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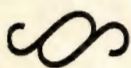
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The
Urgent
Need

for

CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION



By
M. NORVEL YOUNG

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Abilene, Texas

FOREWORD

The 1952 Bible Lectureship at Abilene Christian College emphasized the plea for a return to New Testament teaching and Christian living.

A discussion of Christian education in the home, school, and church was given by M. Norvel Young, preacher for the Broadway church in Lubbock, Texas.

Approval and commendation by scores of persons interested in Christian education, along with numerous requests for copies of the text, has made us feel that this address should be published. The enthusiastic reception given the sermon by so many members of the church is an indication of the growing interest everywhere regarding the education of our young people.

Brother Young's discussion is presented in a clear, frank, and objective way. Such a far-reaching, timely, and vital subject deserves the prayerful consideration of every Christian.

DON H. MORRIS, *President*
Abilene Christian College
Abilene, Texas

The Urgent Need for Christian Education

BY M. NORVEL YOUNG

Too many of us today are like the college student who showed up in class with a sign pinned on his sweater with the letters, "B. A. I. K." His professor asked him just what that stood for and he said: "Boy, Am I Konfused." "But," objected the professor, "confused is not spelled with a 'K'." "Well," said the student, "that just goes to show how confused I am!"

There is no one to doubt that our world is in a confused and demoralized state. Boys dying in the Far East while technically "peace" exists at home. Apparent prosperity while inflation threatens all our economic values. More people on church rolls than ever before in the history of the nation and yet more ungodly wickedness. Jeremiah has a message for our times. Centuries ago he wrote by inspiration these words which sound strangely modern and up-to-the-minute:

"But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. . . . For among my people are found wicked men; they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit; therefore they are become great, and waxen rich."

He goes on to describe the moral and spiritual deterioration of his time and of ours in these words:

"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof? . . . For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely . . . saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace."

Doesn't that sound like it might be a commentary on conditions in these United States this year of our Lord, 1952?

"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed neither could they blush; therefore they shall fall among them that fall at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord." Then it is that Jeremiah makes this eloquent appeal which we apply today to our nation and particularly to our modern system of education: "Thus, saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."¹

1. Jeremiah 6

Root of Evil

Every fruit goes back to a root. A good tree will bear good fruit, and an evil tree will bear evil fruit. We believe that much of the responsibility for the evils of our generation must be placed upon the kind of training which our generation has received from the homes, the churches, and the schools of our nation. H. G. Spaulding, a high school principal in New Jersey, pointed this out in the educators magazine, *School and Society*:

"Black markets have flourished, supported by millions of dishonest citizens. Innumerable strikes have threatened the welfare of our people, as workers and employers alike, have shown a callous disregard for the rights of their fellow citizens. In a multitude of ways, in large affairs and small, our people have given evidence of a lack of that moral sense which exalteth a nation. Who are these adults who wreck their homes, seek wealth by dishonest means, and violate the laws of God and man? Why they are our former pupils, and in part we made them what they are."²

Fearful Facts

The moral and spiritual breakdown of millions of our fellow citizens did not just happen. It is no accident that one marriage out of three ends in divorce, that a major crime is committed every 17 seconds (and largely by juveniles), that gangsters and racketeers can grow so powerful they can flaunt our laws and control many of our great cities and even reach into Washington with their filthy fingers dripping with violence and vice. Something is wrong with the kind of training which produces a generation which spends twenty billion annually on gambling, more than on all their clothes and shoes. Somewhere we have missed the road when 65,000,000 of our people drink alcoholic beverages while more than 4,000,000 are chronically in trouble with drunkenness, and 1,200,000 annually die from alcoholism or related diseases.³

And yet in spite of alcohol being the greatest killer, worse than cancer or heart disease, our people will not even vote to stop the use of millions of dollars annually to use radio, television, and the press to persuade teen agers and their parents to drink more and more. The Langer bill in Congress would prohibit such advertising, but not enough people are concerned. "My people love to have it so," said Jeremiah of the corrup-

2. H. G. Spaulding, "Education and the Crisis in Character," *School and Society*, 3-29-1947, p. 219.

3. Estimates from the Yale Clinic on Alcoholism.

tion of his day. There are more girls tending bars in our nation than attending college! In this day when clear heads and pure hearts are so direly needed, our nation's capitol is rated as the heaviest drinking city in the world, including Moscow.

Senator Tobey put his finger on the problem when he said: "The underworld of America operates on a budget of billions of dollars—larger than any single state, and second only to that of the United States. And where does it get its money? From multitudes of men and women, who with calloused consciences participate in varying degrees in its lawless activities. If all these people would find God . . . the source of income and power of the archcriminals would dry up." These and similar statements from educators, editors, business executives, as well as preachers, show some signs of an awakening to the dangers which confront us. But the general public reaction to exposes of crime and abominable corruption is that of apathy, a shrug of the shoulders, and a "What's to be excited about" attitude. Jeremiah's description fits too well. "They were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush."

Action Needed—Now

Fellow Christians, it is time to wake up. We Christians must lead the way. We must ask for the old paths of righteousness and walk therein. Our time to act is limited. It is limited by the brevity of our lives. It is limited by God's forbearance. How long will He allow our nation in immorality, corruption, and sin? Oh, someone says, "There have always been prophets of doom who said the world was going to the dogs and yet we are still being blessed." Yes, but had you ever considered the historical fact that all the other "worlds" or "civilizations" of the past that violated God's laws have "gone to the dogs?" Where are the Babylonians? Where are the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Greece, and Rome? Those "worlds" went to the dogs and God raised up people with stronger moral convictions and gave them a chance. Just as surely as we continue as a nation in gross unrighteousness we "shall be cast down, saith the Lord." The need is urgent for a moral and spiritual regeneration of our people. Who else can lead the way if the people of God do not? Where better to start than with our program of training the coming generation?

The Three-Fold Plan

First, we shall deal with the inadequacies of our huge system of public education, and then

suggest some practical ways in which we can help solve the problems through improving our system of public schooling, through free private Christian schools, through the home, and through the training program God delegated to the church.

One reason we treat the public education system first is because so many parents have been led to believe that they can turn all their educational problems over to the public school and if enough money is appropriated the end result will be wonderful. The thousands of God-fearing, Bible-believing educators in our public system recognize that more is needed than money to guarantee success. Our public system of education is a remarkable achievement. It is one of the most significant achievements of our time, and nothing which we say by way of constructive criticism should be construed to mean that we join those of certain faiths who would seek to destroy it. It is not the system which we oppose. The system is merely a huge and effective tool which can be used to disseminate truth or error. But we are strongly opposed to the efforts of secular and materialistic forces which are seeking to employ our public schools for their unworthy goals!

Public School Potential

The very size of our educational system and the trend toward centralization makes it difficult to keep it a servant of the children and their parents. More than a million and a quarter teachers are employed in this largest American business. More than thirty-five million students are engaged in full-time study with more than four million in part-time study. In other words, approximately one-fifth of our total population is engaged in some aspect of the gigantic American school system. Consider what a potent tool this is for influencing the destiny of our people. Consider what a temptation this multi-billion dollar industry is to those who would control our youth for their own selfish ends. One of the significant trends in modern dictatorships of the type of Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin is the use they have made of the public school systems to propagandize the children for their evil purposes. There is a trend today to obligate our schools to the national government by Federal Aid to education. We may be sure that in time whoever pays the piper will call the tune. Let us keep the control of our public schools in the hands of the local communities, close to the homes they are to serve!

Of or From?

Our major criticism of the job being done, by and large, by our public schools is that we have mistaken freedom of religion for freedom *from* religion. We are strongly opposed to the dominance of our schools by a sectarian church, but we believe that it is equally dangerous for the irreligious, naturalistic philosophy of life to be inculcated at public expense. Dr. Rodney Cline, Professor of Education at Louisiana State University states it concisely:

"If knowledge is increased without an accompanying increase in moral and spiritual responsibility, tragedy results. Modern public education in America seeks, as it were, to ignore the existence of any obligation which it may have in this respect. Despite the religious nature and the religious reasons for existence of early American education, later trends have ushered in a day when materialistic considerations are all the vogue, while spiritual matters are ignored, if not actually forbidden, as part of the life of the school."

He goes further to describe the situation aptly:

"In jealously guarding against the sectarian dominance of education, a point of reaction has been reached which is surely too much in the opposite direction. Sectarianism and religion are by no means synonymous, but in this case they have been treated as such. In attempting to see that the religious beliefs and practices of no church might hold sway in the public school, modern society finds itself burdened with an educational system in which, while the teaching of religion is prohibited, the teaching of things anti-religious is condoned."

It is impossible to teach in a philosophical or religious vacuum. We have closed the door to teaching about God as the Creator of the universe, but we have left another door open to those who would "teach a so-called naturalistic philosophy in which God is not mentioned, and where the learner is supposed to believe that nothing is higher than the materialistic laws of nature." Thus, Dr. Cline continues "the child is deprived of the opportunity for the wholesome stimulation of that part of his nature which is nobler, and more important, than all the rest."⁴

Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert puts it succinctly in these sentences:

"Colleges today turn out students who have an intimate acquaintance with Russian novelists, but lack so much as a nodding acquaintance with the Bible."

4. Rodney Cline, **Boardman**, Journal of the Louisiana School Boards Association, 1951.

"The lack of serious concern with religion in institutions of higher learning is at least a partial explanation of the lack of dedication and commitment, in many of their graduates."

"In effect, even if not in intent, the educational institutions are saying to students: 'Religion is not important enough to be a concern of the university. We omit it because it is a matter of minor importance, not calling for serious examination.'"

Dr. Cavert goes on to criticize the "warped kind of education which came from an intensive study of Julius Ceasar but no reference to Jesus Christ."⁵

Cut-flower Generation

We believe that the real foundations of the best in our culture go back to the Bible and to Jesus Christ. We believe the respect for human personality which makes democracy possible goes back beyond Bunker Hill to the Sermon on the Mount. The very beginning of our public school system grew out of a desire on the part of God-fearing citizens that their children should learn to read and write and "Be taught the principles of religion and the capital laws of the country and be put to useful work," to quote from the General Court of Boston in 1642. In 1647 they were more explicit in stating their purpose:

"It being one chief project of ye ould deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of ye scriptures, effort must be made to thwart this ould deluder, ye learning may not be buried in ye grave of our fathers in ye church and Commonwealth."

Not only were elementary schools begun with this spiritual end in mind, with the Bible for one of its textbooks, but our earliest and most famous colleges were started by men who feared God and loved the Bible. Harvard University was begun with an estate left by a preacher and its motto was "For Christ and the Church."

Let us contrast this general sentiment which was sympathetic toward Christianity with the import of the report of a committee of outstanding educators appointed by Harvard to outline a course for higher education. The report is emphatically non-Christian and in some instances even anti-Christian. Truly ours is a cut-flower generation. We have cut the roots of faith in God, and the Bible, which produced the best flowers of our culture. We are blinded to the fact that the freedom and prosperity we enjoy grow out of the spiritual values which we as a people

5. Quotes in *Our Sunday Visitor*, pp. 1, 4, 1951.

are denying. Notice this important report which has been very influential in educational circles:

“Sectarian colleges have, of course, their solution . . . the conviction that Christianity gives meaning and ultimate unity to all parts of the curriculum, indeed to the whole life of the college. Yet, this solution is out of the question in publicly supported colleges, and is practically, if not legally impossible in most others. Some think it the Achilles’ heel of democracy, that by its very nature it cannot foster general agreement on ultimates, and perhaps must foster the contrary.”

Overlooking the prejudicial term “sectarian” to cover all private schools with a Christian view of life, we notice the insinuation that the unity which our modern world is seeking cannot be found in Christianity. Notice further!

“As early Protestantism, rejecting the authority and philosophy of the medieval church, placed reliance on each man’s personal reading of the Scriptures, so this present movement, rejecting the supreme authority of the Scriptures, places reliance on the reading of those books which are taken to represent the fullest revelation of the Western mind. . . . Whatever one’s views, religion is not now for most colleges or universities a practical source of intellectual unity.”

In this connection it might be pointed out that the great publishing project known as “Great Books of the Western World” contains some forty volumes which our leading educators consider important for modern man, and the Bible is not included! Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, Augustine, Aquinas, Shakespeare, Milton, but not the Bible! Oh Lord, open the eyes of the blind guides who lead the blind youth of our day!

A Faithful Remnant

We are not saying that the full-fruits of materialistic and naturalistic philosophy which has infiltrated into our educational system is seen in all of our local schools. There are thousands of devoted teachers and school executives who have not bowed the knee to Baal, but there is no doubting the planned and concerted effort on the part of many educational leaders to banish faith in God and Christ and the Bible from the minds of our children. John Dewey is the dean of educational philosophers today, and although he has contributed many valuable educational techniques, his basic philosophy is that of pragmatic experimentalism, opposed to the Christian view of the world. Here is one of many quotations which bear this out:

“We affirm that genuine values and tenable

ends and ideals are to be derived from what is found within the movement of experience. Hence, we deny that they can be derived from authority, human or supernatural, or from any transcendent source.”⁶

To take this out of philosophical terminology and put it into the words of a student of his, we quote: “Faith in God and in authority, ideals of soul and immortality, belief in divine Grace—these have been made impossible for the educated mind of today.”⁷ 7

Two Views of Man

Under this type of influence in our colleges and universities and with tens of thousands of teachers who have absorbed varying degrees of it, is it any wonder that thousands of young people are acting like the animals they have been taught they are? Is it surprising that our divorce rate is shooting up, that our athletic contests are marred by bribery, and that the honor system on examinations breaks down? Is it any wonder that of the more than two million young people in colleges today fewer than one in twenty ever study any system of ethics or moral values, to say nothing of the Bible itself? As Bernard Iddings Bell puts it in his important book, *Crisis in Education*:⁸

“Many a mild-mannered professor, who goes on being scholarly and scientific but who forgets and fails to give to others a sense of man’s high destiny and dignity is as truly a foe to humanity as any designing dictator. Karl Marx, for instance, had no idea . . . that he was helping to lift into power a Stalin or a Molotov.”

Dr. Bell goes on to ask why it is that most modern universities have ruled out the discussion of the “Why” of life. He claims that it is not so much the universities’ forgetfulness of God as “its debased conception of man.” Its tacit assumption is that man is only an animal, and that his happiness, significance, greatness are to be achieved by providing him with the increasing satisfaction of his animal appetites, the appetites for food and shelter and rest and play and sex.” God and religion are ruled out as “irrelevant.”

In sharp contrast to this conception is the Christian view of man. Jesus said that the end or purpose of man is to “know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” Solomon stated that “The fear of the Lord is the beginning

6. “The Underlying Philosophy of Education,” Quoted in Cook, *Philosophy, Education and Certainty*, p. 252.

7. Norman Woefel, *Molders of the American Mind*, p. 119.

8. Bernard Iddings Bell, *Crisis in Education*, McGraw-Hill, 1949, p. 166.

(essence, first principle) of knowledge.”⁹ The difference between the Christian concept and the materialistic, naturalistic concept of so many modern educators is fundamental, and basic. You cannot sow to the one and reap the other.

Light a Candle

Let us hasten to remind the reader that it is not the powerful system which we criticize, but the abuse of that system by those leaders who have denied the supernatural, Christian view of life and who seek to impose their philosophy upon our children through public education. Our vast educational system is but a tool to be used for enlightenment, freedom, and virtuous character development, or to be used by designing man for the enslavement, and moral degradation of our country's youth. Like the radio or the telephone the same marvelous instruments can be used to uplift mankind or to propagate falsehoods and deceive the people. Let us not be so enamored of the new tool that we think it can do no harm. Modern airplanes are wonderful or terrible depending upon their use. They can carry doctors and medicines to disaster victims or they can carry atomic bombs and poison gas to be dropped on hospitals and residential areas. Their use depends upon the philosophy or faith of the men or order of the mission. The most important thing about any man is his underlying philosophy of life or his concept of God and man.

But it is not enough to “curse the darkness,” or to point out some things that are wrong. The Chinese proverb says: “It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.” What can we as Christian parents do? We cannot do everything, but we can do something, and simply because we cannot do everything we should not refuse to do the something which we can do. Let us notice what we can do in the home, in the church, and in the school.

The Home

The home is a divine institution ordained by God as the place where the prime responsibility for the rearing of the child should be placed. To parents God says: “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.” There is no substitute for the real Christian home as the matrix of Christian character! Dr. Bell points out that too many have assumed that fathers and mothers are invariably in-

9. Proverbs 1:7.

competent and "that public school teachers, under the direction of skilled scientists in education, are the proper and almost infallible guides of youth." It simply is not so. There are tens of thousands of skilled and consecrated God-fearing teachers in our public schools, but they are prohibited by law from giving your child the Bible knowledge, the development in religious convictions, that he must have to become the Christian person you desire him to be. And anyway, you have the child through six of his most formative years before the public school enters the field. You cannot begin too early to teach him to respect and love you, to respect his playmates, to pray to God through Jesus Christ, to be truthful and fair, to be unselfish, and to love others. The ancient Jews tried to teach their children before they could talk so that the first word they uttered would be a quotation from scripture. Too many parents are influenced by the materialism of our day to think that their primary obligation is to feed and clothe the child. Your child is not just a body. He is an immortal soul that will live forever. He needs spiritual guidance and instruction from the Word of God.

" . . . A Partial Statement . . . "

But someone may protest that parents are not always informed as to the latest findings of the psychologist or psychiatrist. It is well for them to be informed, but not to be overawed by the latest fads. The fads in child training that were so popular ten to fifteen years ago are now out of date, but the poor children who were the guinea-pigs will carry the scars of the mistakes through life. Do not be intimidated by the "authorities."

One prominent psychologist has said: "Boil down all that we have really learned" about human personality and you have "a poor and partial statement of the sermon on the mount." Follow the principles of Christ's way and you will not wake up some morning to find that your methods have been discarded by the "authorities." Teach your child the Word of God "when thou liest down and when thou risest up and when thou walkest by the way." Continue that training all through school days, for even though your child is in school six or seven hours a day you still have the rest of the waking hours to influence his character. Read his textbooks. Check up on the attitudes he is being taught, and counteract any which are not in harmony with the Christ-Way.

Especially let me urge fathers to take responsibility for their child's training. God expects fathers to do more than pay the bills. "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."¹¹ Children are told in the same chapter to "obey your parents in the Lord" and fathers have the prime responsibility, as heads of the household, to see that their children are "nurtured" in the Christian Way. One successful and prominent citizen recently said: "I owe my success to being brought up on the knee of a devoted mother and across the knee of a determined father." Let us go back to the Bible and put the emphasis upon child-training in the Christian home.

Soul of Education

Next, we ask what the church can do? The church of the New Testament is described as the pillar and ground of the truth. Its primary obligation is to teach the Word of God to those in the world and to those in the kingdom. The church must never abdicate in favor of the state. The child is a living soul, not designed for the state, but for God. John Milton expressed it in classic words: "The end of all education is for the child to gain knowledge of God in Christ, and out of that knowledge to love Him, to imitate Him, and to grow like Him." We cannot expect the state to accomplish this end and we should not expect the home to do it alone. The church has a heavy educational responsibility which its members cannot afford to shirk. There is no doubt about the fact that a part of the blame for the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of our generation lies in a failure of the church to effectively train its children, its youth, and adults.

The soul of education is the education of the soul. God intended that his divine "body," the church, the kingdom of God on earth, should not only teach all nations, and baptize those taught, but teach those baptized "all things whatsoever I have commanded you."¹² I am thoroughly convinced that most churches of Christ are not beginning to start to commence to do this educational task as effectively as it should be done. The elders of each church should give hours of prayerful consideration of ways and means of improving their "nurturing program." Too many spiritual babes are lost for lack of the sincere milk of the word. Our infant mortality rate is a shame. If we could actually see souls starving

11. Ephesians 6:4.

12. Matthew 28:19, 20.

and dying as we can see bodies, we would be aghast at the picture.

Only Ten Per Cent

So we plead, let us go back to the old paths in our training program in the church. Let us get back to the New Testament example of a daily training program. "And everyday, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ."¹³ Our church buildings should be used seven days a week. There should be daily classes for pre-school children taught by volunteer teachers that have sacrificed to train for such work. Some of our religious neighbors are teaching such children by the tens of thousands. There is no reason why we cannot teach these children the Bible effectively with the use of story hours, workbooks, visual aids, etc. . . . Then we can follow this up with daily Bible classes for all ages of school children after school hours. In some communities it is possible to get released time from school for such a program. In the evenings various classes for young married couples, for new converts, for the training of elders and deacons and preachers can be conducted. We are not touching the hem of the garment. Most Sunday Bible Schools could be doubled in a year's time with proper training of the teachers and enthusiastic work on the part of the faithful Christians. The average church spends about ten per cent of its energy and money on its Bible School and yet one study showed that seventy-five per cent of new members come through the Bible School, eighty-five per cent of the workers in the church, and ninety per cent of preachers, elders and missionaries. More prayer and more money and more effort should be expended in this teaching program each Sunday morning! Also most churches can have classes for all ages to train for service prior to the evening worship period, and can have very effective vacation Bible Schools the first two weeks after public school is out. Let us pray that there will be a great awakening throughout the fourteen thousand or more churches of Christ in our land and throughout the world so that the church may indeed be the pillar and ground of the truth in every locality. Let us work to that end with redoubled zeal!

Christian Teachers

Lastly, we shall notice what can be done through the schools. One of the most obvious things is

13. Acts 5:42.

the need for more Christian parents to take an active interest in their local public school system and seek to influence it so that it will at least provide as favorable an opportunity as possible for the training of boys and girls from Christian homes. Where we can conscientiously do so, we should take part in parent-teacher meetings and let our voice be heard for schools that will inculcate freedom of religion, but not freedom from true faith in God and the Bible. If God-fearing parents do not take an interest in their public schools we may be sure that the element which does not fear God or accept His word will take over. Also, we should try to encourage real Christian teachers to use their influence through the public school system. More Christian boys and girls should enter the teaching profession, even though it may not be as profitable as others. The example and influence of a Godly teacher is most powerful, and we thank God for the thousands of devoted teachers who have resisted the materialistic philosophy so prevalent today.

Christian Schools

But we might as well face the fact that all of our efforts in this direction are hampered by the fact that such a great number of people in our nation do not want the schools to be oriented in favor of God and the Bible. Since the public schools are for all, we must do our best to influence them in the right direction, but there is another way in which we can light a candle of righteousness; that is, what we often call Christian education through private schools supported and controlled by Christian people. One of the freedoms of our land, and we trust that it shall long prevail, is the freedom of individuals to establish and maintain schools which are in harmony with their faith and ideals. Within the restoration movement more than twenty-five colleges and a number of primary and secondary schools have been established during the last century and a quarter. The leaders in the restoration movement of the nineteenth century in this country were men of education and men who appreciated the importance of enlightenment. Alexander Campbell established Bethany College in West Virginia because he felt the need of a liberal arts college where the Bible was taught as a textbook. He said:

“In all ages of Christianity, the reformers of the world were educated men. Who have been the fathers of Protestantism, of Bible translation, and of the diffusion of Christian light, learning

and science in the world . . . who were not nursed and cherished in the bosom of a college?" Then he goes on to say: "We, indeed, as a people devoted to the Bible cause, and to the Bible alone, for Christian faith and manners and discipline, have derived much advantage from literature and science, from schools and colleges. Of all people in the world we ought then to be, according to our means, the greatest patrons of schools and colleges."¹⁴

Campbell goes on to emphasize the fact that the restorers did not accept the idea that religious convictions came from the mystical or miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit, but said:

"Religious ideas, like others, can come only through the processes of clear thought working upon materials furnished by the senses; that feelings and the mystical consciousness gives us no valid religious knowledge; that man can know God only through revelation, which must come in clear sensory form; that faith is an intellectual act, the belief of testimony given by revelation."¹⁵

Products of Conviction

With such a conviction it is no wonder that the leaders in the restoration movement emphasized the need of schools and colleges which would teach the Bible as a text. Tolbert Fanning founded Franklin College near Nashville, Tennessee in 1845 and Burritt College was established at Spencer, Tennessee in 1849, and Add-Ran College was begun in Thorp Spring, Texas in 1873. These three were the pioneer institutions. Later the Nashville Bible School was established by David Lipscomb and James A. Harding in 1891 and the predecessor of Freed-Hardeman College was founded in 1885 at Henderson, Tennessee. More than twenty-five colleges have been established by members of the church with eight living today. These eight are: David Lipscomb College, Freed-Hardeman College, Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas, Abilene Christian College in Abilene, Texas, George Pepperdine College in Los Angeles, California, Montgomery Bible College in Montgomery, Alabama, Florida Christian College in Tampa, Florida, and Central Christian College in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. In addition to these colleges there are a number of high schools and grade schools devoted to the same ideals.

14. "Colleges—No. 1." *Millennial Harbinger*, Series Four, II (1852), 110.

15. Quoted in *A History of Christian Colleges*, by M. Norvel Young, Old Paths Book Club, 1949, p. 25.

Tallow and String

These schools are adjuncts to the home in the training of children beyond the capacity or opportunity of the home to train them. They cost a great deal of money which must be supplied by Christian people who believe the results justify the expenditure. Approximately one dollar has been donated by some generous friend for every dollar paid in tuition and fees by a student of one of these schools. Such schools are not profit-making enterprises. Tolbert Fanning expressed amazement when some of his critics accused him of "college speculation."

"Can I be astonished then, that some of the little-souled of this almost soulless age, should charge 'speculation' on me for spending all I have to establish a college to benefit the youth of my day? What honest, sensible man, ever heard before of 'college speculation'?"¹⁶

If we are going to light a candle in this darkened age, we must recognize that we must pay for the tallow and the string. One reason why many Bible colleges have died is that their friends were under the misapprehension that once they were started they could become self-supporting on tuition and fees. Some schools will need donations just as long as they continue to serve our children. Each child served costs more than the student pays. Of course, endowments can help by providing continuing support through the income from the endowment.

Are such schools worth the cost? Tolbert Fanning, David Lipscomb, T. B. Larimore, James A. Harding, and a host of other pioneers thought they were. They made great sacrifices to provide the opportunity of training students who have become outstanding leaders in the cause of Christ. They believed that the soul of education is the education of the soul, and they could see that Christian character needed to be developed by Christian teachers using the Bible as a daily textbook. After all, what is the value of a soul? Jesus asks: "What shall a man be profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" No price tag can be placed on the immortal souls of our boys and girls. Whatever the sacrifice we must provide the best training not only for their minds, and bodies, but for their souls!

Full Education

But let us briefly notice just what such a Christian college offers that cannot be expected in our

16. T. Fanning, "Franklin College," *Christian Review*, III, No. 11 (November, 1846), p. 257.

state institutions, due to their very nature. First, there is the reverent teaching of the Bible, God's Word, each day to each student (one or two of the schools do not have the Bible each day, but require a sizeable amount for graduation). If we believe that the Word of God is living and active and is the seed of the Kingdom, we know that such an influence is bound to be beneficial for all students. William Lyon Phelps, celebrated scholar of Yale, said that if he had to choose between a college education and a thorough knowledge of the Bible, he would choose the latter. Secondly, there is the daily chapel or worship services for each student and faculty member. I can bear witness from personal experience at three of the colleges to the profound spiritual effect these daily worship experiences have. I have seen rough students who groused at the idea of "having to go to chapel" become devoted leaders in the church in their home community and give most of the credit to the influence of college chapel. I have seen students who began the school year trying to cram for tests during chapel end the year with a deepened spiritual love for God and Christ. We are all human, and our children are human. Daily worship to God in spirit and in truth in fellowship with hundreds of fellow-students builds us up in soul.

In the third place there is the advantage of Christian teachers, not only in Bible but in science, in history, in English, and the hundreds of courses offered. The Christian view of life is not an air-tight compartment which deals with a few moral or religious principles. If God is God, then no fact in the universe can be properly understood apart from Him. "In Him we live and move and have our being." How can we comprehend history, the study of nature, or the study of man, without reference to God and Christ? This is a point often merely overlooked by well-meaning Christian parents. Modern college training does not consist of learning certain techniques such as how to spell, how to add and subtract, how to use a microscope, or play a violin. It also proposes to develop attitudes, to teach the meaning of the world about us, to cultivate the personality. In this area it is so important to have teachers with the Christian view of life.

A Bargain

In the fourth place let us mention the factor of Christian associates and social activities in harmony with the godly life. Young people of college age are making life-long friends and most of

them will marry someone they meet in college. Nine out of ten Americans marry, and it is an old rule that we can only marry those we go with. This is not to say that Christian schools do not have some undesirable companions, but it does follow that you have a select group drawn largely from Christian homes with parents of similar ideals. The chances of marrying one of the same faith and concept of a Christian home are much greater on the campus of a Christian school. It is a matter of hard fact that whereas in the general public one marriage in three ends in divorce, marriages made through associations on Christian campuses show less than one per cent ending in divorce. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The fruits of higher education under Christian teachers, with the Bible taught daily as the Word of God, with daily chapel, and with a majority of Christian associates, have proven good. Parents who have tried both state or secular type of college training and work in a Christian college bear witness to the value of the education which goes the second mile to train the soul as well as the mind. Yes, Christian education is a bargain in terms of character and spiritual value.

An Illustration

Now, let me make a personal appeal to Christian parents to plan for their children to have the advantages of a Christian program of training! Many parents who are exceedingly careful about the physical health of their children, who gladly pay extra to have the best food with fortifying vitamins, who will sacrifice a new car, or a larger house, so that their children can obtain proper training of their minds, are often amazingly unconcerned about moral and spiritual training they provide. I believe that Christ should have a say about where you go to school just as He should about where you work or what kind of recreation you engage in. And parents are responsible!

Let me illustrate with a family whom I have known for years. They were very active in the church and had two fine children, a boy and a girl. These children came to Sunday Bible School and all the worship services and were very interested. Their prospects were bright for a continuing development in the service of our Lord. But their parents did not see the importance of a Christian training on the college level. These children were honor students in public high school, and their parents said: "Our children are above the average and they have honors coming to them in this world, and we are going to send them to a

university where they will receive all the recognition that is due them." This was their attitude in spite of the fact that they lived in a city where both types of education were offered, the Christian and the non-Christian. They deliberately chose the latter. Their children, like so many thousands of others from Christian homes, soon lost their interest in prayer-meeting, and Bible School, and Sunday evening worship. They joined a prominent fraternity and were soon in the whirl of dances, cocktail parties, week-end outings which were unchaperoned and conflicted with the worship of God. Since their consciences pained them at first, they were ripe for entertaining the insinuations of their professors that the Bible is simply another book written by fallible men, that God is the product of man's own yearnings, and that morality consists in the traditions of the culture in which we happen to be born. These doubts and their own wordly living combined to make these young people to think that their parents were old-fogey and that the sermons they heard were "narrow" and out-of-date. Later they married those who shared their new-found "liberty." Now their parents are heartbroken. Their children have not darkened the church door for years, and their beautiful grandchildren are growing up as ignorant of the Bible and the Christian life as pagans. Yes, the children obtained honors and recognition and had their pictures in the local society pages a number of times. But, oh how empty those honors seem now in retrospect compared with the soul-sickness which has overtaken them!

Casualty Rates Too High

Fellow parents, let us wake up before it is too late. This actual case history is not an isolated case, but could be duplicated in nearly any church in the land. Through the years I have lived in cities where large colleges and universities are located, and have seen the same tragedy re-enacted over and over again. Others have told me of their experience in towns where large numbers of members of the church come to school. The general rule is for about half of the students to begin attending Bible School and worship. Within the first semester the percentage is reduced to a third, and by the end of the first year the number is usually down to a fourth of those enrolled. By the end of four years not more than 10% of the Christians who started are faithful and loyal to the church. Of course, some of the 90% are reclaimed later on, but not too many. Now, let us hasten to give credit to that ten per

cent. Usually they are exceedingly strong. Usually they have resisted all the pressures to compromise in moral living or in doctrine. But the casualty rates are too high. No general would be willing to send his boys into battle with such odds against him. He would call for reinforcements, and that is exactly what the Christian schools are trying to provide! Parents, we have our children only once. If they make the most prominent professional people, and the most successful business men of the country and forsake God and Christ and the Church, what a miserable failure we have made and they have made. Jesus said: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." This applies to education!

Weigh the Values

Many times parents have refused to allow their children the advantages of a Christian school because they claimed that the work done was not standard, the buildings were not adequate, and the teachers were not well known academically. Unfortunately, this has sometimes been the case, but today there is no room for such an excuse in most cases. Most of our colleges are doing creditable work on the undergraduate level, and their buildings and equipment are standard. Abilene Christian College has recently been admitted into the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities which gives it the highest accreditation possible. But, even though the state may provide more expensive buildings and larger laboratories, and may have on its faculty men of wider reputations, shall we value these things above the spiritual advantages outlined above? Or shall we be willing to make sacrifices for the rewards in character and soul development which will come? Put God first in your choice of school just as you would in your choice of life's companion!

Bible Chairs

We realize that not every child from a Christian home can have the advantage of a Christian-centered education. There are more students in state schools in Texas and Tennessee and Oklahoma than in all of our Christian colleges at the present time. What can we do for these boys and girls? We can and should do the best we can by having Bible Chairs at each of these schools. Our Bible Chair at Texas Technological College in Lubbock, Texas serves some 400 members of the church with daily morning devotionals and with Bible classes, and opportunities for fellowship. But,

although we think we have a much better than average state school, we cannot influence the student in ninety-five per cent of his work. We think we are doing well to have fifty attend the morning devotionals and to have sixty taking a Bible class one or two hours per week. The state allows twelve hours of credit during the four years, but the rigid requirements of most departments keep the great majority of the students from taking more than three to six hours during the four years. Other Bible Chairs report similar obstacles. So we can see that the Bible Chair is very worthwhile and Christians should see that one is established at every school which will permit them, but they are ^{not} a cheap solution to the problem of restoring God to our college education.

Educational Posterity

Therefore, we urge every reader to pray about this matter, and to work for the increasing of opportunities for our children. There is a dire need for better support of the existing schools. Some students of the situation estimate that not more than ten per cent of the members of the church in our land have helped provide the funds which have made our present schools possible. There is a need for a general awakening to the need. We honor all of those devoted friends of Christian schools who have sacrificed in time, in talent, and in money to make the present schools as effective as they are. Many ex-students and many parents have benefited from the sacrifices of board members, of faculty members who turned down professional advancement and enticing salary increases to stay with this work. A number of these beneficiaries have yet to show their gratitude. George Peabody said, "Education is a debt due from present to future generations." We who have freely received from others our Christian training must show our gratitude by providing better training for our children and children's children, and for other people's children.

Real Friends

Let me also appeal to elders and preachers to use their influence to acquaint Christian parents with the situation. Too many times those who are charged with the leadership of the local congregation's thought have not informed themselves, and have failed to warn parents of the pitfalls of neglecting the soul in college training. Also, sometimes, Christians have seen the mistakes that fallible men sometimes make in conducting a Bible-centered school, or they have allowed personal tastes to keep them from seeing the overall value

of Christian education. Of course, mistakes have been made, and no doubt others will be made, but let us not make the mistake of failing to see the forest for the trees. Let's not throw out the baby with the bathwater! Or to put it another way, let us not tear down the whole house because there may be termites under the back porch. Let's help honest, godly men correct mistakes of policy. Let's be real friends by offering constructive, rather than destructive, criticism, and then be willing to use our influence to help schools which are worthy. We are making no appeal here for any college which has lost its bearings and which has forsaken the fundamentals of spiritual emphasis and the teaching of God's word. But we do believe that many good brethren have failed to use their influence in behalf of good Christian schools.

Growing With the Need

There is a great need for more Christian schools throughout the land. Colleges such as A. C. C. need to be enlarged to take care of the wide variety of training programs desired. But we still need a number of junior colleges, and in some cases where the environment is especially anti-Christian, we need Christian high schools and grade schools. These schools will serve as feeders to the large ones able to give further work. We need several colleges able to give extensive graduate work with the same Christian emphasis they have on the undergraduate level. Our population is increasing in such a rapid rate that statisticians tell us that by 1960 the number of students in college in our nation will be doubled. It takes time to build buildings, to train a faculty, and prepare for increased enrollment. It is later than we think! We must be up and doing if we would light many candles in this age!

Total Commitment

What we need is total commitment to Christ and the Church. When more nominal members of the church are totally committed to putting God first in business, education, as well as on Sunday morning, wonderful things will begin to happen. Recently I heard Dr. Raines of Indianapolis tell this story about a young man who became interested in a young lady. At first he won 25 per cent of her attention, but he came home very dissatisfied. Then he won 51 per cent of her attention, which is a voting majority in any democracy, but he still was not satisfied. Then he won 75 per cent of her interest and loyalty, which is a passing

grade in any school, but that wasn't enough. He worked harder at the job and finally won 99.4 per cent, which will float anywhere, but it was not enough. He was not happy until he won 100 per cent of her attention and loyalty. Then he could say certain words to her, make certain promises, and plan certain plans for the future, which were not possible until he had her total commitment. So it is with us and the Lord. Many people think that Christ should be satisfied with a token bow to Him on Sunday morning and a tip to God in the collection plate. But God must be first or not at all. He wants 100 per cent of our trust and loyalty. When we yield to Him in that total commitment, He can do wonders with us!

May God bless every Christian home, every truly Christian school, and His Kingdom on earth that His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. May we march forward by going back to the old paths of Jesus' teaching!

“Advance, O Church of God, Advance!
Your banner be unfurled;
A higher sovereignty o'er rules
The kingdoms of this world.

Advance, O Church of God, Advance!
We dare not longer wait,
To share our Christ with all the world
It is already late!

The world, confused and changing calls,
Advance, O Church of God, Advance.”

This address was given by M. Norvel Young, February 18 and 19, 1952, as a part of the 1952 Abilene Christian College Bible Lectureship.

A complimentary copy of this pamphlet will be mailed to any address upon request. Also, the pamphlet is available in lot quantities at ten cents per copy. Address all correspondence to:

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