

Taylor University

## Pillars at Taylor University

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Milo Rediger Writings & Addresses

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### How Much May Taylor Expand and Still Remain "Effectively Christian?" (response to panel discussion)

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*Taylor University*

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ATTENTION: Dr. Milo A. Rediger

The theme for this panel discussion is, "How much may Taylor expand and still remain 'effectively Christian'?" With this thought in mind, would you please answer the following questions and give us your opinions? Thank you.

- 1) Would the intimate Christian fellowship of the Taylor students be lost if the school expanded? Why?
- 2) Would this expansion force Taylor University to employ non-Christians as teachers, staff, and administration? Why or why not?
- 3) Would expansion increase Taylor's spiritual influence upon the surrounding communities or would she lose all spiritual contact? Please state reasons for your answer.
- 4) If Taylor should expand, would it be advisable to "loosen the reins" in reference to the present rules and regulations? Why or why not?
- 5) If Taylor should expand, to what type of student would this appeal?

Dr. Rediger,

As one of the panel members assigned to the personal opinions of the administration, I wish to thank you for your cooperation and time.

Sincerely,  
Charles Norman

1. I suppose the answers to all of the questions will be influenced by our definition of expansion. Twenty years ago it was the opinion of many people in education, and I shared this opinion, that five or six hundred was the maximum enrollment for a good small Christian college. In the early 1950s our advance planning committee, in view of what we could anticipate in the 1960s and 1970s, revised this goal upward to 1200. We felt that it was our responsibility to meet a part of the increasing need for higher education. We felt that if the Taylor program is good, it should be made available to many more young people. We also felt that, if growth adjustments are made in the proper way, we could not only retain but actually increase the quality of the uniqueness and advantages of the small college.

Now, of course, we have again revised our goals up to 1800. As we live and grow and learn, it seems that we should do at least this to help meet the needs of our time. I also believe that we can retain and continue to improve the real qualities of the "small" Christian liberal arts college. I believe there is a numerical limit, and that we would have exceeded that limit if we were to go to three or four or five thousand students. I am confident, however, that the 1800 of the 1970s would compare favorably with the 500 of the 1940s, and that the intimate Christian fellowship of Taylor students will not be lost within the limits of this expansion program.

2. It is my opinion that, within the limits of expansion as defined here, we will not be forced to employ non-Christians as teachers or administrators. This is, of course, becoming more and more difficult, but at the present time we have no intention of abandoning the unique combination of intellectual qualifications and spiritual commitment which we now look for when we employ our people. It may become necessary to allow somewhat more flexibility than we have had in the past, and it may be necessary for us to acknowledge more differences among individuals. I do not think it will be necessary, however, to go so far as to employ people who classify themselves as non-Christians.

3. I do not see why expansion, again defined as before, should in any way cause Taylor University to lose "spiritual contact" with the surrounding communities. It would seem, rather, that with more people of the same persuasion and more people working at the same task, we should be able to increase our spiritual influence commensurately. I base this opinion on the assumption that we will continue to find, at both faculty and student levels, the kind of people who are interested in Taylor's twin marks of distinction and who will contribute positively to the further development of these qualities in higher education.

4. It would be difficult to respond intelligently without a careful definition of "loosening the reins". For any kind of group living, ~~some~~ regulations are necessary. This does not necessarily mean strict and rigid control of all individual conduct. It does mean a pattern of living in which the rights of others are considered

and in which all parties give up some personal "freedoms" in consideration of the personal freedoms of others. I suppose a case in point is the rule on the use of tobacco. I know that most other Christian colleges have long since operated by the "campus rule". This means that the use of tobacco is prohibited within the boundaries of the campus but that no effort is made to select the kind of students who do not have the tobacco habit. So far we have been able, with few exceptions, to populate our student body with young people who are not addicted to the use of tobacco. Personally, I would like to continue this. Whether or not it would become necessary to change to the campus rule remains to be seen. However, I do not feel that expansion as such, at least within the limits as defined here, will be the major determining influence on this point.

5. It is my opinion that, expanding as I have defined expansion here, the Taylor appeal would continue to be as it has been in the past. Again, I do not believe that this expansion as such would be a significant factor in determining the appeal. It could be a factor, and, as such, could be congenial and favorable rather than negative.

Milo A. Rediger