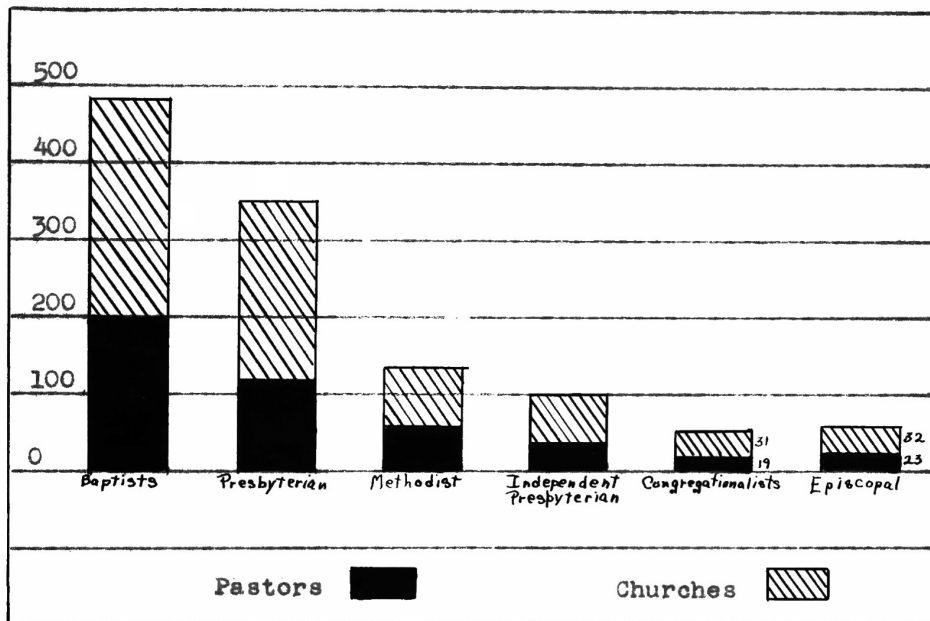


FIGURE 3

PASTORAL PROVISION in the six oldest denominations

new hope and courage brought by new missionaries arriving on the field, help both Mission and church in the evangelization of the large number of children.

Work of the Brazil Bible Society. J. H. Morris of the Brazil Bible Society reported last year that this society is distributing more than a million Bibles each year. This "gigantic effort" is being accomplished by an "army" of evangelists and colporteurs who travel through the streets, up the rivers, and in the back woods and mountains, by canoe, bicycle, car, or on foot. The goal of the society is not to interpret the Bible or to preach any certain doctrine, but make the Bible a common possession of all Brazilians.¹⁹ This is revolutionary in a land where the precious Book is kept from the children and adults by their religion.

III. THE TYPE OF CHILDREN'S WORK THAT BRAZIL NEEDS

The Christian schools and colleges of the various denominations are meeting a real need in the lives of the older children in Brazil. They are teaching them Christian ideals and Christian living, and their influence is being felt in every phase of life. These schools are limited in number and facilities, consequently they cannot reach all the children.

¹⁹ _____, "Million Bibles Go to Brazil Yearly," The Christian Century, (March 2, 1949), p. 276.

The work of child evangelism in Brazil must reach the learned as well as the unlearned, the rich as well as the poor. Since many of the older children are not allowed to come to the services in Protestant churches, there is need for an interdenominational child evangelism work that can operate apart from the churches and yet in cooperation with the work of the International Child Evangelism Fellowship in Brazil which is meeting this need. Their first years in Brazil were spent in preparation of material, which included the translation of child evangelism material into Portuguese, the national language of the country. The organization began its work in Daily Vacation Bible Schools in Brazil, because it is one of the greatest agencies for child evangelism in Brazil. Through this medium children are reached, and homes are opened that otherwise would be closed to Christian organizations.²⁰

The statistics for 1943 for the three north-eastern states which included Pernambuco, Paraíba, and Rio Grande do Norte are encouraging: home Bible classes, 1,639; total attendance, 54,023; Bible verses learned, 17,627; professed conversions, 1,370.²¹

²⁰ W. W. Enete, "The Daily Vacation Bible School", Brazilian Snapshots I (March 1932), No. 3, p. 3.

A law permitting religious instruction to be given in government graded schools has been taken advantage of by the Catholic church for twenty years. Evangelical children who did not attend Catholic classes were ostracized and persecuted. A Brethren missionary took steps to incorporate Protestant religious instruction in the schools. The results have been gratifying. In addition to the instruction received by the children, unbelieving directors and Roman Catholic teachers have become interested in the Gospel. In 1948 there were one hundred and fifty schools in the city of Sao Paulo, and about eight hundred and fifty in the state.²² The Child Evangelism Fellowship continues its work with home classes and open air meetings for children. A special and rapid training course is being prepared for those who will take up this work and this movement is spreading throughout all of Brazil.

²² Harry G. Briault, "Brazil Again", Child Evangelism, (January 1948), p. 13.

CHAPTER V

A PROPOSED PROGRAM OF CHILD EVANGELISM AMONG JUNIOR CHILDREN IN BRAZIL

I. PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAM

The first requisite for the successful prosecution of any task is a clear understanding of what is to be accomplished. There are in Brazil multiplied millions who because of isolation, superstition, and ignorance know nothing of Christ. The primary purpose of child evangelism is to teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every child. The junior age group is perhaps the most receptive to the call of God. They deserve, therefore, the utmost consideration in the work of Protestant child evangelism, for the Gospel is not preached in Brazil except as it is preached by the Protestant missionary. Brazilian children are quick, alert, and responsive and deserving of our friendship and assistance therefore the contribution to the evangelization of these older children ought to be made in a constructive way. Truth should be made understandable and easy to grasp. It should be presented clearly, interestingly, and forcefully.

Learning the language presents an acute problem for the missionary. The children of Brazil have a street language all their own, which must be understood if the missionary

would talk effectively to them. Words are tools and the teacher must be constantly aware of new words to be introduced into the child's vocabulary. Such words as salvation, grace, new birth, faith, Savior, and heaven, should be used and the evangelist should see that these words are made clear to the child and related to his past experience. Once new words are taught the teacher should see that they become a natural part of the child's own vocabulary. The teacher who recognized the value of new words will seek to work patiently with these juniors, explaining the various words and illustrations of her message.¹

"The key to all attention is interest."² If these juniors are restless and inattentive, they should not be rebuked, rather, the method of presentation of the lesson should be analyzed. Today the trend in secular education is to use visual aids for the presentation of material. Visual teaching includes anything that uses the eye in assimilating facts that the brain will act upon. It is an "attention getter" and a "memory hook" on which to hang truths of the lesson.³

¹ Hamilton, Ch. IX op. cit., p. 28.

² Benson, op. cit., p. 154.

³ Gladys Seigfried, "Try Flannelgraph for all Ages", Christian Life (February, 1950), p. 28.

Dexterity, suspense, movement, and color are four basic principles to be used in teaching by the visual method. The flannelgraph, when correctly used, incorporates all these. It is a simple teaching aid consisting of flannel-covered board and flannel backed cut-outs that cling to the board. The movement of the teacher in manipulating the cut-outs as they are shifted captures wandering attention. Flannelgraphs fall into two main groups, they build up story scene and the flannel diagram lesson. In the latter, Bible truths are illustrated with cut-out symbols similar to the diagram method.

The story scene type is used by missionaries in teaching Brazilian Juniors. This method teaches Bible customs and costumes which in many instances have a direct bearing on the story. It also is the basis for mental pictures of stories verbally told at a later time. Flannelgraph teaching is adapted to all age groups. For beginners the story should be simple, with few characters, dealing with stories of God's love, and children of the Bible. Lesson content may be increased for the primary age. Juniors enjoy any stories that deal with real persons that they can set up as ideals or heroes. They also enjoy visualized Bible stories that contain map study and historical material. They also respond to flannel object lessons with morals applying to everyday living.

The flannelgraph is not available for teaching all

truths, neither will a carelessly selected flannelgraph solve all teaching problems, but when well selected it can be used by the Holy Spirit to teach truth.⁴ The flannelgraph is especially good in teaching Brazilian juniors, because the pictures are shown as illustrations and removed after the message. If pictures of Bible characters are hung on the walls, Brazilian children, who are used to worshipping pictures of saints, will begin to worship them. The missionary must be constantly alert to guard against any false presentation of illustrated material, or misunderstanding of illustrations used.

Object lessons, successfully used, interest Brazilian juniors in the missionary as well as the lesson. Object lessons hold attention and are a real asset to recalling truth. The first sentence should build up a bridge from the child's present knowledge to the new truth the teacher is about to present. One definite, specific truth should be taught, and then a vital response from the child's heart should be sought. The teach should be energetic, using natural activity to command attention. The objects used should be related to the everyday life of the junior boy and girl. If simple magic is used in the object lessons it should be explained immediately. Brazilian children are very superstitious and they believe

⁴ Siegfried, op. cit., p. 29.

everything to be supernatural that cannot be explained. The application of the lesson should be made as the message is given, long introductions and conclusions being avoided. The climax and applications should be simultaneous.⁵

Every junior child in Brazil should own his own Bible, which may be secured from the Brazil Bible Society. Competitive drills in looking up verses is a pleasant and profitable learning experience.

Story telling is one of the oldest methods of teaching children, and juniors will enjoy dramatizing the story after they have heard it. Old Testament stories and New Testament parables lend themselves to spontaneous representation. Because juniors are creative, with an abundance of energy, acting out the simple truths they have just heard in the story, afford an opportunity for teaching vivid sections of human experience. Standards of conduct can be made concrete when they act the part of the heroes they worship. Costumes and scenery are unnecessary, they are imaginary. Attention should be directed to the value of the story rather than minute details. Hearing stories that involve moral struggles like their own, and showing the natural consequences of right and wrong choices tend to form ideals.

⁵ Neale Richard, "Hold Their Attention with Object Lessons," Christian Life, (February, 1950), p. 33.

Child evangelists teaching this age group of Brazilian children have the great responsibility of bringing each junior to personally and publicly accept Christ as his Savior. The evangelist is the central figure in the sixth year, the Bible the central object in the ninth year, so Christ should be the center and supreme hero in the closing days of childhood.

After these Brazilian children have had a personal experience in Christ they should be nurtured and given responsibility in evangelism also. Children's choirs singing the Gospel choruses are a great aid to worship. Organized group life is necessary for spiritual nurture and the Sunday school classes of the established churches offer opportunities for group activities and Christian associations.

These new converts should be taught the reality of spiritual life. A conscious reverence for sacred things should be part of the thinking of every converted junior. Joking about such things as prayer, the church, the Bible, the sacraments, or other instruments of worship should be sublimated into new attitudes. To propagate the Gospel in Brazil every agency or institution should keep in close contact with the established churches that those who are won for Christ may feel the new life offered by these new converts. Many of the established churches have spent energy for self propagation

at the expense of spiritual life.

The training of leaders to teach these juniors should be the outstanding major co-operative program of the national churches. Christian workers employed by the mission boards should be selected only after their spirituality and Christian experience are fully assured.

The national churches should accept defined areas for their activity instead of overworking areas that are already occupied. Overlapping will lead to friction and consequent loss of spiritual power.⁶ Brazil is much too large to neglect whole sections of the country and continue to spiritually feed the children who have already become established in other evangelical denominational work.

The two groups of children that the evangelizing agencies should contact are: the rural population, those who live on small farms and the upper middle class of intellectuals who will later become the leaders of tomorrow. The tendency is to concentrate work in the urban areas, but problems of illiteracy throughout the country should be attacked and the distribution of the word of God increased. Then should follow personal evangelism among the children, especially the juniors, who in turn will help to evangelize the adults.

⁶ Erasmo Braga, and Kenneth G. Grubb, The Republic of Brazil, p. 128.

II. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Brazilian junior is a mixture of races and social habits. His religion is an adapted form of Catholicism which includes many forms of Indian and Negro worship. Generally speaking, Brazilian juniors are good-natured, generous, hospitable, friendly and courteous. The psychology of the junior age Brazilian boy and girl resembles that of other races. He is active, physically and mentally alert, and group rather than individual loyalties play an important part in his life. He manifests an increasing interest in persons as ideals which results in hero-worship.

The ultimate aim of the junior teacher is to teach Jesus Christ as the hero of all heroes, that the junior may find Christ. The second aim is to train him in Christian living. Jesus should be considered as the moral leader in group as well as in individual lives. Christian living has as its object specific habits of conduct. Clean thinking and living, fair play, regular prayer and Bible study, and taking the Lord as companion through life, will effect the moral struggle against evil in Brazil today.

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