DISCIPLING TEACHERS--A FOUNDATIONAL CHURCH SCHOOL GROWTH PRINCIPLE

By

HAROLD W. CUSTER

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Approved by _Herbert W. Byrne_____

Department __Christian Ministries_____

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

A problem discovered in the United Methodist churches in the West Virginia Conference, the Wheeling District, and the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia, was the rapid decline in church schools. This rapid decline in church schools was paralleled by a similar decline in church membership and average church attendance.

Statistical evidence in ten volumes of the West Virginia Annual Conference Journal of the United Methodist Church dated 1973 through 1982 which recorded statistics for 1972 through 1981 revealed conference church school enrollment declined 23,389 or 19%, and average church school attendance declined 13,427 or 17.98%.[1] During the same period of time the conference church membership declined 23,678 or 14.8%, and average church attendance declined 1098 or 1.38%.[2] A similar study of the Wheeling District of the West Virginia Annual Conference revealed district church school enrollment for this time period declined 2105 or 23.1%, and average church school attendance declined 1209 or 24.6%.[3]

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[1]Statistics recorded in ten consecutive volumes of the West Virginia Annual Conference Journal of the United Methodist Church, Dewayne R. Lowther, ed., 1973-1982, pp. 409, 393, 449, 465, 463, 557, 559, 545, 609, and 517 respectively. Hereafter referred to as Conference Journals.

[2]Conference Journals, pp. 408, 393, 448, 464, 462, 556, 558, 544, 608, and 516.

[3]Conference Journals, pp. 409, 393, 449, 465, 463, 557, 559, 545, 609, and 517.

District church membership declined 3132 or 15.8%, and average church attendance declined 690 or 10.54%.[4]

When this same study was made of the Steelton United Methodist Church, a local church in the Wheeling District of the West Virginia Conference, some interesting data was uncovered. The church school enrollment for this time period declined 117 or 52.2%, and the average church school attendance declined 32 or 31.68%.[5] However, church membership increased 29 or 10.3%, and average church attendance increased 31 or 28.97%.[6] A more careful examination of the statistics, however, revealed a decline in church school enrollment the first six years (1972-1977) of 169 or 75.4%, and a decline in average church school attendance of 50 or 49.5%.[7] These same six years reflected a decline in church membership of 15 or 5.3%, and a decline in average church attendance of 20 or 18.69%.[8] During the next four years (1977-1981) church school enrollment increased 52 or 94.54%, and average church school attendance increased 18 or 35.29%.[9] Church membership

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[4]Conference Journals, pp. 408, 392, 448, 464, 462, 556, 558, 544, 608, and 516.

[5]Conference Journals, pp. 405, 385, 441, 461, 455, 547, 549, 535, 599, and 507.

[6]Conference Journals, pp. 404, 384, 440, 460, 454, 545, 547, 533, 597, and 505.

[7]Conference Journals, pp. 405, 385, 441, 461, 455, 547, 549, 535, 599, and 507.

[8]Conference Journals, pp. 404, 384, 440, 460, 454, 545, 547, 533, 597, and 505.

[9]Conference Journals, pp. 405, 385, 441, 461, 455, 547, 549, 535, 599, and 507.

increased during this period of time 44 or 16.54%, and average church

attendance increased 51 or 58.62%.[10] Therefore, statistics revealed a

direct relationship between church school enrollment and average church

school attendance, and church membership and average church attendance.

Warren J. Hartman, Assistant General Secretary for Church

School Development of the United Methodist Church, declared the decline

in church membership and average church attendance, which was a United

Methodist church-wide statistic, was not due to losses of members as

much as it was due to a sharp decrease in the numbers of new Christians

being received on profession of faith each year.[11] Hartman also stated

"The church school is the source of two out of every three persons who

profess their faith in Christ and unite with the United Methodist

Church."[12] Therefore, based upon statistical data and Hartman's re-

search findings Hartman proclaimed there was much evidence to support

the old addage "As the church school goes, so goes the whole church."[13]

The implication of this statement indicated the direction of a

possible solution to the problem of declining church membership and

average church attendance--an increase in church school enrollment and

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[10]Conference Journals, pp. 404, 384, 440, 460, 454, 545, 547,
533, 597, and 505.

[11]Warren J. Hartman, "The Church School and Evangelism," in
Evangelism Cassette Mini-Course, ed. Ronald K. Crandall (Nashville:
Discipleship Resources, 1978), tape 11a.

[12]Warren J. Hartman, "Some Research Findings about Growth
through the Church School" (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1978),
pp. 52-53. (Mimeographed.)

[13]Hartman, "The Church School and Evangelism," tape 11a.

average church school attendance. The basic problem, therefore,

became one of reversing the decline in church school enrollment and

average church school attendance. It was to this problem the writer

directed the focus of this project. The problem of rapidly declining

church schools was directly attacked, and a partial solution to the

problem was presented.

Statement of the Problem

This study has sought to identify at least one foundational

church school growth principle which formed the basis for developing

a model for church school growth in the Steelton United Methodist

Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia. More specifically, the study

sought to answer the following questions:

1. What were the current church school growth principles?

Was there at least one identifiable foundational principle of church

school growth?

2. Could a model for church school growth be developed based

on this one foundational church school growth principle?

3. How have the pastor, the teachers, the church school

students, and the Congregational Reflection Group of the Steelton

United Methodist Church contributed to the development and testing of

this model?

Such a study could lead to endless research and testing.

Therefore, the following limitations were set. This study focused on

the concept of growth in the church school. The use of "Church Growth"

material produced by the Institute of Church Growth in Pasadena,

California, was limited to only that which directly applied to church school growth and, by way of reference, to that which presented the biblical basis for the concept of growth. Only churches in the Wheeling District of the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church were examined for statistical and evaluative purposes. Current church school principles were identified. At least one foundational church school principle was identified, and a model for growth in the church school was developed based on this foundational principle. The development and testing of the model was limited to the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The lens through which this study was viewed was three-fold in nature. Biblical material laid the foundation and mandated the challenge of a model for church school growth. Historical material provided principles which formed the content of the model. Communication theory and teaching/learning theory provided the functional aspects of the model.

Several basic assumptions were present in the study. The first assumption was that growth—numerical, cognitive, and spiritual—was a biblical principle and, therefore, desirable in the church school. The current controversy over the concept of growth was discovered. However, it was not the intention of this study to exhaust the various points of debate and to draw a conclusion. It was the intention of the study to accept the concept that growth was a biblical principle and desirable in the church school and to develop a model which assisted the church

school in attaining numerical growth, cognitive growth, and spiritual growth.

A second assumption was that growth could take place in United Methodist church schools in the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church. Statistics regarding church schools have come from churches in the West Virginia Conference, the Wheeling District of the West Virginia Conference, and specifically the Steelton United Methodist Church. The survey instrument sent to pastors included only those pastors in the Wheeling District. Therefore, the assumption concerning growth must necessarily be focused on the church schools in the West Virginia Conference, the Wheeling District, and specifically to the Steelton United Methodist Church.

A third assumption claimed the church school was vitally important to the total church program. It was not considered an addendum which may or may not be present. It was a vital organ in a living, dynamic organism functioning synergetically with all the other organs to accomplish the will of God through the Church here on earth.

A final assumption was the basic premise of the project-dissertation: there was at least one foundational church school growth principle upon which a model for church school growth could be developed, and that this model, when applied to a local church situation, would produce growth.

Definitions of four words were crucial to the understanding of this study:

"growth".............................Both qualitative and quantitative
                                     increase or expansion; increase in

numbers of students and increase in cognitive and spiritual aspects of both students and teachers.

"church school".....................Used synonomously with Sunday school; Christian education classes which meet at the church on Sunday mornings.

"disciple".......................(noun) One who receives instruction from another; one who accepts the doctrines of another and assists in spreading or implementing them.

"discipling".....................(transitive verb) The act of teaching, training, helping, and encouraging another person to become a disciple.

Methodology of the Study

The methodology of this study can be succinctly stated under four phases: planning phase, investigative phase, generalization phase, and summary.

Planning Phase

In the planning phase the past experience of the writer, preliminary research in periodicals and books using the resources of the B. L. Fisher Library, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, and the Clifford E. Barbour Library, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and careful work with the Congregational Reflection Group of the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia, were utilized to determine the need and the validity of the project.

Investigative Phase

Three kinds of research were utilized. Historical research was used for statistics, for discovering the church school growth principles, for biblical, theological, and historical studies in the areas of Christian education, evangelism, church growth, discipleship, communication theory and teaching/learning theory. Experimental research was used in the form of questionnaires and other measuring and evaluation instruments with the teachers and students of the Steelton United Methodist church and with the pastors in the Wheeling District. Developmental research was basic to the entire study. The project was conceived and born in the Congregational Reflection Group, and has grown into the development of a model for church school growth in the Steelton United Methodist Church.

As the research was completed the findings were shared with the Congregational Reflection Group and with the church school teachers in a contextual setting which resulted in the development of a model for church school growth.

Generalization Phase

The research, the application of the research, and the results of the application were analyzed and evaluated. The results of this process led to further development of the model for church school growth.

Summary

The problem and the process were restated, conclusions to the findings were drawn, and needs for the future were projected.

Review of the Literature

The purpose of the review of the literature was to identify major sources of literature which have proved to be of significance to this study. The review of the literature consisted of three segments: 1) biblical and historical material, 2) church school growth material, and 3) communication theory and teaching/learning theory material.

Biblical and Historical
  Material

Scripture highly substantiated the basic assumption that growth was a biblical principle. Jesus claimed "For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10).[14] His mission was evangelism. He was constantly trying to seek and to save lost persons. In His parables He emphasized the importance of reaching persons with the gospel. The parables of the lost sheep (Matt. 18:12) and the lost coin (Luke 15:8-9) both revealed the importance of seeking and winning individual persons. His parable of the marriage feast (Matt. 22:2-14) revealed His desire to reach as many persons as possible.

The strongest statement Jesus made regarding evangelism and growth was the Great Commission:

> All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age. (Matt. 28:18-20).

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[14]All Scripture quotations were cited from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, published in 1952.

With these words Jesus proclaimed in definite, positive terms His instructions--make disciples of all peoples. This task required growth to take place.

Luke recorded explicit statements concerning growth as it occurred in the early church:

> So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:41).
> And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:47).
> But many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to about five thousand. (Acts 4:4).
> And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem... (Acts 6:7).

The record of Paul's missionary journeys and much of his writings throughout the New Testament even further substantiated the assumption that growth is a biblical principle.

Several secondary sources were cited which dealt explicitly with Scripture in the verification of the assumption. One was Under-standing Church Growth by Donald A. McGavran, dean emeritus and senior professor of mission, church growth, and South Asian studies at the School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. This volume was first published in 1970 and then fully revised in 1980 to make it more relevant to pastors and churches in the United States. It is the single most important volume to the "Church Growth" movement. The specific biblical material relevant to the concept of church growth, which was directly applicable to church school growth, was found in Part I "Theological Considerations." Here McGavran discussed the biblical and theological aspects of church growth in three chapters: "The Complex Faithfulness Which Is Church Growth,"

"God's Will and Church Growth," and "Today's Task, Opportunity, and Imperative."

Another secondary volume dealing with the biblical foundation for church growth was A Theology of Church Growth by George W. Peters, published in 1981. Peters is professor of world missions at Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas. In this volume Peters did not discuss, defend, or debate the various schools of church growth. Rather he presented a theology of church growth based upon his interpretation of biblical material. He included fourteen pages of biblical references in a "Scripture Index" which reflected the passages cited throughout his book. The references covered the entirety of Scripture with a special focus on the book of Acts.

The biblical foundation for the combination of evangelism and Christian education, which is inherent in the phrase "church school growth" was best represented in Christian Education for the Local Church by Herbert W. Byrne, published in 1963. Byrne, professor of Christian education at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, is a unique combination of evangelist and Christian educator. This combination was reflected in every page of the volume. The specific biblical material was found in chapter one "The Work of the Church in Christian Education."

The biblical foundation for the idea of a model of church school growth was best stated in The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert E. Coleman, past professor of evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, and present Director of the School of World Mission and Evangelism at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield,

Illinois. This volume was first published in 1963 and has gone through twenty-nine printings. Coleman examined the life and ministry of Jesus as recorded in the four gospels and other books in the New Testament and suggested that Jesus' plan of evangelism was one of discipling. More specifically the plan included "selection, association, consecration, impartation, demonstration, delegation, supervision, and reproduction." This model provided the foundation for the development of a model for church school growth with the pastor discipling the teachers in a way similar to Jesus and His twelve disciples.

The history of Christian education and the Sunday school provided a rich heritage out of which this study emerged. Due to the nature and scope of this project-dissertation a thorough historical study has been eliminated. However, a brief survey of this historical heritage has been recorded noting specifically the contribution Methodists have made to the Sunday school and the importance of the Sunday school to Methodism. Two volumes provided the source of the survey: History of Christian Education, published in 1943 by Clarence H. Benson, and 200 Years and Still Counting, published in 1979 by Wesley R. Willis. Benson provided a more broad historical base of Christian education while Willis focused primarily on the Sunday school.

Benson began with a biblical basis for religious education by examining education in Jewish history as recorded in the Old Testament. Jewish people received God's laws and His divine plan for the teaching of the laws. Education began as the responsibility of parents, priests, and religious festivals. As the people began to stray from

God's will the schools of the prophets were established. After seventy years of exile a renewed national interest in religious education emerged in the office and work of the rabbi.

When Jesus began His ministry it was one of teaching. He taught His disciples and then left them with the mandate to teach others and thereby make more disciples. The Apostle Paul continued Jesus' model of teaching as he led the dramatic spreading of the gospel to the Gentiles with his missionary journeys. As the gospel spread among the Gentiles catechetical schools became more prevalent following the influence of Socrates.

The message and method of the early Church were preserved through the Dark Ages by two agencies—sects known as the Albigenses, the Waldenses, the Lollards, and the Hussites; and monasticism. With the Renaissance came the Protestant Reformation and then the Catholic Counter Reformation. Through this period interest in Christian education and the importance of teacher-training revived in the hearts, minds, and messages of Luther, Melanchthon, Calvin, Knox, Zwingli, and Loyola.

Robert Raikes, William Fox, and John Wesley emerged in the eighteenth century with the establishment of the Sunday school. Raikes began a school for rough and rowdy children in Gloucester, England, in 1780. This school has been designated as the beginning of the modern Sunday school movement. Fox launched a Sunday School Society in 1785 for the purpose of supporting Sunday schools. Wesley, the founder of Methodism, highly supported the Sunday school as he established his societies. Therefore, the Sunday school has been a vital part of the

Methodist Church even before the church was officially organized.

The nineteenth century was the "Golden Age" of the Sunday school. Missionaries like Stephen Paxson were starting Sunday schools across the land. Sunday school conventions were being organized. John H. Vincent, a Methodist minister, was instrumental in developing a new lesson series with analytical and illustrative helps for the teachers. He significantly influenced the adoption of the International Uniform Lesson system. He also proposed elaborate teacher-training plans which would raise the quality of Sunday school teachers to the level of public school teachers.

Benson's book concluded with an overview of twentieth century developments such as the graded lesson material, further attempts at teacher-training, the establishment of Bible institutes, and vacation Bible schools. However, the twentieth century has basically produced a decline in the effectiveness of the Sunday school.

The specific history of the Sunday school was found in Willis' book. He, like Benson, provided an excellent historical presentation. The specific contribution Willis brought to this study was his strong statements concerning the importance of Methodists in the early establishment of Sunday schools and the vitally important contribution Sunday schools made to the development and growth of Methodism. Therefore, a study of the problems and potential solutions concerning the Sunday school in a United Methodist church, district, and conference by a United Methodist pastor was consistent with the historical relationship Christian education, the Sunday school, and teacher-training have had with Methodism.

Church School Growth Material

Eight books, twelve periodical articles, and eight United Methodist denominational publications comprised the most significant literature dealing specifically with church school growth. This material was used to compile the list of church school growth principles in chapter two and to provide the basis from which a foundational church school growth principle was derived.

Charles L. Allen, recently retired pastor of First United Methodist Church, Houston, Texas, and Mildred Parker, the Minister of Christian Education in the same church, have written a helpful volume titled How to Increase Your Sunday-School Attendance published in 1979. Writing from a United Methodist perspective these authors contributed insights into principles of church school growth they have experienced throughout their several years of ministry. Particularly important to this study were the statements concerning the importance of the pastor in church school growth, the basic principle of evangelism and the church school, and the training and development of teachers.

Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn, executive leaders of the Institute for American Church Growth, Pasadena, California, published in 1980 Growth: A New Vision for the Sunday School. This was an extremely helpful volume to this study. This volume took "church growth" principles as stated by the church growth school of thought based in Pasadena, California, and applied them directly to the church school. The authors outlined what has happened in the church school. They stressed the importance of evangelism and out-reach. They also discussed the invaluable tool of visitation based on

"webs of growth" and the establishment of new classes--all of which have been utilized by this study in the development of a model for church school growth.

Perhaps the most helpful volume directly related to church school growth material was A Growing Church School by Kenneth D. Blazier, published in 1978. Blazier is Director of the Department of Educational Ministries of the American Baptist Church. Blazier addressed directly the area of church school growth. He suggested seven factors or principles of church school growth and included ways to strengthen these factors. His concern for growth was reflected both in qualitative growth and quantitative growth. These factors or principles of church school growth were found not only in this volume but in many books and periodicals researched. This repetition of the principles of church school growth in other materials strengthened the importance of Blazier's volume to this study.

Another helpful volume was New Life for Your Sunday School by Iris V. Cully. This volume was published in 1976. Cully is a past associate professor of Christian education at Yale Divinity School and is presently professor of Christian education at Lexington Theological Seminary, Lexington, Kentucky. In this volume Cully discussed several aspects regarding the upgrading and growth of the church school. The specific contribution to this study was the chapter titled "Teachers--How to Keep Them." Cully shared the concept that teachers are vitally important to the church school and therefore much effort must be directed toward them in order for the church

school to grow and to acquire new life.

A Guide to Sunday School Enlargement compiled by George W. Stuart, 1968, was another helpful volume to this study. Stuart is an education specialist and member of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. In this book Stuart dealt specifically with church school enlargement or growth. Two chapters were of primary importance. Chapter three, "Understanding and Applying the Principles of Enlargement," was written by John T. Sisemore. It dealt with church school growth principles. Chapter seven, "Enlisting and Training Workers for Enlargement," was written by Chester Vaughn. It dealt with the concept of training teachers and other church school workers which was applied directly to the development of a model for church school growth.

The Successful Sunday School and Teachers Guidebook was written by Elmer Towns in 1976. Towns is a Christian educator and prolific writer. He is a Baptist clergyman and present academic dean of Liberty Baptist Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia. This was a comprehensive, exhaustive, massive volume which dealt with nearly every aspect of church school work. The specific contribution to this study came in the areas of church school growth principles and the emphasis on working with teachers on a regular basis.

Towns also published in 1969 The Ten Largest Sunday Schools and What Makes Them Grow. In this volume Towns evaluated the ten largest church schools research can find to determine the reasons for their success. The focus was necessarily on independent Baptist churches because they comprised the majority of the ten largest

church schools. Therefore, much of this volume was irrelevant to United Methodist church schools. However, there were some basic principles of church school growth stated here which seemed to hold universal applicability—namely leadership, evangelism, visitation, weekly Sunday school teachers' meetings, and new classes.

Harold J. Westing, Director of Christian Education for the Conservative Baptist Association in America, published Make Your Sunday School Grow Through Evaluation in 1976. This volume approached church school growth from a different perspective than nearly every other volume written in the field—evaluation. Like other authors in the field Westing cited laws relating to both quantitative growth as well as qualitative growth. However, he contended that growth must come through evaluation—knowing what the church school's weaknesses and strengths are before strategies can be applied and growth can come.

Twelve periodical articles contributed most significantly to this study regarding church school growth principles. The first article appeared in Christianity Today, February 22, 1980. The author was Jo Berry, an educational consultant for David C. Cook Publishing Company of Elgin, Illinois. Berry's article was titled "Sunday School: How to Avoid Teacher Trauma." In her article she highlighted the importance of the teacher in the church school and the necessity of an effective, ongoing program of teacher-training.

Doris A. Freese, an associate professor of Christian education at Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, Illinois, has written "How Far Has Sunday School Come? Where Is It Headed?" in Christianity Today,

February 22, 1980. Freese, like Berry, stressed the importance of the teacher in the church school and the necessity of a vital teacher-training program.

The third periodical article most significant to this study was C. Peter Wagner's article "Aiming at Church Growth in the Eighties" published in Christianity Today, November 21, 1980. Wagner, a missionary to Bolivia for sixteen years and presently professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, addressed the future of church growth emphasizing the importance of evangelism and outreach over that of social action. This emphasis was directly related to church school growth principles in this study.

A periodical published by Graded Press, the curriculum publishing department of the United Methodist Publishing House, is The Church School, now known as Church School Today, a monthly magazine devised for pastors, coordinators, education chairpersons, superintendents, and all church school offices. This periodical provided nine articles significant to this study.

Kenneth D. Blazier, author of A Growing Church School, wrote "Planning for Church School Growth" in the May, 1981, issue. This article was a simple review of his book with little new information. The significance of the article was the restatement of his church school growth principles in a United Methodist publication.

"Communication: A Key to Growth" was written by Paul M. Bradley in the February, 1981, issue. Bradley emphasized the importance of publicity and promotion as church school growth

principles.

Mary Calhoun, a retired staff member of the United Methodist Board of Discipleship, wrote an article titled "Room for One More" in the December, 1980, issue. She listed some principles of church school growth with an emphasis on the importance of the teacher.

Millie S. Goodson, a certified Director of Christian Education and free-lance writer, wrote another article focusing on the importance of the teacher as a major factor of church school growth in the July, 1977, issue. The article was titled "Teachers Need TLC."

The church school growth principle of parental satisfaction and the relationship between the home and the church school was the focus of an article titled "Partners in Christian Nurture" written by Delores P. Griffith in the January, 1980, issue.

J. Stephen Lang, an editorial assistant in the Department of Youth Publication of the Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church, wrote "Directions for the 80's" in the December, 1980, issue. The focus of his article was in the area of evangelism through the church school.

Albert F. Mutti, associate director of the Council on Ministries for the Missouri West Conference of the United Methodist Church, wrote a significant article in the April, 1979, issue titled "Pastors: Teach your Teachers." Not only did this article deal with the church school growth principle of training teachers, it also provided a basis for a foundational church school growth principle of discipling teachers.

"Want to Grow? Start More Groups" was written by Richard A.

Myers in the December, 1980, issue. Myers is a retired United

Methodist minister and currently a church consultant with the

Religious Research Center in Indianapolis, Indiana. The major con-

tribution of the article to this study was the emphasis on the

addition of new classes as a church school growth principle.

L. Paul Neufer, assistant professor of religion at Lycoming

College, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, wrote "Ministers Must Motivate

Teachers" in the September, 1963, issue. In this article Neufer

discussed the psychological aspects of teaching and the need for

pastors to motivate and support the teachers.

Eight booklets and pamphlets published by Discipleship

Resources of the United Methodist Church also contributed to this

study. Myrtle Felkner, an educational assistant in a cooperative

parish of the United Methodist Church, wrote Making the Church School

Better in 1980. This booklet was significant to this study in the

presentation of the importance of the teachers and the pastor to

church school growth.

"People Power, Increasing Membership and Attendance in Your

Church School" was a pamphlet written by Millie S. Goodson in 1977.

Goodson stressed the importance of the church school being a major

priority of the church as a church school growth principle. She

also declared an emphasis on evangelism as a strong principle of

growth.

Warren J. Hartman compiled two booklets which proved to be

significant to this study. A Look at Some Excellent Church Schools,

published in 1977, proclaimed the importance of qualified teachers

and supportive pastors as church school growth principles. A Planning Guide for Decision Point, also published in 1977, stressed the principles of planning and setting goals.

Garland Knott, professor of religion at Methodist College, Fayetteville, North Carolina, published Moving Toward a Strong Church School in 1981. His list of church school growth principles included planning, setting goals, an emphasis on evangelism, a supportive and involved pastor, and good teachers.

Roy H. Ryan, currently replacing Warren J. Hartman as Assistant General Secretary for Church School Development of the United Methodist Church while Hartman is on a sabbatical leave, wrote in 1981 Strengthening Our Church School. In this booklet Ryan stressed at least five principles of church school growth: an emphasis on evangelism, the addition of new classes, well-trained teachers, goal-setting, and the importance of ties between the church school and the home. Ryan also wrote "Ten Ways to Improve Your Church School." In this pamphlet Ryan emphasized the same principles as he does in Strengthening Our Church School plus he stressed the importance of a supportive and involved pastor. Many of the same principles of church school growth were also found in his publication "Ten Principles of Sunday School Growth." However, here he added promotion and evaluation to the list.

Communication Theory and Teaching/
 Learning Theory Material

Communication theory and teaching/learning theory material was helpful in the formulation and development of a model for church

school growth. The content of the model and the mechanics of the

model were directly influenced by this material. Nine books were

most significant to this study.

Kenneth E. Andersen is an educator and professor of speech

communication at the University of Illinois at Urbana. In his

volume Introduction to Communication Theory and Practice, 1972,

Anderson presented a general communication model which revealed the

complexity of the communication process. However, chapter eleven

"Small Group Communication" proved to be the most significant portion

of his book to this study. The model for church school growth suggested

in this study revolved around communication in a small group.

Grow: Your Sunday School Can Grow by Lowell E. Brown with

Bobbie Reed, 1974, is another significant book to this study. Lowell E.

Brown is the executive director of Gospel Light International Center

for Learning. In this book Brown and Reed focused on the teaching/

learning process as they discussed church school growth. They centered

attention on the importance of the teacher not only as leader and

instructor but more importantly as model.

Herbert W. Byrne's Christian Education for the Local Church,

1963, proved to be valuable to this study again in the area of

communication theory and teaching/learning theory. In chapter seven

Byrne dealt with "The Work of the Teacher in Christian Education."

In this chapter he specifically focused on the importance of the

teacher, communication, the teaching process, and the learning

process.

Robert E. Coleman's The Master Plan of Evangelism, 1963, was

also valuable to this study in the areas of communication, teaching, and learning. As he revealed Jesus' plan of evangelism communication, teaching, and learning were at the very heart of the work Jesus did with His disciples.

Another major contributor to this study was Teaching for Results by Findley B. Edge, 1956. Edge is professor of religious education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. In this volume Edge, like Byrne, linked together the two major fields of evangelism and Christian education. However, the most significant contributions of this volume to this study were the discussion of the teaching/learning process, the concept of communication through modeling and the small group, and the emphasis on pastoral leadership throughout the entire process.

Rensis Likert, a retired professor of psychology and sociology and director emeritus of the Institute for Social Research, published The Human Organization: Its Management and Value in 1967. The major contribution of Likert's book was his systems approach to leadership styles. The specific contribution to this study came at the point of the leadership style the pastor or another leader utilized in the model for church school growth.

Robert F. Mager, a Ph. D. in experimental psychology and a popular industrial consultant in instruction, published Developing Attitude Toward Learning in 1968. Mager's book focused on the student's attitude toward learning. The volume's significance to this study came primarily in the emphasis on communication through modeling.

Another valuable volume to this study is <u>Group Leadership for Self Realization</u> by Taylor McConnell, published in 1974. McConnell, professor of Christian education at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, has written a book focusing on the small group and the leadership of that group. The major contribution to this study came at the point of communication theory in the small group.

Finally Lawrence O. Richards' volume <u>A Theology of Christian Education</u>, published in 1975, was a significant work in the area of Christian education. Richards, former professor of Christian education at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, and presently involved in the development of creative church school curriculum, also combined the fields of evangelism and Christian education. However, Richards varied with "church growth" persons in that his emphasis was on nurture rather than outreach. He contended evangelism is a natural outgrowth of nurture. His major contribution to this study was in the area of communication theory. His major thrust was that of modeling by the teacher. This concept was exemplified by Jesus and the twelve disciples. It was applied in this study to the pastor and the church school teachers, and to the teachers and their students.

Summary

This chapter introduced the subject of this paper--church school growth. It contained the statement of the problem and the aim of the paper--to develop a model for church school growth in the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia.

The theoretical framework and the methodology of the study were summarized. Finally, a review of the literature was presented including a brief historical sketch of Christian education and the church school.

CHAPTER 2

Current Principles of Church School Growth

In the literature search two realities quickly surfaced.

Specific, explicit principles of church school growth were boldly

and clearly stated. Ten of these principles were repeatedly presented

by the authors as prominent principles of church school growth.

However, underneath the bold explicitness of these ten principles

there appeared to be at least one implicit, foundational principle

to which many authors pointed but none explicitly proclaimed.

Therefore, in this chapter ten explicit principles of church

school growth were presented. After the presentation of the explicit

principles an implicit, foundational church school growth principle

was stated and discussed.

Ten Explicit Principles

Kenneth D. Blazier in his book A Growing Church School listed

seven explicit principles of church school growth.[1] All seven of these

principles were proclaimed and stressed in other publications. There-

fore, the first seven of the ten explicit principles of church school

growth listed were summarized in Blazier's book. Some of the principles

were stated here somewhat differently from Blazier due to the process

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[1]Kenneth D. Blazier. A Growing Church School (Valley Forge:
Judson Press, 1978), p. 15.

of assimilating the varying nuances of all the authors into an accurate and comprehensive focus.

The Church School--A Major
Priority

The first explicit church school growth principle was the making of the church school a major priority of the local church. The nineteenth and very early part of the twentieth centuries have been called the "Golden Age of American Sunday Schools."[2] This was a time of prioritizing the church school. Sunday school conventions, weekly training classes, attendance and offering signboards in the fronts of sanctuaries, and attendance awards were all part of an era which prioritized the church school.[3]

In many places during this period in the Wheeling District of the United Methodist Church in West Virginia the worship service was not conducted every Sunday due to multiple church charges. Therefore, on the Sundays when the pastor was not present to conduct the worship service the church school was the only form of organized corporate Christian activity. This heightened the importance and priority of the church school in several communities. However, as Sunday school conventions became obsolete, as weekly training classes became more unrealistic, as signboards were removed from the fronts of sanctuaries, as attendance awards were forgotten, and as worship services were con-

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[2]Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn, Growth: A New Vision for the Sunday School (Pasadena: Church Growth Press, 1980), p. 28.

[3]Arn, McGavran, and Arn, p. 27.

ducted nearly every Sunday the church school became less a priority of the local church and the church school declined.

To resurrect these methods of a past generation may not be the solution to a declining church school situation. However, the concept of the church school as a major priority must be revived, and it must be revived in the total congregation. Pastors, teachers, leaders, students, and all other laity must prioritize the church school.

The priority of the church school must be reflected in the church's programming, the church's budget, the church's building, and the church's staff. The church school should not be seen as an added appendage to the church which is dragged along for sentimental or nostalgic reasons. It must be a vital, living part of the church's total program working synergistically with all other aspects of the ministry of the church to accomplish God's purposes.

Pastoral Participation

Another explicit principle of church school growth was pastoral participation. The specific role of a pastor in the area of church school growth was somewhat debated in the various sources. However, the necessity of the pastor's participation was unanimous. Blazier declared "An effective teaching program probably will not flourish unless there is a pastor who is solidly behind it."[4] Vincie Alessi listed pastoral concern as the first church school growth principle.[5] Elmer Towns in

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[4]Blazier, p. 17.

[5]Vincie Alessi, Evangelism in Your Church School (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1978), p. 15.

his study of The Ten Largest Sunday Schools and What Makes Them Grow

listed "pastoral leadership" as reason number four and "strong pulpit

ministry" as reason number two.[6] Charles Allen and Mildred Parker

proclaimed "the attitude of the pastor is almost the controlling factor

in whether or not a Sunday school grows."[7]

There were varying degrees of participation by the pastor recom-

mended. Towns suggested by way of evaluation the pastor teach a

church school class, teach the lesson to the teachers prior to their

teaching on Sunday, and perhaps even write the curriculum.[8] Blazier

captured the more prominent view of pastoral participation in the realms

of planning, programming, promoting, encouraging, supporting, and

enabling.[9] The degrees of pastoral participation varied--the fact of

the necessity of pastoral participation was solidly united. Perhaps

Herbert W. Byrne summarized this principle best when he said "As the

minister goes, so goes the program."[10]

Intentional Planning

Intentional planning was another explicit church school growth

principle. If church school growth was truly desired intentional

planning regarding the means to accomplishing it became a necessity.

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[6]Elmer Towns, The Ten Largest Sunday Schools and What Makes Them
Grow (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1969), pp. 114-115.

[7]Charles Allen and Mildred Parker, How to Increase Your Sunday-
School Attendance (Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1979), p. 14.

[8]Towns, pp. 137-139. [9]Blazier, p. 17.

[10]H. W. Byrne, Christian Education for the Local Church (Grand
Rapids: Zondervan, 1963), p. 97.

Blazier said "Church school growth will take place only in churches that plan for it."[11]

Two things happened when intentional planning was present. Through the utilization of charts, graphs, survey instruments, question-naires, and records the past was analyzed and evaluated to determine present needs and goals. Then future action was planned by identifying needs, setting goals, making assignments, and implementing the results. If these two procedures were absent intentional planning was absent and so were the desired results.

Blazier listed some evidences of intentional planning:

-a defined purpose for the church school;
-specific objectives for the school year and plans for their
    implementation:
-curriculum selection based on periodic evaluation of achievement,
    needs, and congregational expectation;
-the involvement of students, parents, teachers, and others in
    the planning whenever decisions affect them;
-classes or groups for all ages to meet a variety of needs;
-a program that is both traditional in keeping the best from the
    past and innovative in attempting creative approaches.[12]

Student and Parental
Satisfaction

Another explicit church school growth principle was student and parental satisfaction. Based on a study which indicated "growing church schools seem to be growing because they are more successful in their primary task, namely, that of helping persons to understand, accept, and appropriate the Christian faith and life."[13] Blazier

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[11]Blazier, p. 18.   [12]Blazier, p. 18

[13]Warren J. Hartman, A Study of the Church School in the United Methodist Church (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1976), p. 21.

said "Perhaps the church schools are growing because persons feel satisfied that they individually are coming 'to understand, accept, and appropriate the Christian faith and life.'"[14] Students had needs. Parents of younger children and youth wanted the needs of their children met. Therefore, this principle was one of determining needs and then meeting the needs.

This principle appeared to be based on the old addage "satisfied customers come back." Satisfied customers also told others of the product which satisfied them. This enhanced the importance of this principle as it supported other principles of church school growth discussed in this chapter.

Dedicated, Caring, Trained Teachers

The importance of the teacher in church school growth was fundamental. Any principle of church school growth was ineffective if there was not a dedicated, caring, trained teacher to apply it directly to the class. Therefore, the presence of a dedicated, caring, trained teacher must be stated as an explicit church school growth principle.

Herbert W. Byrne elevated the position of teachers to such heights as "a sacred ministry," "under-pastors," and "shepherds of their classes."[15] He emphasized the fact that "the curriculum is 90 percent teacher."[16] Elmer Towns said "any class will grow in

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[14]Blazier, p. 18.   [15]Byrne, p. 247.   [16]Byrne, p. 249.

direct proportion to the energies expended by the teacher."[17]

Blazier expanded the principle to include church school superintendents, department superintendents, secretaries, musicians, librarians, and any other church school leaders as well as teachers. He wrote, "Dedicated and caring lay leaders are an indispensable factor of growth in quality and numbers."[18]

More has been said about the importance of teachers in relation to church school growth when an implicit, foundational church school growth principle was discussed.

Promotion

In order for a church school to grow an intentional, organized plan of promotion was a necessity. Every legitimate opportunity needed to be siezed to communicate the workings and ministries of the church school--brochures, church newsletters, bulletins, announcements in worship, posters, signs, banners, buttons, newspapers, radio, television, etc.

Persons simply could not respond to that which was unknown. Therefore, if the church school intended to grow persons must have known of the opportunities available. Such things as when classes met, where classes met, what were the age levels in each class, who was the teacher, what was studied, what was the format of the class, what were some class projects, etc., were necessary items to promote.

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[17]Elmer Towns, The Successful Sunday School and Teachers Guidebook (Carol Stream: Creation House, 1976), p. 224.

[18]Blazier, p. 19.

Visitation

It was practically impossible to find a Christian educator who did not include visitation as a primary principle of church school growth. Blazier listed visitation as the final church school growth principle. However, he said, "Visitation may be the factor that contributes most to numerical growth."[19] He expanded his position to one of more inclusiveness when he wrote, "A visitation program which reflects the loving, caring atmosphere within the congregation is necessary for growth in quality and numbers."[20]

John T. Sisemore[21] and Harold J. Westing[22] agreed that both the quantity and quality of visits made directly effected church school growth. Statistically Westing said "It usually takes about eight visits to net one increase in attendance."[23]

Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn have jointly authored a book titled Growth: A New Vision for the Sunday School. The significance of the book was that it was an application of church growth principles to the Sunday school. Visitation was a primary church growth principle, and these Christian educators suggested it was directly applicable to the church school.

The basic concept they proposed was "oikos evangelism" or the

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[19]Blazier, p. 20.   [20]Blazier, p. 20.

[21]John T. Sisemore, A Guide To Sunday School Enlargement, ed. George W. Stuart (Nashville: Convention Press, 1968), p. 36.

[22]Harold J. Westing, Make Your Sunday School Grow through Evaluation (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1976), p. 58.

[23]Westing, p. 58.

"web approach." This "oikos evangelism" was a "strategy of identifying existing webs of friends and relatives as the prime source of prospects for Sunday School and church growth."[24] They based the concept on Scripture and current research. Research was conducted by the Institute for American Church Growth (Pasadena, California) regarding why persons came to Christ and why they attended a particular church. Over 10,000 persons were surveyed. The result was that 79% stated the main reason they were Christian and were attending their particular church was due to the influence of a friend or relative.[25]

Visitation was the principle of church school growth which made the "web approach" work. Once church school classes identified the existing "webs" of influence then visitation took place. The visitation was not cold, mechanical, canned, door-to-door visitation with strangers. Rather it was visitation among and between friends and relatives with the specific goal of leading that friend or relative to Christ and to the church school.

Evaluation

Harold J. Westing has stated a principle of church school growth not explicitly proclaimed by other Christian educators, but one which was utilized by most. It was the principle of evaluation.

The literature search in the area of church growth quickly uncovered the prevalent controversy between the proponents of

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[24]Arn, McGavran, and Arn, p. 73.

[25]Arn, McGavran, and Arn, p. 76.

"success" and the proponents of "faithfulness." The major thrust of this paper did not allow an extended discussion of these positions. However, the debate needed to be raised because Westing arrived at this church school growth principle out of the controversy.

> God expects faithfulness, we say, suggesting that God asks us only to do our best and to leave the results with Him. But if we do not check on results, how can we know if we are genuinely giving our best? "God only requires faithfulness" may be a cover-up, I'm afraid, for laziness or for unwillingness to face the need for something more than good intentions.[26]

Westing suggested that in order for the church school to grow the leaders and students must do some evaluation to learn where they have been, where they are, and to have a solid base from which to project future goals.

New Classes

Nearly all Christian educators agreed that new classes must be created if growth was to be continuous. Many educators agreed with Harold J. Westing when he said "A class reaches maximum growth in a few months."[27] Sometimes classes have reached their full potential and then have declined. In those cases everything possible needed to be done to restore the class to its potential. However, there was a saturation point beyond which no class would grow. Accurate record keeping and constant evaluation would quickly identify this point. When this saturation point was reached a new class needed to be started.

The ratio of students to teachers varied according to the age

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[26]Westing, p. 8.   [27]Westing, p. 57.

of the students. However, based on Westing's figures an average was ten students to one teacher. Therefore, for each new class started a church school could expect an average increase of ten students.

Another aspect of the principle of starting new classes was that of "divide and multiply."[28] Elmer Towns declared that a class of ten students can be divided into two classes of five each and within a short period of time both classes will be averaging ten students. He also stated that two classes of ten students each can be merged into one class of twenty students and within a short period of time the one class will be averaging ten students.

Westing also made this statement: "New classes and departments grow faster, win more people to the Lord, and provide more workers."[29] This indicated not only would new classes produce numerical increases in the church school simply due to their numbers, but that they would cause other increases to occur as a result of their quality. The production of new converts and new workers would perpetuate new classes and church school growth.

Emphasis on Evangelism

A final explicit church school growth principle was an emphasis on evangelism. Most Christian educators agreed that a growing church school would intentionally work to lead persons to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and to incorporate them into the fellowship

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[28]Towns, The Ten Largest Sunday Schools, p. 136.

[29]Westing, p. 57.

of the church through the church school. Charles Allen and Mildred
Parker stated "the supreme reason for the Sunday school is to win
persons to Jesus Christ as their Savior, Lord, and Friend. The
Sunday school is the chief evangelistic agency of the local church."[30]
A growing church school was one which followed Jesus' command to
"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . ." (Matt. 28:19).

C. Peter Wagner concurred with other Christian educators
regarding an emphasis on evangelism. However, he pointed to a separa-
tion of evangelism and social service activism as a major problem of
church school growth. He cited studies done by Dean Kelly in his
book Why Conservative Churches Are Growing and Dean R. Hoge and David A.
Roose in their book Understanding Church Growth and Decline 1950-1978
to prove his point. He claimed churches could grow and be social
service active providing social services did not take a back seat to
evangelism. This, he said, was exactly what happened in the 1960's
and 1970's.[31]

Elmer Towns was a little more bold when he wrote "Personal
salvation is primary; social action is secondary."[32] Towns, as well
as most other major Christian educators, was not proclaiming the
necessity of abandoning social action. He and the others were merely
making clear the necessity of an emphasis on evangelism and the priority

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[30]Allen and Parker, p. 74.

[31]C. Peter Wagner, "Aiming at Church Growth in the Eighties,"
Christianity Today, XXIV (November 21, 1980), 24-27.

[32]Towns, The Ten Largest Sunday Schools, p. 119.

of evangelism over social action if either must be prioritized.

Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn joined the other

Christian educators in proclaiming an emphasis on evangelism as an

explicit church school growth principle. In a review of what has

happened in church schools during the last decade they said "The

focus of the Sunday School changed from those 'outside' to those

'inside.'"[33] This decreasing interest in evangelizing those "outside"

and an increasing interest in nurturing those "inside" has produced

a drastic decline in the church school.

In discussing this concept further Arn, McGavran, and Arn

used the phrases "inward-focused Sunday schools" and "outward-focused

Sunday schools." Lawrence O. Richards was supportive of the "inward-

focused Sunday school."

> As the first concern of the church we must retain the nurture of
> the Body. For this is God's strategy . . . as we grow into His
> likeness, His love will motivate us, His concern energize us, and
> the evidence of His presence enable us to witness in power.[34]

Richards' theory sounded good and appeared to be sound.

However, in the words of Arn, McGavran, and Arn, "Such self-centered

education does not motivate people toward involvement in the church's

mission of growth and outreach."[35]

H. W. Byrne was supportive of the "outward-focused Sunday

school."

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[33] Arn, McGavran, and Arn, p. 25.

[34] Lawrence O. Richards, A Theology of Christian Education
(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), p. 56.

[35] Arn, McGavran, and Arn, p. 41.

Evangelism is the chief work of the Sunday School. In fact, Christian Education cannot be Christian unless it is evangelistic . . . To fail here is to fail in our primary reason for existence. . ."36

One Implicit Principle

A careful study of the explicit church school growth principles not only uncovered those explicit principles, but it also revealed at least one basic, foundational, implicit church school growth principle--DISCIPLING TEACHERS.

This implicit principle was built around two basic concepts. First, teachers must be considered as disciples in the sense that a disciple receives instruction from another person, accepts the doctrines of another person, and assists that person in spreading or implementing the doctrines. Second, the act of discipling is the act of teaching, training, helping, and encouraging another person to become a disciple. Therefore, the implicit church school growth principle of discipling teachers was stated as the process by which teachers are taught, trained, helped, and encouraged to become well trained, well educated, enthusiastic disciples of Jesus Christ who can in turn make disciples of their students.

This principle was specifically revealed as Christian educators discussed three aspects of church school teachers: 1) the importance of the teacher, 2) the need for adequate teacher training, and 3) the need for ongoing teacher support and encouragement.

36Byrne, p. 24.

The importance of the teacher to church school growth was briefly discussed as the fifth explicit church school growth principle. However, more needed to be said about this principle. Not only quantitative growth but also qualitative growth was considered regarding the importance of the teacher. The teacher did have a direct relationship to the quantitative growth of the church school. Nearly every Christian educator agreed at this point. But when qualitative growth was considered the teacher became an even greater factor.

Lawrence Richards used the word "model" when he talked about church school teachers and the total scope of Christian education.[37] Teachers could not effectively teach something they did not know. They could not explain something they did not understand. They could not introduce someone well they did not personally know. They could not expect students to become something the teachers were not themselves.

Harold J. Westing put it so succinctly when he said "Students grow spiritually in relation to the quality of the spiritual life of the teacher."[38] Findley B. Edge agreed totally with this aspect of the importance of teachers. In one sentence Edge captured the heart of this concept: "The Christian teacher should seek to embody the ideals of Christ in such an attractive and winsome way that his life will both be worthy of and inspire imitation."[39]

When the importance of teachers included a concept of being a

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[37]Richards, pp. 80-87. [38]Westing, p. 60.

[39]Findley B. Edge, Teaching for Results (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1956), p. 50.

Christian example as well as functioning well in the classroom the

implication of a discipling program for the teachers emerged. No

longer could seminars on teaching methods and theories adequately

prepare teachers for their work. There must be some assistance in

becoming the spiritual person and Christian example necessary to do

the modeling required. One answer was a discipling program for the

church school teacher with a primary goal of producing growing,

maturing, Christian models. This principle was not explicitly

stated by Christian educators but it was definitely implicit in

nearly every one.

Another aspect dealing with church school teachers which

revealed this implicit principle was the need teachers had for

training. No credible Christian educator would ever declare an

end to the need for teacher training. Neither were they satisfied

with what was being done in this area. Jo Berry summarized the

feelings of most educators when she said "If we want effective

Sunday schools we must rethink our hit-or-miss approach to preparing

teachers."[40] Doris A. Freese spoke even more boldly when she said

training Sunday school teachers has always been a problem and that

an adequate job has never been done.[41]

What explicitly emerged in the discussion of teacher training

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[40]Jo Berry, "Sunday Schools: How to Avoid Teacher Trauma,"
Christianity Today, XXIV (February 22, 1980), 18-22.

[41]Doris A. Freese, "How Far Has Sunday School Come? Where
Is It Headed?" Christianity Today, XXIV (February 22, 1980), 14-17.

was a two-fold solution. First, training courses must become more
plentiful and more demanding. Statistics and observations revealed
that growing church schools possessed the greatest number of training
sessions and the most difficult ones.[42] Second, the training must
be continuous. As Chester Vaughn put it, "The church needs to
recognize the value of spending time in year-round training. The
task of training Sunday School workers is a permanent job."[43]
Implicitly Christian educators were proclaiming the need for a
program of discipling teachers which would provide continuous,
credible, and demanding teacher training.

A third aspect of church school teachers which revealed a
basic, foundational, implicit church school growth principle was the
teachers' need for encouragement and support. Too often persons
have been secured in a local church as church school teachers, have
received some teaching material, and have been expected to teach
effectively for the rest of their lives with little or no encourage-
ment or support.

All Christian educators explicitly agreed that encouragement
and support were necessary. Elmer Towns summarized most educators'
feelings with these words: "No worker can be expected to keep
performing at a high level without constant motivation, evaluation,

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[42]Berry, p. 20.

[43]Chester Vaughn, A Guide to Sunday School Enlargement, ed.
George W. Stuart (Nashville: Convention Press, 1968), p. 96.

and reward."[44] Iris V. Cully went a step further when she said,

"Give teachers opportunities to know each other, share their concerns,

have personal enrichment, and develop tools for teaching."[45] Elmer

Towns said a "face-to-face encounter between leaders and workers is

a necessity for constant growth."[46] Charles Allen and Mildred Parker

declared officers and teachers of a very successful Sunday school

reported "coming together as workers, talking, planning, praying,

thinking, studying as a team has done more to increase the attendance,

the spirit, and effectiveness of their Sunday school than anything

they have ever tried."[47] Therefore, what these educators were saying

explicitly revealed implicitly the church school growth principle

of discipling teachers.

Summary

In this chapter ten current explicit church school growth

principles were stated and briefly discussed—The Church School—A

Major Priority; Pastoral Participation; Intentional Planning; Student

and Parental Satisfaction; Dedicated, Caring, Trained Teachers;

Promotion; Visitation; Evaluation; New Classes; and an Emphasis on

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[44]Towns, The Successful Sunday School and Teachers Guidebook,
p. 210.

[45]Iris V. Cully, New Life for Your Sunday School (New York:
Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1976), p. 31.

[46]Towns, The Successful Sunday School and Teachers Guidebook,
p. 211.

[47]Allen and Parker, pp. 62-63.

Evangelism. As a result of a careful study of the explicit principles

a basic, foundational implicit church school growth principle

emerged--DISCIPLING TEACHERS.

CHAPTER 3

A Proposed Model of Church School Growth

After a careful study of the explicit church school growth

principles and the discovery of a basic, foundational, church school

growth principle, the application of this material to the local

church school was considered. If discipling teachers was a basic,

foundational church school growth principle then this principle could

form the foundation for a program of church school growth. In this

chapter a proposed model for church school growth was presented

based on the foundational church school growth principle--DISCIPLING

TEACHERS. The model was discussed under three headings: 1) Foundation

of the Model, 2) Content of the Model, and 3) Mechanics of the Model.

Foundation of the Model

The foundation of the model came directly from Scripture.

Jesus came into the world "to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

Evangelism was His all-consuming passion. But for Jesus evangelism

was more than simply attaining an initial commitment. It was the

making of disciples. This fact was evident in the work He did with

twelve men. Therefore, while evangelism was His goal, the means to

reaching that goal was a method of discipleship.

This method of making disciples was not only important to

Jesus for His own ministry but was also important to His disciples in

their ministry. This fact became quite clear when a study was made

of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18b-20):

> All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them
> in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo,
> I am with you always, to the close of the age.

Robert E. Coleman declared the concept of making disciples

was even more prominent when the Greek text of these verses was

studied. In the Greek text the main verb is "make disciples." All

other verbs--"go," "baptize," and "teach"--are participles which

derive their force from the main verb.[1]

Therefore, since discipling teachers has emerged as a basic,

foundational church school growth principle, and discipling men was

Jesus' method of world evangelism, it was imperative to derive the

foundation for a model of church school growth from Jesus' own method

and example. This process was expedited by a careful examination of

a book written by Robert E. Coleman titled The Master Plan of

Evangelism. In his book Coleman presented eight principles of Jesus'

plan to make disciples and thereby accomplish His goal of world

evangelism: selection, association, consecration, impartation,

demonstration, delegation, supervision, and reproduction.

The first principle was that of "selection."[2] Jesus focused

on persons. When time came for Him to begin His ministry He selected

twelve men (Luke 6:13-16). These men were to become His disciples,

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[1]Robert E. Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism (Old Tappan:
Fleming H. Revell Company, 1963), p. 108.

[2]Coleman, p. 21.

and together they would accomplish Jesus' goal.

A basic principle in Jesus' method was "association."[3] After He had selected the men He spent time with them. He did not call them to do a task by themselves as much as He called them to follow Him (Mark 1:17). Jesus Himself was a vital factor in His method, and the principle of association was a primary one.

"Consecration" was the third principle.[4] Jesus demanded consecration, dedication, and obedience (Matt. 11:29). Just as Jesus loved and obeyed His Father He wanted His men to love and obey Him. This principle of consecration was a vitally important one to Jesus. Coleman said it so well when he wrote "Jesus was making men to lead His church to conquest, and no one can ever be a leader until first he learns to follow a leader."[5] And Jesus did say "Follow me" (Mark 1:17).

Coleman listed "impartation" as the fourth principle of Jesus' method.[6] This was the principle of Jesus giving Himself to His men. He poured Himself into the twelve disciples in every way He could. But there was a divine factor present. Not only did He do all He could as a human being, He also introduced the disciples to the power of the Holy Spirit. As He demanded them to follow Him He provided them with the power to follow Him. He also promised them at His bodily departure from the world another comforter or counselor would take His place--the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17). Therefore,

[3]Coleman, p. 38. [4]Coleman, p. 50. [5]Coleman, p. 58.

[6]Coleman, p. 61.

while the demands upon the twelve were high, the needed power to meet the demands was provided.

Perhaps one of the most significant of all Jesus' principles was that of "demonstration."[7] Jesus demanded a great deal of the twelve disciples, but He never demanded more than He was willing to do or be Himself. He provided the men with a model to follow (John 13:15). Whether He was discussing prayer, the use of Scripture, soul winning, teaching, etc., Jesus was constantly modeling for the twelve. He not only explained how, He showed them how. Jesus meant exactly what He said: "Follow me" (Mark 1:17).

Another of Jesus' principles was "delegation."[8] Jesus knew world evangelism was not possible to accomplish all by Himself. He knew His bodily presence was to be short on the earth. He had to make every minute count. Therefore, He poured Himself into twelve men who could work with Him while He was here and then carry on without Him when He was gone. He delegated the task of evangelizing the world to His disciples. He told them from the very beginning "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17).

After delegation came "supervision."[9] When Jesus made an assignment He expected it to be completed. He required the disciples to report back to Him their carrying out of His assignments (Mark 6:30; Luke 9:10). He wanted to know how they did so He could help them improve.

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[7]Coleman p. 73. [8]Coleman, p. 82. [9]Coleman, p. 94.

Jesus also expected "reproduction."[10] Just as He poured His

life into the twelve and made disciples out of them so He expected

the disciples to go make more disciples. This was clearly evident

in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18b-20). Reproduction was the

final step in this entire discipling process. It was the key to

reaching Jesus' goal of world evangelization.

LeRoy Eims, International Ministry Representative for the

Navigators, confirmed Coleman's perspective of making disciples as

Jesus' plan for world evangelization.[11] Eims proposed three principles

of Jesus' plan. Like Coleman Eims declared "selection" and "association"

to be two basic principles of Jesus. However, Eims' third principle

was that of "instruction." This principle basically incorporated

the six remaining principles of Coleman into one. Win Arn and Charles

Arn also concurred that Jesus' method of evangelization was making

disciples, and that it was this method He recommended for future

generations.[12]

Therefore, the foundation of the proposed model of church

school growth was Jesus' example of discipling a few men. Practically

every aspect of Jesus' discipling process was directly applicable to

the model proposed for the local church school.

The first step in directly applying Jesus' model to the local

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[10]Coleman, p. 102.

[11]LeRoy Eims, The Lost Art of Disciple Making (Grand Rapids:
Zondervan, 1978), pp. 28-36.

[12]Win Arn and Charles Arn, The Master's Plan for Making
Disciples (Pasadena: Church Growth Press, 1982), pp. 15-31.

church was to identify Jesus' counterpart. There was a very real
sense in which Jesus Himself must be allowed to function in the local
church as He did with the twelve disciples. However, with Jesus not
being present physically His presence must be considered in the form
of the Holy Spirit. More has been said about this aspect later.
However, there needed to be a direct counterpart to the role of Jesus
when His discipling process was applied to the local church school.
This role was assumed by the local church school leaders and by the
local pastor.

In some local churches there was a sophisticated staff of
church school leaders with a professional staff person directly
responsible for the church school. In these churches the professional
staff person might have been the counterpart to Jesus. Sometimes the
church school superintendent could have functioned in this role.
However, most churches in the Wheeling District of the United Methodist
Church in the West Virginia Conference were small membership churches
with the pastor being the only paid professional staff person. In
these churches the pastor was the person most qualified to assume the
role of Jesus' counterpart in the application of this discipling
process. Therefore, as this proposed model was presented the pastor
was the central Jesus counterpart figure.

Jesus selected twelve men to become His disciples. In a local
church school persons were selected to teach church school classes.
Just as Jesus was very careful in His selection of men so should
pastors and local church school leaders be very careful in their
selection of teachers. Jesus did not choose men who were already

great disciples. He chose men who had the potential to become great

disciples. Teachers should be selected in the same way.

Jesus spent time with His disciples. His model occurred in a

period during which it was customary for great teachers to have

disciples who practically lived together as a family. Therefore, they

were literally together nearly all the time. The principle, however,

incorporated a two-fold thrust. First, Jesus spent time with the

disciples. But secondly, the disciples spent time with each other.

When Jesus' model was applied to the local church school the

immediate application was seen. The pastor must spend time with the

church school teachers. Obviously it was impossible to reproduce

the model of master teacher and disciples living together as Jesus

and His twelve men did. However, it was not impossible to intention-

ally design a program of discipling teachers whereby the pastor

regularly spent several hours of quality time together with the

teachers each month.

Also, when these several hours of quality time occurred the

dynamics of the teachers spending time with each other became apparent

and beneficial. Too often the pastor had little or no direct contact

with the church school teachers and the teachers had very little

direct contact with each other. It was nearly impossible to produce

a unified, effective, growing church school apart from the principle

of association.

Consecration was another of Jesus' principles. His consecrated,

dedicated life to God resulted in His total obedience to the heavenly

Father. This same consecration He demanded of His disciples.

Likewise this consecration, dedication, and obedience to God through Jesus Christ needed to be present in the local church school. The pastor needed to be consecrated to God himself. Then he needed to expect the same level of consecration from the teachers.

The principle of impartation was the principle which consisted of Jesus giving of Himself to the disciples. This giving of Himself in a human way was necessarily adopted by the pastor. The pastor needed to be willing to give all he/she had to the teachers. But this principle for Jesus was more divine than human. It included the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when the principle was applied to the local church school with the pastor and teachers the divine aspect needed to be present and dominant.

This could occur only as the pastor continually relied upon the power of the Holy Spirit for leadership and guidance, and as the pastor encouraged the teachers to rely upon the Holy Spirit for their strength and power. No pastor could be and do all the office demands, and neither could the church school teacher. This divine, Holy Spirit power needed to be present in order for the discipling process to be effective.

Jesus was a model. All He asked His disciples to be and do He was and did Himself first. He provided perfect on-the-job training. This same modeling needed to be done by the pastor with the teachers. As the pastor taught, the teachers were observing a model of teaching. As the pastor dealt with problems, the teachers were observing a model of problem solving. Of course, the dynamics of the teachers modeling for each other was also present, real, and vital.

Jesus delegated tasks and responsibilities to His twelve disciples. He realized He could not do all the work Himself. He knew He could be more effective in realizing His goal if He had twelve men doing the same thing He was trying to do. The application of this principle to the local church school was directly pointed at the pastor. A pastor could multiply the effectiveness of the work if this principle were applied with the church school teachers. If the pastor would communicate ideas, dreams, goals, insights, knowledge, theology, excitement, etc., to the teachers they in turn could join the pastor in a unified, concerted effort.

This concept was stated boldly by noted Christian educator Findley B. Edge:

> . . . it is probable that the pastor would do more good to a larger number of people by helping his teachers improve their teaching than he could by almost any other means. Jesus used this approach. He spoke to large groups, but his main area of concentration was to gather his small group of disciples about him and give them special training and instruction in the task they were to do. Actually, the pastor will be able to touch the lives of more people intimately through his teachers than he will through any other means.[13]

The delegation of tasks and responsibilities was not given to the disciples by Jesus without supervision. Jesus expected them to report back to Him. He wanted to know how they were functioning. This way He could constantly be teaching them, correcting them, motivating them, and encouraging them to go on with their tasks and responsibilities. When this principle was applied to the local church

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[13]Findley B. Edge, Teaching for Results (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1956), p. 214.

school the importance was immediately evident. As teachers taught and worked with their students problems arose, questions emerged, discouragement and lack of motivation occurred. Therefore, supervision was necessary to deal immediately with the problems and concerns. The pastor needed to provide accountability for the teachers but not from a master-slave mentality. Supervision on the local church school level was a cooperative effort in which everyone involved--pastor and teachers alike--held each other accountable and provided for each other's training, motivation, encouragement, and support.

Finally, the key to the success of the discipling program was reproduction. Jesus was preparing His disciples to do what He was doing--teaching, preaching, loving, caring, healing, and, most importantly of all, making disciples. When He was ready to leave this earth bodily His one basic command was to "make disciples" (Matt. 28: 18b-20). If the pastor was to be the Jesus counterpart in this discipling program in the local church, then the pastor needed to be preparing the teachers to become the Jesus counterpart in their classes. This way Jesus' "Master Plan of Evangelism" of making disciples became a continuous process and perpetually effective and successful.

Content of the Model

The content of the model of church school growth necessarily focused on and revolved around the concept of growth. Growth has already been defined as both qualitative and quantitative increase or expansion; an increase in numbers of students attending church school as well as an increase in cognitive and spiritual aspects of both

students and teachers is involved. Therefore, in discussing the
content of the proposed model of church school growth three divisions
emerged: 1) Numerical Growth, 2) Cognitive Growth, and 3) Spiritual
Growth.

Numerical Growth

Numerical growth emerged as the basic goal when the ten
explicit church school growth principles discussed in chapter two
were applied to the local church model. Even though qualitative
growth was present and vital to each of these ten principles, it was
more applicable in the areas of cognitive growth and spiritual
growth. Numerical growth, as revealed in the ter explicit church
school growth principles and based on the Scriptural foundation just
discussed, provided the first major contribution to the content of
the model.

The concept of the church school as "a major priority" of the
entire church needed to be presented to the teachers and ultimately
to the entire congregation. As the pastor discipled the teachers
the pastor discussed with them the various ways this principle could
be applied. The church's programming needed to reflect a constant
effort to involve more persons in Christian education through the
church school. The church's budget had to prioritize the increase in
church school attendance by providing additional funds each year to
cover growth in needed materials and supplies. The church's building
needed to be under constant evaluation and consideration in order to
provide more and more classroom space. The church's staff had to

cooperate by making the numerical increase of the church school one of their major priorities.

As has been stated above the professional staff in most United Methodist Churches in the Wheeling District of the West Virginia Conference was limited to the pastor. Therefore; the importance of the second principle "pastoral participation" was even enhanced. The pastor had to reflect the importance of numerical increase in the church school. Whether the pastor taught a class or was involved solely in supportive, enabling roles, pastoral leadership in making numerical increase a priority was vital. This was communicated to the teachers verbally in discipling sessions and modeled in every area of the pastor's responsibilities such as pulpit ministry, administrative committees, program committees, and informal conversations.

The principle of "intentional planning" was communicated to the teachers both from a conceptual standpoint as well as from a workshop perspective. After learning about planning some actual planning necessarily took place. Numerical increase in church school attendance created problems in areas such as space, curriculum, supplies, and, of course, teachers. Therefore, planning was a vital part of the content of a model of church school growth.

The content of the model certainly included the principle of "student and parental satisfaction." It was a necessity that teachers became aware of the importance of this principle. It was necessary to learn some methods and tools which would enable them to determine the needs of their students and the students' parents and to discover

the means to meet those needs. This principle focused as much on keeping students in church school as it did on reaching new students. Charles Allen and Mildred Parker added significantly to the importance of this principle when they wrote "The Sunday school is the great conserver of church members."[14] Not only was it vitally important to keep persons in the Sunday school but by doing so these persons were also kept in the church.

It was imperative that the importance of "dedicated, caring, trained teachers" was communicated to the teachers. As already discussed the church school teacher was a primary key to growth--both quantitatively and qualitatively. However, too often by actions and words or by the absence of actions and words churches have communicated the opposite to teachers. It was essential that this error be reversed. The importance of teachers commanded a vital part of the content of the model of church school growth.

"Promotion" needed to be taught and learned in this model. Many avenues were examined for promoting the church school. Every one needed to be explored, evaluated, applied, reviewed, and improved consistently and constantly. Just as advertising was considered vital to all major businesses it became crucially important to the church school.

While "visitation" has been a long time principle of church school growth it has been a principle which evoked many strong emotions in teachers. Some teachers have had a natural ability to visit and

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[14]Allen and Parker, p. 18.

a built-in desire to do so. Others, however, have been totally

repulsed by the idea and even terrified at the prospect of visiting.

Much training and encouragement were needed in this area. This was

another principle which needed a strong model and on-the-job training

in workshop formats and in actual visitation settings.

The process of "evaluation" was one which should have been

routine and ever present. However, the importance of evaluation,

the process of evaluation, the tools of evaluation, and the inter-

pretation of evaluation all formed a basic segment of content of the

model of church school growth.

The importance of numerical growth was strongly evident in

the principle of "new classes." New classes, however, created many

dynamics. Questions such as "Why is a new class necessary?" "Where

will it meet?" "Who will teach it?" "What will be the curriculum?"

"How long will it function?" and "How will it effect existing classes?"

needed to be carefully discussed as a part of the content of a model

of church school growth.

The final explicit church school growth principle and the

final principle contributing to the numerical growth content of the

model was an "emphasis on evangelism." While this principle was

listed last it was perhaps the basic underlying principle of numerical

growth content. This principle emerged out of biblical theology and

a study of the purpose of the church and the church school. The

command of Jesus in His Great Commission (Matt. 28:19) was to "make

disciples of all nations..." This command dictated an emphasis on

evangelism which necessarily was reflected in numerical growth.

Cognitive Growth

The serious examination of the qualitative aspect of church school growth began with the introduction of cognitive growth content. There were at least eight areas of cognitive growth to which every church school teacher needed to be exposed--theology, doctrine, church history, polity and discipline, Bible study, curriculum, teaching-learning theory, and communication theory.

A teacher's theology was considered vitally important. Perhaps some teaching could take place in which the personal beliefs of the teacher were irrelevant. However, teaching a church school class was not such teaching. As stated above who the teacher was in many cases was more important than what was taught. Therefore, what a church school teacher personally believed about God was directly related to who the teacher was and, consequently, extremely important.

Part of the cognitive growth content had to be theology. The United Methodist Church was found to be a product of the actions and theology of John Wesley. Therefore, church school teachers in a United Methodist Church should have ideally been acquainted with, and basically in agreement with, Wesleyan theology. Therefore, Wesleyan theology became a part of the cognitive growth content.

Also, church school teachers in a United Methodist Church school should have been acquainted with the doctrines of the United Methodist Church. There were significant differences in the doctrines of each denomination. Therefore, the specific doctrine of the United Methodist Church was some cognitive content necessary to a model of church school growth.

Another aspect of cognitive growth content was that of church history. A general knowledge of the origin and development of the church and the church school was considered invaluable to a person who was now a part of continuing the process and further developing the tradition. Any church school teacher in the United Methodist Church needed to understand the significant role their denomination has played in church history, particularly regarding the church school.

The polity and discipline of the United Methodist Church also needed to be discussed. All churches were organized slightly differently. How a United Methodist Church functioned was important for a United Methodist church school teacher to understand and to communicate to students.

It was necessary for teachers to have a basic understanding in these areas to facilitate both quantitative and qualitative growth. For teachers to have actively encouraged persons who were not Christian and not churched to accept Christ and to attend a United Methodist church school they needed to understand Christian biblical theology, Wesleyan theology, United Methodist doctrine, church history, and United Methodist Church polity and discipline. Without this objective, cognitive content the teachers' persuasiveness would have been totally subjective, emotional, and, too often, short lived.

Another area of cognitive growth which was considered to have been a part of the content of a model of church school growth was Bible study. Irregardless of the approach of the curriculum or the format of the class the basic authority in every church school class needed

to be the Bible. Therefore, it was vitally important the church school teachers had a good understanding of Scripture. One of the best ways discovered for teachers to understand Scripture was for them to study it. Some time needed to be spent in teaching the teachers how to study the Bible inductively.

Curriculum selection, evaluation, and application was another area of cognitive growth content. While the United Methodist Church published its own curriculum, and each United Methodist Church school class was encouraged to use the denominational curriculum, there was frequently a choice of curriculum material and a choice of teaching methods. Teachers needed training in these areas.

Teaching-learning theory also needed to be a part of the cognitive growth content. How students learn directly influenced how teachers taught. Much material was available regarding the teaching process and the learning process. This material needed to be placed into the hands, the minds, and the hearts of church school teachers.

There was also much new material produced in the area of communication theory. Regardless of the wealth of information and inspiration the teachers had if they could not communicate it to their students it was useless. Therefore, much attention needed to be given to communication theory.

A unique element to both teaching-learning material and communication material was the possibility of modeling the material while teaching it. The pastor needed to present and model these cognitive materials simultaneously. The teachers were being taught

by the pastor. They were expected to learn. The teaching theories being presented by the pastor were to be used by the pastor, and the learning theories being presented by the pastor were to be used by the teachers.

Spiritual Growth

The qualitative aspect of church school growth was also reflected in spiritual growth content. Who the teacher was as a person was vitally important. The teachers' relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ was considered more important than any other qualification. Therefore, it was imperative much emphasis be placed on spiritual growth.

If the pastor was indeed the Jesus counterpart in this model then the pastor prayed for the teachers. He did it privately and also publicly. He prayed with the teachers modeling by precept and example the importance of prayer.

Not only did the pastor pray but the teachers themselves learned to pray. The teachers needed to learn to pray for themselves and for each other. No aspect of the content of the model of church school growth united teachers and pastors in their task like prayer. No aspect produced more spiritual growth than prayer.

Prayer, however, was not the only aspect of spiritual growth content considered. Sharing was also vitally important. The sharing of ideas, concepts, helps, problems, victories, etc., by both the pastor and the teachers increased the spiritual growth of all partici-pants in this discipling program.

When pastors and teachers prayed together and shared together they began to learn to care together. Caring was a prominent result of spiritual growth content. In this process everyone was involved in building one another in faith and spirit. Pastors and teachers alike helped each other become the pastors, the teachers, and the persons God created them to be. When this happened spiritual growth took place, qualitative growth took place, and usually numerical growth took place.

Mechanics of the Model

After a discussion of the foundation of the model and the content of the model it was necessary to focus on the mechanics of the model. The mechanics of the model developed from a study of communication theory, teaching-learning theory, and leadership style theory. This study produced a model which functioned in three settings: 1) the large group, 2) the small group, and 3) the individual one-to-one setting. Before the exposition of the specific settings occurred a summary of the studies which produced the settings was made.

A study of communication theory began with a definition of communication. Taylor McConnell said "communication is the transfer of meanings (mental images) from one mind to another."[15]

Kenneth E. Andersen suggested a more thorough definition when

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[15]Taylor McConnell, Group Leadership for Self Realization (New York: Petrocelli Books, 1974), p. 36.

he wrote "communication is a dynamic process in which man consciously or unconsciously affects the cognitions of another through materials or agencies used in symbolic ways."[16]

Communication was considered practically unavoidable anytime two or more persons were together. As McConnell put it "it is almost impossible not to communicate."[17] While communication may have been inevitable it was not simple.

Andersen reflected the complexity of communication when he proposed a model of the communication process. His model consisted of six elements: source, receiver, message, channel, specific setting-situation and general environment, and communication-binding context.[18] The source was the originator of the message. The receiver was the one who received the message. The channel was the particular medium in which the message had been placed. The specific setting-situation and general environment referred to the physical setting and conditions which highly influenced the transmission and reception of the message. The communication-binding context suggested the communication process was an interaction of all these factors and thereby made communication extremely complex.

To add to the complexity of communication theory McConnell reported that as a result of extensive lab measurements done by Psychologist Albert Mehrabian only seven percent of a message was

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[16]Kenneth E. Andersen, Introduction to Communication Theory and Practice (Menlo Park: Cummings Publishing Company, 1974), p. 5.

[17]McConnell, p. 87.   [18]Andersen, p. 9.

carried through words while ninety-three percent was carried by nonverbal means.[19]

The complexity of communication was extended still further. Lowell E. Brown, Bobbie Reed, Robert E. Coleman, Findley B. Edge, Robert F. Mager, and Lawrence O. Richards all concurred that the concept of modeling directly influenced the process of communication. In fact, they all suggested in one way or another that modeling was the most important aspect of communication. The character and example of the source, or the originator of the message, directly influenced the reception of the message. This concept of modeling was also evident in McConnell's statement concerning trust: "Communication develops in a group in direct proportion to the extent to which trust emerges."[20] Trust necessarily rose or fell with the consistency between what the source said and what the source was and did--i.e., modeling.

McConnell's discussion of communication focused on the small group. Andersen's discussion was somewhat more comprehensive. He suggested three basic communication settings: 1) the large group, 2) the small group, and 3) the individual one-to-one setting. This identification of specific settings along with the model of Jesus and His twelve disciples provided the basis for the settings of the model of church school growth.

A study of teaching-learning theory began with an examination of the learning process. How a student learned dictated how a teacher

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[19]McConnell, p. 91.   [20]McConnell, pp. 101-102.

taught. Findley B. Edge listed five steps in the learning process as stated by Ernest M. Ligon: 1) exposure, 2) repetition, 3) understanding, 4) conviction, and 5) application.[21] H. W. Byrne's list of five steps in the learning process came from John M. Gregory: 1) memorization, 2) understanding, 3) expressing the thought, 4) giving evidence for beliefs, and 5) application of knowledge in daily life.[22] Lowell E. Brown and Bobbie Reed also listed five steps in the learning process: 1) receive (listening), 2) explore (investigate), 3) discover, 4) appropriate (apply), and 5) assume responsibility (change life patterns).[23]

While each of these lists was different the basic progress was the same. For learning to take place the message was received and resulted in a changed life evidenced by a change in behavior. The learning process was fundamentally the same.

This process of learning directly effected the process of teaching. If the end result was a changed life and a direct application of the material learned to everyday life situations, then teaching needed to create the environment and provide the avenue for this to happen. Byrne suggested the teaching process needed to be one of motivating, guiding, exciting, and directing.[24]

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[21]Edge, pp. 33-39.

[22]H. W. Byrne, Christian Education for the Local Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1963), p. 264.

[23]Lowell E. Brown and Bobbie Reed, Grow--Your Sunday School Can Grow (Glendale: G/L Regal Books, 1974), p. 21.

[24]Byrne, p. 262.

The key to successful teaching seemed to emerge in the form of pupil participation. The teaching-learning process was not a combination of dynamic teaching and static learning. Learning, too, had to be dynamic. The student needed to be actively involved in the process.

This concept of "participation teaching" was also strongly stated by Lowell E. Brown and Bobbie Reed. Brown and Reed used words such as "investigating," "experimenting," "observing," "questioning," "problem solving," and "discussing" when they described the student's role in the teaching-learning process.[25] When discussing the teacher's role they used "guiding," "stimulating," and "caring" as key words.[26]

The result of a study of the teaching-learning process was the suggestion of three settings in which such teaching and learning could take place. The first setting was the large group. Here the message could be sent and received. The students could hear the basic content which needed to be learned. The second setting was the small group where interaction and the dynamics of student participation could take place. Finally, the individual one-to-one setting between the teacher and the pupil was suggested. In this setting the evidence of learning-- application--could be evaluated; and support, encouragement, and reward could be received.

A study of leadership styles was necessary within this dis- cussion of the mechanics of a model of church school growth. The foundation of the model originated in Scripture with Jesus and His twelve disciples. In this biblical model Jesus was the leader. He was

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[25]Brown and Reed, p. 13.   [26]Brown and Reed, p. 23.

the central figure and the key to the success of the discipling

program. Therefore, in the application of the biblical model to the

church school growth model attention needed to focus on leadership

styles.

The study of leadership styles centered around Rensis Likert

and his "systems" approach to management or leadership styles. In

his book The Human Organization: Its Management and Value Likert

discussed four systems of leadership which were the product of social

science research: 1) exploitive authoritative, 2) benevolent

authoritative, 3) consultative, and 4) participative.

System one, exploitive authoritative, was a dictatorial

leadership style. All authority and power was in the leader. All

messages came from the leader to the followers. There was no inter-

action and no participation among the group.

System two, benevolent authoritative, was an authoritative

leadership style but considerably more cooperative and mild than

system one. While the major authority and power resided in the leader

he/she operated more from a paternalistic perspective. The leader had

no intention of exploiting the followers but only to help them. As a

father protected a child and made major decisions for the child's

good the benevolent authoritative leader protected and made decisions

for the followers. There was some dialogue present in this leadership

style, but the followers really did not effect the leader.

System three, consultative, was a leadership style in which the

followers had a vital role. The leader, while still maintaining the

role as leader, consulted the followers for facts, advice, opinions,

and feelings, and was influenced by them.

System four, participative, was a leadership style in which the leader and followers were colleagues, each respected the other, each cooperated with the other, each was responsible to the other for contributions. It was a collaborative approach to leadership. It was a leadership style which reflected the highest value of the individual person. It was the leadership style represented in the theological concept of the body of Christ revealed in I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4.

Douglas McGregor in his book The Human Side of Enterprise echoed Rensis Likert's systems approach with his "theory x" and "theory y" approach.[27] McGregor's basic assumptions in "theory x" produced leadership styles comparable to Likert's "exploitive author-itative" and "benevolent authoritative." His "theory y" assumptions produced leadership styles comparable to Likert's "consultative" and "participative" styles.

Taylor McConnell continued in the same vein when he discussed "autocratic," "democratic," and laissez-faire" styles of leadership. The main difference was seen in the addition of the "laissez-faire" style which simply carried the participative style to an unprofitable extreme. Laissez-faire leadership made the leader so a part of the group that there was really no leader at all.

Another vitally important aspect of leadership styles was that

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[27]Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), pp. 33-57.

of choice. McConnell said a leadership "style" was possible only when there was a choice.[28] Therefore, the implication inherent in the term "leadership styles" was the possibility, the probability, and the desirability that leadership styles could vary according to settings and needs. A good leader would be able to adjust leadership styles to meet the present demands.

The importance of this study of leadership styles became quite evident when the results of the studies on communication theory and teaching-learning theory were revealed. Both studies resulted in the suggestion of three basic settings for communication, teaching, and learning to take place: 1) large group, 2) small group, and 3) individual one-to-one setting. In each setting the role of the leader was crucial. However, the role of the leader was not always the same. Therefore, with a variety of leadership styles from which to choose the leader could enhance the facilitation of the best possible communication, teaching, and learning simply by choosing the most appropriate leadership style.

Likert's "exploitive authoritative" style of leadership was never considered appropriate in a Christian context. In this style persons had little value. Persons were controlled absolutely and exploitively by a dictatorial approach. However, there were occasions when the "benevolent authoritative" style was appropriate. In the large group setting more of this approach was necessary than in either of the other two settings.

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[28]McConnell, p. 16.

The small group functioned better, communication increased, and teaching and learning improved as the leader moved toward "consultative" and "participative" styles of leadership. The one-to-one setting was one in which the value of persons was vital. The participative style of leadership was crucial in this setting.

As a result of the above studies the model of church school growth functioned in three settings: 1) the large group, 2) the small group, and 3) the individual one-to-one setting. The large group was defined as the pastor and all church school teachers. They met together monthly for the introduction of basic items of content, for dealing with the items of business and communication applicable to all, and for the purpose of being united as one church school body. The pastor adopted a benevolent authoritative leadership style like a father with his children, always making decisions in their best interest. However, the pastor did freely adjust to a consultative leadership style when necessary and possible. As the group functioned for longer periods of time the less benevolent authoritative the pastor became and the more the pastor moved toward the participative style of leadership.

The small group was defined as the pastor and part of the church school teachers. The division of the teachers into small groups could occur at random, by classes, by age level of students, etc. Each local church situation dictated how this division could best occur. The small group of teachers also met with the pastor monthly.

The purpose of the small group was to allow for a participative style of leadership and a participation teaching and learning experience. Specific problems were handled in the small group. Each

teacher attained more personal attention, encouragement, help, and support. The actual learning and applying of the content received in the large group occurred in this setting.

The individual one-to-one setting was at times a formal, intentional setting in which an individual teacher met with the pastor to discuss a set agenda. It was at other times a more informal aspect of the model of church school growth in which the pastor and each of the teachers communicated on a one-to-one basis reinforcing the idea of encouragement, support, help, collegiality, and unity.

A minimum goal in terms of time was four hours per month with each teacher. These four hours were to be spent proportionately in the large group setting, the small group setting, and in an individual one-to-one setting. The more time spent together, however, the more power the model generated toward reaching the goal--church school teachers being discipled for the realization of church school growth.

Summary

In this chapter a proposed model of church school growth was presented. The foundation of the model was discussed. The content of the model was surveyed under the categories of numerical growth content, cognitive growth content, and spiritual growth content. Finally, the mechanics of the model were disclosed by examining communication theory, teaching-learning theory, and leadership styles.

CHAPTER 4

The Proposed Model of Church School Growth in Action

The contextual setting for the first use of the proposed

model was the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville,

West Virginia. The discussion of the proposed model in its

contextual setting included four sections: 1) Design of the Model,

2) Implementation of the Model, 3) Administration of the Model, and

4) Evaluation of the Model.

Design of the Model

The design of the proposed model of church school growth was

a discipling program in which the pastor discipled the church school

teachers following the model of Jesus and the twelve disciples.

The pastor led the teachers through a study of numerical growth

content, cognitive growth content, and spiritual growth content in

three basic settings: the large group, the small group, and the

individual one-to-one setting.

This design has been presented at length in chapter three.

However, the process by which the design was constructed was vitally

important to the project, to the writer, and to the members of the

Steelton United Methodist Church.

When the writer, who was pastor of the Steelton United

Methodist Church, and the Congregational Reflection Group first began

meeting as part of the requirements for the Doctor of Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary, the writer presented as a possible project-dissertation topic "Evangelism Through Family Ministries." However, as the meetings proceeded the topic began to undergo some major revisions.

The basic area of concern originally presented was evangelism. This area was unanimously endorsed by the Congregational Reflection Group from the very beginning. However, in the second Congregational Reflection Group meeting weaknesses of the Steelton United Methodist Church were discussed. Three specific weaknesses were mentioned: 1) youth ministry, 2) involvement of men in the church, and 3) the church school.

The third Congregational Reflection Group meeting continued the discussion of the weaknesses and finally produced a possible project-dissertation consisting of a comprehensive plan of evangelism focusing on visitation, church school, and men. The fourth meeting produced the possibility of making the men a focal point of a contextual project separate from the project-dissertation. The church school emerged a strong possibility as the focal point of the project-dissertation.

It was in the fifth Congregational Reflection Group meeting that the organization and development of a United Methodist Men's Group was fixed as the contextual project. It was also at this meeting that the area of church school growth became the general topic for the project-dissertation. The exact nature and scope of the project was still unclear, but the general topic was fixed.

The eighth Congregational Reflection Group meeting focused on the writer's presentation of the material found in Robert E. Coleman's book <u>The Master Plan of Evangelism</u>. The writer declared the major thrust of the book was Jesus' model of making disciples. When this model was presented to the Congregational Reflection Group the group began to formulate a basic question for the project-dissertation: What role could discipling play in church school growth?

It was at the ninth Congregational Reflection Group meeting that the concept of discipling teachers as a method or principle of church school growth became the basic topic of the project-dissertation. This ninth meeting marked the conclusion of the first year of the doctoral program.

As the second year of the program began the design of the project-dissertation began to take shape. Due to the fact the basic idea for the project grew out of the work of the writer and the Congregational Reflection Group the design was not preconceived and predeveloped. It grew as did the basic idea.

From preliminary research in the areas of church growth principles, discipling, and communication theory the writer presented a working design as a starting point. The writer was to be the leader and the teachers were to be his "disciples." The entire group of teachers would meet together once a month. In these large group meetings the writer would share material from his research, discuss it, evaluate it, modify it, and challenge the teachers to try it.

Along with the large group setting with all teachers present

several smaller groups would meet with only part of the teachers present. In these smaller group settings specific attention could be given to each teacher and each age level. A more careful and personal evaluation could take place in the smaller groups.

It was a direct and intentional decision by the writer and the Congregational Reflection Group that the final design of the project would emerge as a result of developmental research and the actual work of the writer and teachers together. Therefore, the final design of the project as it appears in chapter three is the result of two years of research, presentation, evaluation, and development by the writer, the Congregational Reflection Group, and the church school teachers of Steelton United Methodist Church.

Implementation of the Model

The implementation of the model began when the writer challenged the ten church school teachers of Steelton United Methodist Church to participate in a discipling program. Due to the developmental nature of the program the challenge to the teachers was presented on a strictly volunteer basis. The goal was total participation. However, only eight of the ten teachers responded positively.

These eight teachers covenanted together with the writer to organize a discipling program with the writer (pastor) as the leader and the teachers as the "disciples." This program would function for a nine-month period. It would then be evaluated and decisions would be made concerning its effectiveness and its future.

The basic organization included meetings with the writer

and teachers together in three distinct settings: 1) the writer with all the church school teachers (large group), 2) the writer with half the church school teachers (small groups), and 3) the writer with an individual teacher. The goal was for each teacher to be involved in some aspect of the program a minimum of four hours per month.

A study of two books provided the immediate content of the model: The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert E. Coleman and Growth: A New Vision for the Sunday School by Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn. These books were studied in both the large group and in the smaller groups. In the large group setting the basic content was discussed and understood. In the small group settings the teachers were challenged to apply the content to the age level of their students and to their specific classes.

The study of these two books provided a three-fold result. First, the biblical concept of discipling with Jesus and His disciples as a model provided the foundation for the program the writer and the teachers were developing. Second, church school growth principles began to emerge. Third, the writer and the teachers began to examine church school growth from a qualitative as well as from a quantitative perspective.

Very early in the development of a model of church school growth an invitation was extended to Herbert W. Byrne, Professor of Christian Education, Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, to conduct a workshop on church school growth. Preparation for the workshop included a battery of survey instruments which were

distributed to the teachers and to some students.[1] These survey

instruments provided invaluable information for the workshop and for

the development of the model of church school growth. A specific

examination of the survey instruments will appear below in the section

"Evaluation of the Model."

During the workshop seven specific principles or factors of

church school growth were discussed, analyzed, and applied to the

Steelton United Methodist church school. An opportunity was given

for the teachers and the writer to be engaged in evaluating the

present state of the church school, planning strategies to improve

certain areas of growth, and planning to evaluate more carefully

the developmental progress of the model.

A direct result of the workshop and the research of the

writer was the revelation of new areas of needed study. Certain

particular cognitive growth needs began to emerge. Theology, doctrine,

church history, United Methodist polity and discipline, Bible study,

curriculum selection and use, teaching/learning theory, and communica-

tion theory all became topics of study and discussion in the meetings

of the teachers with the writer.

As this model of church school growth was developed certain

key program events became significant. The discovery and application

of the principles of church school growth directed attention toward

numerical growth. The development of a prospect list by those already

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[1]A copy of the survey instruments is found in the "Workshop
on Church School Growth" manual in Appendix A, pages 101-142.

in church school produced nearly two hundred names of persons who were potential church school members. A visitation Sunday was scheduled to visit specifically those on the prospect list. Each teacher took some of his/her students and together they went visiting.

Another aspect of numerical church school growth was the development of a special five-week church school emphasis called "Fishers of Men." The evangelistic concept of Jesus' command "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17) was applied along with several other principles of church school growth: the church school became a major priority, the pastor (writer) was very much involved in planning and promoting the event, intentional planning preceeded the event, promotion was comprehensive and dramatic, and two new classes were started.

The cognitive growth needs were met in the regular meetings with the teachers and in special settings. A one-day teachers' retreat was conducted by the writer in which two areas were presented and discussed: 1) Creative Bible Study, and 2) Creative Bible Teaching. The teachers were challenged to develop good inductive Bible study habits. Then they were instructed in ways to apply what they learned from their Bible study to their classroom teaching.

The spiritual growth needs seemed to emerge as the teachers and writer intentionally met together for study and discussion. A vital part of every meeting was the sharing of needs and victories and the period of prayer for each other. It was very quickly evident that in the process of focusing on church school growth personal, spiritual growth was taking place in each participant.

After the initial nine months of the discipling program the decision to continue was made. The writer, the teachers, and the Congregational Reflection Group unanimously agreed that the program had great possibilities. However, if it were to develop properly more time was needed. The end result was an extension which basically covered the second and third years of the Doctor of Ministry program of the writer.

Administration of the Model

As the model developed administrative roles evolved around three persons or groups of persons: the writer (pastor), the church school superintendent, and the Congregational Reflection Group. A careful examination of each person or group revealed the importance of each.

The writer (pastor) was most directly engaged in administration. He was the initiator of the project. He was the Jesus counterpart in the model. Guidance of the overall project as well as specific leadership of each session were basically his responsibilities. He functioned as researcher, instructor, counselor, motivator, enabler, and model. However, simultaneously he also functioned as learner, colleague, and friend.

The church school superintendent functioned primarily as a member of the group along with the other teachers. However, she did perform administrative tasks as she led the teachers in planning, implementing, and evaluating church school programs such as vacation church school, promotion Sunday, Christian education Sunday, and the

children's Christmas program. Much of the planning and organizing for the church school growth workshop, the teachers' retreat, and the five-week church school emphasis was done directly by the church school superintendent.

The Congregational Reflection Group functioned as an idea resource center, a sounding board, an evaluative board, a counseling body, a motivating body, and a support group. This group helped the writer develop the initial concept of a discipling program for the church school teachers as a model for church school growth. It was this group which could most objectively analyze, criticize, and modify the model.

Evaluation of the Model

The evaluation of the model must begin with some statistical information. If it was a model of church school growth the first question to ask was "Did the church school grow quantitatively?" The answer was "Yes." In 1980 the annual average attendance of the church school of Steelton United Methodist Church was 68. The October, 1983, average attendance of the church school was 92. This marked a 35% increase in church school attendance. In 1980 there were nine church school classes. In October of 1983 there were eleven church school classes.[2]

The survey instruments used in the Workshop on Church School

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[2]These statistics were found in the official church school records of Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia.

Growth also provided some helpful information in evaluating the model. "A Questionnaire on Teaching Practices in the Sunday School" was completed by the eight teachers in the discipling program prior to the Workshop on Church School Growth. This questionnaire provided the teachers an opportunity to evaluate themselves as they responded to questions concerning the motivation, preparation, presentation, and evaluation of their teaching. It also provided some vital information and direction regarding study and discussion topics for the large and small group settings of the discipling program.

The questionnaire regarding "Factors of Church School Growth" provided an evaluation of the church school and the church from the perspective of the teachers. Weak areas in the church school and in the church were readily revealed, and motivation for improvement was generated. This questionnaire provided the first in-depth examination of factors or principles of church school growth.

"Our Opinions About Our Church's Educational Program and People" revealed opinions from teachers, adult students, and senior high students concerning why persons did not participate in church school and what persons found in the church school when they did come. This questionnaire provided valuable discussion material for the workshop and for the large and small discipling groups.

"Exploring the Concept of Church School Growth" provided the springboard into a basic discussion of church school growth. The relationship between the factors or principles of church school growth and a basic definition of church school growth became the focal point of discussion. The result was a definition of church

school growth which embraced both quantitative growth and qualitative growth.

The Workshop on Church School Growth guided the development of the model of church school growth in the Steelton United Methodist Church. The evaluation of the church school's past, present, and future was invaluable. The presentation and discussion of the factors or principles of church school growth provided solid content to the program. The training in planning and evaluation skills proved tremendously helpful as the model developed.

Evaluating the qualitative growth of the teachers and the students was more difficult than evaluating the quantitative growth. The writer along with the Congregational Reflection Group developed a questionnaire titled "Growth Evaluation."[3] During the process of developing the instrument the writer and the Congregational Reflection Group realized the subjectivity involved in the questionnaire. However, they determined to use the teachers' responses in the overall developmental process of the model and to finally produce an instrument which could be used as a pre-test/post-test questionnaire. Credible, reliable, accurate, and objective evaluations would be possible only with the use of such an instrument. Due to the developmental aspect of this project no pre-test/post-test instrument was available at the outset.

The teachers' responses to the "Growth Evaluation" question-

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[3]The "Growth Evaluation" questionnaire and collated teacher responses are found in Appendix B, pages 143-145.

naire were helpful. Generally they evaluated themselves as having grown significantly during the discipling process in the following areas: knowledge of the Bible, love for the Bible, interest in Bible study, time spent in Bible reading and study, relationship with the Lord, commitment to the Sunday school, commitment to the church, love for teaching, concern for students, involvement in the lives of students, and daily witness for Christ.

They also felt their students had grown in many of the same areas: knowledge of the Bible, love for the Bible, interest in Bible study, time spent in Bible reading and study, relationship with the Lord, commitment to the Sunday school, commitment to the church, and daily witness for Christ. However, the teachers felt their students had not grown as much as they had grown. Almost without exception the responses regarding the basis for their answers reflected an unclear, unsure, subjective position. They all agreed more objectivity was needed as they tried to evaluate their students.

The result of the entire process of developing the instrument, the use of the instrument by the teachers, and the evaluation of the responses was the development of a pre-test/post-test instrument for the teachers,[4] the working together of the writer and the Congregational Reflection Group, and the teachers' realization of the great need for objective evaluative instruments to be used in their classrooms. Although the objective evaluation process of the effectiveness of the

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[4]The "Pre-test/Post-test" questionnaire is found in Appendix D, Pages 149-151.

model of church school growth in the Steelton United Methodist Church has been weak the developmental process has been very successful and must be evaluated as a great strength.

The subjective quality of the questionnaire did not produce objective data with which to measure success or failure. However, part of the genius of the discipling program for teachers is the subjective aspect of feeling support, love, friendship, fellowship, and help in being a church school teacher. The fact that all the teachers responded with answers reflecting higher than average growth indicated success in the subjective aspect of the program.

The evaluation of the model has focused primarily on the Steelton United Methodist church school. However, in chapter one statistics were presented concerning the Wheeling District of the United Methodist Church of the West Virginia Conference. Therefore, a survey questionnaire was prepared and mailed to forty-seven pastors in the Wheeling District.[5] Twenty-seven pastors, or 57.446%, responded.

The questionnaire substantiated the statistics given in chapter one. Indeed the church school attendance record in the Wheeling District churches has been declining over the last ten years. However, according to the general consensus of the pastors the quality of the Christian education was stable. This was undoubtedly and necessarily a subjective response.

The most helpful statistics came from the answers reflecting

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[5]The "Church School Questionnaire" with the cover letter and collated responses is found in Appendix C, pages 146-148.

the time the teachers spent together each month in church school
meetings, planning sessions, training sessions, etc., and the time
the pastor or other professional staff person spent with the teachers
each month. The vast majority of teachers spent less than one hour
together each month and even more pastors spent less than one hour
per month with their teachers.

These statistics did not in themselves prove that discipling
teachers would produce church school growth. However, they did prove
that in twenty-seven declining church schools in the Wheeling District
of the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church the
basic concept of discipling teachers was absent. When this fact was
compared to the growth the development of a model of church school
growth in the Steelton United Methodist Church has produced the
possibility of a partial solution to the problem of church school
decline seemed to be evident.

One factor needed to be considered in the evaluation of the
model of church school growth. When the writer entered the Doctor of
Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary, some of the church
school classes at Steelton United Methodist Church were meeting in
the Fellowship Hall of the church with movable partitions as walls
with no doors. Two classes were meeting in the sanctuary and one
in the kitchen. The facilities were very inadequate for the church
school and were obviously not conducive for quantitative growth.
Each classroom was filled to capacity, and there was no room for new
classes to meet.

Therefore, in the midst of the development of the discipling program for church school teachers the Steelton United Methodist Church was engaged in a building program. This building program was to produce eleven classrooms, a choir/conference room, an office complex, a church library, a new kitchen, a new narthex, a new church entrance, a rennovated Fellowship Hall, and four new restrooms.

The building program added many dimensions to the discipling program. Several teachers, many members of the Congregational Reflection Group, and the writer were heavily involved in the building program committees. The main Building Committee acted as the contractor which in reality added extra responsibilities upon the writer. The construction caused some disruption to the already inadequate classroom facilities. The tension of opposing opinions added another dimension to the discipling program.

However, all was not negative. The people of Steelton United Methodist Church for the first time in their history were giving high priority to the educational ministry of their church. The church school teachers and students began to dream about their new classrooms and to save money for the finishing touches they could produce. It was a dream which was soon to become a reality.

Therefore, the impact of this building program needed to be considered. Much time and work the writer and the teachers could have given directly to the discipling program was consumed by the building program. However, the positive impact of a dream becoming a reality seemed to override the negative impact. Had the building already been built the discipling program perhaps could have produced

even greater growth results. Yet, the contribution the building

program made to the developmental aspect of the discipling program

enhanced it and left a great and lasting impact upon the church school

teachers and members of Steelton United Methodist Church.

Another aspect must be considered in the discussion of the

evaluation of the model--the "Hawthorne Effect."[6] In 1927 at the

Hawthorne plant of Western Electric Elton Mayo was studying the effects

of factory lighting upon production. Using assembly-line workers as a

test group he discovered as the lighting was increased production

also increased. However, he also discovered as the lighting was

decreased production continued to increase. The end result of the

study was the discovery that singling out a test group increased

social and morale factors which in turn increased production.

Therefore, in singling out the church school in a local church

the "Hawthorne Effect" must be considered. The very fact of the

writer spending more time with the teachers and emphasizing more

openly the church school than other aspects of the church would in

light of the "Hawthorne Effect" produce some positive results. Again

this was a subjective aspect of the program which was difficult to

objectively evaluate. However, it must be evaluated positively in

the case of the discipling program at Steelton United Methodist Church.

There was both quantitative and qualitative growth reported in the

development of the model of church school growth, and the "Hawthorne

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[6]Taylor McConnell, Group Leadership for Self Realization
(New York: Petrocelli Books, 1974), pp. 69-70.

"Effect" was undoubtedly a factor.

Earlier in this chapter the fact that eight out of ten church school teachers participated in this discipling program was stated. In order to make the evaluation process more complete an evaluation of the classes whose teachers did not participate needed to be made. The two classes which did not have participating teachers were the two youth classes--junior high, grades seven and eight, and senior high, grades nine through twelve. During the discipling program a total of five teachers taught these two classes for brief periods of time. Three teachers were acquired for the junior high class and two teachers for the senior high class. Therefore, there was no teacher stability for either class during this period.

The classes did manage to show an overall increase in average attendance during the period by one student each year. However, a careful examination of the church school records revealed a great fluctuation in attendance.[7] One Sunday there were no youth present at all and another Sunday there were as many as nineteen.

It was the conclusion of the writer and the Congregational Reflection Group that the instability of the teachers and the fluctuation of attendance revealed substantial weakness in these two classes. They also concluded that the slight increase in overall average attendance was to be credited to the building program and the general success of the teachers and classes involved in the discipling program.

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[7]These statistics are found in the official church school records of Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia.

Summary

In this chapter the proposed model of church school growth was presented as it was developed in the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia. The statement and development of the design of the model was discussed. The implementation of the model was presented along with a look at the administration of the model. Finally the model was evaluated from quantitative, qualitative, objective, and subjective perspectives.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

This study dealt with a major problem of the United Methodist churches in the West Virginia Conference, the Wheeling District, and the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia, namely the rapid decline in church schools. This chapter restates the problem, summarizes the findings, draws certain conclusions, and recommends future study possibilities.

Restatement of the Problem

After the declaration and verification of the rapid decline in church schools in the West Virginia Conference, the Wheeling District, and the Steelton church, the statement of the problem was made evident. This study has sought to identify at least one foundational church school growth principle which would form the basis for the development of a model for church school growth in the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia.

In order to be more specific, certain key questions were asked, and answers to these questions were sought:

1. What were the current church school growth principles? Was there at least one identifiable foundational principle of church school growth?

2. Could a model for church school growth be developed based on this one foundational church school growth principle?

3. How have the pastor, the teachers, the church school students, and the Congregational Reflection Group of the Steelton United Methodist Church contributed to the development and testing of this model?

Summary of the Findings

Statistical records were used to produce evidence of church school enrollment, average church school attendance, church membership, and average church attendance in churches in the West Virginia Conference, the Wheeling District, and the Steelton United Methodist Church. These statistics verified the fact that church school enrollment, average church school attendance, church membership, and average church attendance were indeed declining.

A study of these facts also revealed a direct relationship between church school enrollment and average church school attendance, and church membership and average church attendance. Historical research produced facts which suggested the church school statistics were the controlling or leading statistics. If the decline in church membership and average church attendance was to be reversed it must begin with a reversal in the decline of church school enrollment and average church school attendance.

The literature search revealed ten explicit church school growth principles. It produced one implicit, foundational church school growth principle which formed the basis of the development of a model for church school growth, namely discipling teachers.

Experimental research provided the necessary tools to develop

a model for church school growth and to test the results. Questionnaires were used to obtain information from the church school teachers and church school students of the Steelton United Methodist Church which proved invaluable to the development of the model. Questionnaires were also used to survey ministers in the Wheeling District of the West Virginia Conference to determine the validity of the statistics and to learn some current operating procedures in the church schools-- particularly in the area of time the pastor spent with the teachers and the time the teachers spent together. Responses to this questionnaire revealed the fact that no church in the Wheeling District provided a program of discipling teachers as proposed in this study. Other questionnaires were used for evaluation purposes by the church school teachers of the Steelton United Methodist Church.

Developmental research was prevalent throughout the study. Both historical and experimental research were used with the church school teachers, the church school students, and the Congregational Reflection Group as the model for church school growth developed.

Conclusions

Four basic assumptions were made in the beginning of this study. It was the conclusion of the writer, on the basis of the present study, that all four assumptions were valid and accurate.

The <u>first assumption</u> was that growth--numerical, cognitive, and spiritual--was a biblical principle and, therefore, desirable in the church school. In the review of the literature several passages of Scripture were quoted substantiating this assumption. Also four

secondary sources were identified which thoroughly developed the verification and substantiation of this assumption.

The second assumption was that growth could take place in United Methodist church schools in the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church. This assumption was verified objectively by the use of statistical records and subjectively by the use of the questionnaires in the church school of the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia.

A third assumption claimed the church school was vitally important to the total church program. Warren J. Hartman's research findings and other historical research more than adequately substantiated this assumption. With Hartman's conclusion that "as the church school goes so goes the whole church" the very existence of the church itself may depend upon the growth of the church school.

The final assumption was stated as the basic premise of the project-dissertation--there was at least one foundational church school growth principle upon which a model for church school growth could be developed, and this model, when applied to a local church situation, would produce growth. Historical research revealed ten explicit church school growth principles. A careful study of these ten explicit principles revealed at least one foundational church school growth principle. It was an implicit principle but certainly identifiable. The principle--discipling teachers--was then utilized by the writer and the church school teachers of Steelton United Methodist Church to develop a model of church school growth. This action adequately substantiated the basic assumption that a model for church school

growth could be developed upon a foundational church school growth principle.

The second part of this assumption claimed that growth would occur when this model was applied to a local church situation. Two conclusions arose from this part of the assumption. First, growth did occur in the church school of Steelton United Methodist Church. There was quantitative growth among the number of students attending church school and among teachers with the organization of two new classes. This quantitative growth was verified by statistical records. Qualitative growth was more difficult to evaluate. Due to the absence of a pre-test/post-test instrument no objective evaluation could be made. However, the "Growth Evaluation" instrument provided a subjective, self evaluation for the teachers. Subjectively the evaluation was positive--qualitative growth did occur. Therefore, the first conclusion proclaimed quantitative growth did occur, and qualitative growth appeared to have occurred, but objective evidence was insufficient to declare growth without reservation.

The second conclusion arose out of the implementation of the project. The writer and the church school teachers of the Steelton United Methodist Church developed a model for church school growth. The development of the model produced the growth discussed in the first conclusion stated above. However, the model in its final form could not be evaluated in terms of its ability to produce growth due to the fact that the model has never been applied to a local church situation. There appeared to be sufficient evidence to further strengthen this part of the basic assumption, but definite, objective evidence has

yet to be discovered.

Recommendations for Further Study

Four recommendations for further study emerged from this project-dissertation: 1) develop a manual, 2) test the model, 3) research the statistics, and 4) develop other models. A brief explanation needs to accompany these recommendations.

Develop a Manual

A manual needs to be developed which will provide a pastor or other leader with the necessary tools with which a program of discipling teachers can be directly initiated in a local church situation. The manual needs to be an expansion of the contents of chapter three "A Proposed Model of Church School Growth."

Section one of the manual should deal with "Foundation of the Model." A specific set of lesson plans needs to be written providing a step-by-step presentation of the biblical basis for discipling teachers. Specific Bible passages should be studied. Study guides need to be written which would present the contents of Robert Coleman's The Master Plan of Evangelism, LeRoy Eims' The Lost Art of Disciple Making, and Charles and Win Arn's The Master's Plan for Making Disciples in a systematic, comprehensible manner.

Section two of the manual should deal with "Content of the Model." After the pastor and the church school teachers understand the biblical foundation for the program they need to begin a systematic plan of study which will produce competence in the areas of numerical growth, cognitive growth, and spiritual growth.

Numerical growth will consist primarily of a presentation of the ten explicit church school growth principles revealed in chapter two. Each principle needs to be presented along with some specific ways the principle can be implemented in the church school. Workshop experiences must be intentionally designed to allow the teachers opportunity to apply the principles to their own class situations.

The cognitive growth content needs to be presented in a series of short, well-planned, well-written lesson plans. Wesleyan theology, United Methodist Church doctrine, church history, United Methodist polity and discipline, inductive Bible study, curriculum evaluation, teaching-learning theory, and communication theory all need to be systematically presented enabling the teachers to obtain a positive working knowledge of these areas.

Specific attention needs to be given to spiritual growth content. This part of the manual should give the pastor specific guidelines regarding the role of spiritual formation of the teachers. A specific time must be designated each time the teachers are together for spiritual growth. Therefore, the manual must provide suggestions to creatively enhance spiritual growth through praying, sharing, caring, loving, and being.

The third section of the manual needs to deal with the "Mechanics of the Model." This section will be primarily for the pastor or the leader of the program. A brief survey of communication theory, teaching-learning theory, and leadership styles will be most helpful to the pastor or leader before the program actually begins. It is imperative the pastor or leader grasp the importance of their

role in this program both as a model and as a leader who will need to utilize different leadership styles. This section is also important because it will explain the groupings, the time schedules, and the format of the specific curriculum which has been developed regarding the foundation and content of the model.

Test the Model

After the manual is developed the model needs to be tested in order to objectively verify the last part of the basic assumption of the project-dissertation, namely that growth will occur when this model is applied to a local church situation. This testing includes the use of the "Pre-test/Post-test," the keeping of impeccable records, and the faithful application of the material presented in the manual.

Several church schools should test the model. All church school situations are different. Therefore, to accurately test the model many tests need to be made. As the tests are made evaluations of the model need to occur with the collection of data which should be used to revise and enhance the manual and the model.

Research the Statistics

A careful study of statistics needs to occur as the model is tested. Not only should the church school enrollment and average church school attendance be researched and evaluated, but church membership and average church attendance should also be monitored. As stated in chapter one statistics reveal a direct relationship between the church school and the church. Only a careful ongoing examination of the statistics can prove the continued accuracy of this

relationship.

If it is proved that this direct relationship between the church school and the church continues to be true and that the old addage "as the church school goes so goes the whole church" is continually accurate, then the value of this study and the implementation of the model will have a significant impact upon the church school and the church itself.

Develop Other Models

Discipling teachers has emerged as one foundational church school growth principle upon which a model for church school growth has been developed. Special care has been taken to indicate the possibility of the existence of other foundational church school growth principles. Further study needs to be made examining more carefully the principles of church school growth stated in this paper, the foundational church school growth principle stated here, and other principles, which perhaps have not yet been discovered, to determine more foundational church school growth principles upon which more models can be developed.

The goal is church school growth. Research, study, testing, revising, and more testing must continue until every church school is reflecting definite, objective, measurable signs of quantitative and qualitative growth. When this growth becomes a reality a step toward the revitalization of the entire church as the Body of Christ will have been taken.

Workshop

on

Church School Growth

Steelton United Methodist Church

New Martinsville, West Virginia

March 26-27, 1982

Resource person:

Dr. Herbert W. Byrne

Professor of Christian Education

Asbury Theological Seminary

Wilmore, Kentucky

A QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEACHING PRACTICES IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

By Dr. Herbert W. Byrne

<u>Do not sign your name.</u>

Denomination_____ Age of pupils_____

Class_____ Number of pupils_____

I. MOTIVATION - Why are you teaching?

___1*Get pupils to become church members

___Get pupils to attend church regularly

___They are well-behaved and attentive

___They need to be taught practical ethics

___1 Wonderful evangelistic opportunities

___1 No other teacher available

___1 Have always done it

___1 The superintendent asked me

___3 Carry a burden for the souls of children

___4 Because I have a desire to help and do my part

___2 Others (Please state any)

God directed personal discipline

II. PREPARATION

A. General Preparation - What formal training have you had for teaching?

___3 Leadership training course

How much schooling have you had?

___3 College

---

*Collated responses to the questionnaire. Eight teachers received a questionnaire. Eight completed questionnaires were returned.

<u> 3 </u>Reading books on   <u> 1 </u>Bible School

    methods and teaching   <u> 4 </u>High School

<u> 6 </u>Teaching experience   <u>   </u>Grade School

    Years of experience<u> </u>   <u> 2 </u>Other <u>Business Administration</u>

    3, 6, 25, 30, 5,   School Graduate Courses

    1 public/10 private

B. Personal preparation - What spiritual development is yours?

   <u> 1 </u>A deep prayer life   <u> 8 </u>A growing Christian experience

   <u> 3 </u>A vital Christian   and character

    experience   <u> 5 </u>A personal devotional life

   <u>   </u>A life above reproach

C. Lesson Preparation

   1.   Study

      a. How early in the week do you begin to study each lesson?

     <u> 1 </u>Sunday afternoon   <u>   </u>Sunday morning

     <u> 1 </u>Wednesday   <u> 5 </u>Other - When? <u> Varies </u>

     <u> 2 </u>Saturday

      b. What tools do you use for Lesson Preparation?

     <u> 8 </u>Bible - What version<u> NAS/KJV/Amplified/Living/TEV/ASV/ </u>

               Phillips

     <u> 8 </u>Lesson quarterly - What type<u> Standard/Gospel Light/ </u>

                Cokesbury

     <u> 3 </u>Bible dictionary

     <u>   </u>Bible atlas

     <u> 3 </u>Concordance

___3_Commentaries - What type__Haley's/Layman's Bible Com.___

___1_Religious periodicals

_____Harmony of the Gospels

_____Books on how to teach

___2_Others___Personal file/books and notes from Moody Bible___

 Institute

c. Which of the tools you use do you study first?

___6_Bible ___1_Concordance

___5_Lesson quarterly _____Other versions

_____Periodicals _____Others_____

2. Planning the Lesson

a. What are your aims?

___7_To teach the Bible ___4_To instruct in Christian living

___5_To win to Christ ___2_To develop good habits

___5_To build Christian ___1_Others _Who we are "in" Christal_____

 character

b. How are your aims determined?

___5_Needs of the class

___5_Dependent upon Bible Materials

_____From methods of _____If so, what?_____

 your own

c. How do you get to know your pupils?

___3_Visits _____Public school teacher

___3_Observe at play _____Counseling

___3_Parties ___5_Others

d. Do you use a written lesson plan? ___2_Yes ___4_No

e. What materials do you use in class?

_6_ Maps and pictures   _4_ Posters

_6_ Blackboard   _4_ Object lessons

_3_ Flannelgraph   _7_ Pupil books or texts

_7_ Visual aids   _2_ Others Bible/Resource books ___

f. How do you file your materials?

_3_ Boxes   _1_ I don't

_2_ Files   _2_ Others   Paper sack _____

_1_ Folders   Drawers

_2_ Notebooks

III. PRESENTATION

A. What teaching methods do you use? (Mark first, second, and
third in importance)

_1_ _1_ Lecture method	___ Outline Bible	_2_ Visual Aids
_3_ _2_ Picture and exhibits	study	_3_ Memory work
____ Storytelling	___ Assignment	_3_ Debating
_2_ _2_ _2_ Discussion	research	___ Informal
_3_ _3_ _3_ Question and answer	___ Project method	conversation
	_2_ Dramatization	___ Others
	_2_ Handwork	

Why do you use the ones you do?

B. How do you use the pupils during the lesson?

____ They tell the lesson story   ___ Outline lesson board

_3_ Conduct a quiz   _5_ Dramatize lesson

_4_ Assign problems to be   ___ Testimony

    solved   _1_ Help teach

____Spelling bee ____Forum

____Bring their own questions __2_Just listen

__7_Share personal experience __1_Others   games

____Pupil teach a portion

of lesson

C. How is the Bible used in class?

__3_Lesson read by the teacher __2_Scripture quoted from memory

__1_Lesson read by prepared __1_Lesson read in unison

pupil ____Memory quotations

__6_References read at __1_Others

intervals

_1_Promises underscored

D. What guide material do you take with you into class?

__5_Short outline of lesson __1_I memorize the lesson

__1_Complete notes of lesson ____Written lesson plans

__1_I read the lesson

E. Class Procedure - check ones used

__8_Welcome the pupils __1_Stimulate reproduction of

__6_Prayer lesson

__1_Refer to some current __7_Summarize lesson

event __1_Refer to next lesson

__5_Tell story related to __2_Make assignments

lesson __8_Closing prayer

____Reports of assignments ____Closing song

__5_Relate lesson with ____Invitation

previous lessons

__2_ Announce your aim of the day

__2_ Develop outline of lesson

IV.   EVALUATION

A. How do you make the pupils' learning lasting?

__4_ Frequent repetition   __3_ Association of Bible facts

__6_ Reviews   with known facts

__1_ Summary given by pupils   __2_ Others

B. How do you test the pupils' progress in Bible learning?

__6_ Recitation

   __6_ question method   ____topical method

__1_ Examination

   __1_ Bible tests (oral)

a. Bible fields	b. Types of tests	c. Behavior tests
____Historical	__2_ True and False	____Point system
____Biographical	__1_ Completion	____Character
____Geographical	__2_ Multiple Choice	building
	__2_ Matching	____Other

C. What methods of review do you use?

__2_ Summary by the teacher   ____Written review

__3_ Re-tell lesson by pupils __1_ Tests

__5_ Guided discussion   __1_ Handwork with children

D. Do you feel you are meeting the individual needs of your class by the methods of teaching you are now using? __1_ Yes __2_ No

____Is it yielding Christian results

____Is it self directed

____Is it purposeful

THE CHURCH IN THE 80's

Prospects, Problems, Purposes

by

Dr. H. W. Byrne

Introduction

I. MARKS OF THE 80's - Prospects

    A. Transportation

    B. Communication

    C. Science

    D. Medicine

    E. Labor-saving devices

    F. Space

II. PROBLEMS

    A. Men are still lost

    B. Homes are broken

    C. Materialism rampant

    D. Population mushrooming

    E. Church growth is decreasing

    F. World problems are still mounting

III. PURPOSES – of Church and Church Education

    A. Investigation

    B. Evangelization

    C. Identification

    D. Information

    E. Sanctification

    F. Consecration

    G. Supervision

    H. Perfection

PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH SCHOOL GROWTH

Introduction

I. CHURCH SCHOOL GROWTH - The essential Factor

    A. Why the Sunday School is declining

    B. The essential element - conscious decision making

        and commitment

II. WHAT IS CHURCH SCHOOL GROWTH?

    A. It involves numerical growth and quality

    B. Implications

III. SOME MARKS OF AN EFFECTIVE CHURCH SCHOOL THAT GROWS

    A. The real goal

    B. Some marks include

        1. Evangelism   4. Christian community

        2. Daily living   5. Outreach

        3. Growth in   6. Growing, maturing, caring

            commitment   leaders

IV. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CHURCH SCHOOL GROWTH

    A. Major factors - seven

    B. Factor 1 - The Church School should be given a major

        priority

        1. Evidences

        2. Program ideas

C. Factor 2 — A pastor who participates in Church School planning and promotion

    1. Evidences

    2. Program ideas

D. Factor 3 — Intentional planning

    1. Evidences

    2. Program ideas

E. Factor 4 — Student and parental satisfaction

    1. Evidences

    2. Program ideas

F. Factor 5 — Dedicated and caring leaders

    1. Evidences

    2. Program ideas

G. Factor 6 — Attendance goals and promotion

    1. Evidences

    2. Program ideas

H. Factor 7 — Ongoing program of visitation

    1. Evidences

    2. Program ideas

FACTORS OF CHURCH SCHOOL GROWTH

What factors are present when a church school is growing in quality of program and in number of students? <u>Absolutely essential</u> for church school growth in quality and numbers is a congregational <u>commitment</u> and an <u>intentional decision</u> to grow, including the willingness of leaders to devote time and energy toward growth.

In addition, there are other factors which contribute to the potential for church school growth. Seven factors are included in this checklist. Under each factor are listed some things about a church which indicate that the factor is present.

Under each factor, check (✓) each statement which you believe is true of your church. Check the first column (labeled S) if you feel the statement is only "somewhat true." Check the second column (labeled D) if you feel the statement is "definitely true" of your church.

Factor: A CONGREGATION WHICH CONSIDERS THE CHURCH SCHOOL A MAJOR

PRIORITY

IN OUR CHURCH THERE IS/ARE:

S   D

__4*__ ____ an understanding that the church school is an integral

part of the church's total mission and program.

__3__ __4__ a board/committee of Christian education commissioned to

administer the church school.

---

*Collated responses to the questionnaire. Eight teachers received a questionnaire. Eight completed questionnaires were returned.

S   D

  6   __1 individual and corporate concern for persons and their

            growth "in faith and love."

  5   ____ efforts to inform the congregation about the purpose,

            objectives, and program of the school.

  5   ____ a sense of "ownership" of the church school by the

            congregation.

  6   ____ congregational support for the school in providing

            leadership.

  5   ____ active participation in the church school by most of the

            congregation.

  2   __4 adequate budget for the church school.

  6   __1 prayerful support for the school by individuals and the

            congregation.

Factor: A PASTOR WHO PARTICIPATES IN CHURCH SCHOOL PLANNING AND

         PROMOTION

             IN OUR CHURCH THE PASTOR:

S   D

  1   __5 works closely with the board or committee of Christian

            education and other church school leaders.

  ___   __7 visibly supports the church school.

  ___   __7 sets a positive tone for the school through attitude and

            involvement.

  3   __4 places priority on the training of teachers and other

            church school leaders.

  3   __4 actively promotes church school attendance.

S   D

__2__   __5__ seeks to create a climate of concern for Christian education

in the congregation.

__1__   __6__ recognizes himself or herself as an educator and enabler

and continues to grow in these areas.

Factor: INTENTIONAL PLANNING

IN OUR CHURCH THERE IS/ARE:

S   D

__3__   __2__ a board/committee of Christian education responsible for

planning for the church school.

__3__   __3__ efforts to discover the congregation's expectations for

the church school.

__3__   __1__ a church school program which is planned in relation

to the total church program.

__4__   ____ a clearly defined statement of purpose for the church

school.

__5__   ____ specific objectives for the school year and plans for their

implementation.

__2__   __3__ curriculum selection based on periodic evaluation of

achievement, needs, and congregational expectations.

__5__   ____ students, parents, teachers, and others involved in the

planning whenever decisions affect them.

__4__   __1__ a church school program which is traditional in keeping the

best from the past and innovative in attempting creative

approaches to the present.

S   D

_2_   _5_ classes or groups for persons of all ages.

_6_   _1_ classes or groups for persons with special interests and

        needs (singles, handicapped, young adults, etc.).

Factor: STUDENT AND PARENTAL SATISFACTION

        IN OUR CHURCH THERE IS/ARE:

S   D

_3_   _3_ a loving, caring atmosphere which helps persons feel

        wanted and accepted.

_4_   _3_ persons who feel their needs are being met.

_2_   _5_ classroom experiences which focus on the message of the

        Bible in relation to the needs and concerns of persons.

_6_   _1_ good communication among leaders, students, and families.

_4_   _1_ parents who are satisfied with the study experiences and

        growth of their children and themselves.

_5_   _2_ persons who encourage the faithful participation of

        their families and others in the school.

_5_   ___ persons who spontaneously share with others what the

        church school experiences mean to them.

_6_   ___ a physical setting which is conducive to an atmosphere

        of acceptance.

Factor: DEDICATED AND CARING LAY LEADERS

        IN OUR CHURCH THERE IS/ARE:

S   D

_4_   ___ an ongoing, systematic plan for the recruitment, orientation,

        recognition, training, and support of leaders.

S   D

<u> 3 </u> <u> 4 </u> teachers and other leaders who have a faith to share, increasing knowledge of the Bible, developing skills in using teaching methods, and sensitivity to the needs of persons.

<u> 2 </u> <u> 4 </u> leaders who are enthusiastic about the church school.

<u>   </u> <u> 7 </u> leaders concerned that students accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and grow as his disciples.

<u> 4 </u> <u> 1 </u> leaders who are comfortable in the use of assigned facilities, equipment, and curriculum resources.

<u> 3 </u> <u> 4 </u> teachers and other leaders who will spend time to be trained for their roles.

<u> 2 </u> <u> 5 </u> teachers who provide Bible-centered and person-centered learning experiences in their classes.

<u> 5 </u> <u> 1 </u> support for leaders through recognition events, training opportunities, etc.

<u> 2 </u> <u> 2 </u> leaders who feel that their positions are important because of the priority status of the church school.

Factor: ATTENDANCE GOALS AND PROMOTION

         IN OUR CHURCH THERE IS/ARE:

S   D

<u> 2 </u> <u> 1 </u> appropriate and realistic attendance goals for various age groups.

<u> 4 </u> <u>   </u> appropriate promotional techniques which reflect the significance and purpose of the church school and a concern for the needs and growth of persons.

S   D

__3__ __1__ realistic expectations about numerical growth possibilities of various age levels, based upon solid data about the congregation and community.

__2__ __5__ careful record keeping in classes and departments.

__4__ ____ plans for recruiting new students.

__4__ __1__ plans for increasing the regularity of attendance of enrolled students.

__4__ ____ plans for welcoming and conducting follow-up of visitors.

__3__ __1__ involvement of students, teachers, and others in determining attendance goals and promotional plans.

Factor: AN ONGOING PROGRAM OF VISITATION

IN OUR CHURCH THERE IS/ARE:

S   D

__6__ ____ a visitation program which reflects the loving, caring atmosphere within the congregation.

__3__ __1__ clearly defined objectives for the visitation program.

__5__ ____ plans to involve teachers, students, and others as visitors.

__3__ __1__ specified times when visitation is scheduled.

__5__ ____ visitation of present and prospective students.

__3__ __1__ training for visitors.

__5__ __1__ church school administrators and a pastor who visit teachers in their homes.

__4__ ____ orientation of teachers and other leaders, when they are recruited, regarding the expectation of their participation in the program of visitation.

OUR OPINIONS

ABOUT OUR CHURCH'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PEOPLE

A. Check the <u>three</u> main reasons why you think people do not

participate.

__8*__ Does not deal with interesting subject matter.

__11__ Other family members are not interested.

__13__ Too many things to do.

__5__ Don't feel accepted by the group.

__19__ Don't feel the need to participate.

__6__ Meetings are at inconvenient times for them.

__1__ Meeting places are inconvenient.

__4__ Meeting places are uncomfortable.

__8__ There is only talk and no action.

__0__ Program schedule calls for too many trips each week.

__2__ Other No new insight   Too lazy

__1__ Other No reality of living as born again, spirit-filled

         Christian

---

*Collated responses to the questionnaire. Eight teachers, twenty adult students and six senior high students received a questionnaire. Seven teachers, fifteen adult students, and six senior high students completed the questionnaire.

B. Check the <u>three</u> most important things you think people find in
   your Christian education program.

   _21_ A community of friends.

   _2_ Insight into our Christian and church heritage.

   _20_ Biblical knowledge.

   _17_ Strengthened spiritual life.

   _9_ Insight into how they should live.

   _4_ Ways of getting along better with people.

   _7_ Better understanding of who they are.

   _4_ Ways of getting along better within the family.

   _1_ Involvement in the community (social action).

   _0_ Other _____

   _0_ Other _____

EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF CHURCH SCHOOL GROWTH

Checklist

WHAT IS CHURCH SCHOOL GROWTH?

Check each of the following statements to indicate whether you agree or disagree with it or are uncertain about it.

Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	
5*	___	___	A. Only a church which considers its church school a major priority will have a growing church school.
4	1	___	B. The pastor is a key to church school growth.
3	2	___	C. Current life-styles give us a different community setting for a church school than in the past and may make the possibilities for church school growth more limited.
1	4	___	D. A church school may be growing in numbers but not in quality of program.
5	___	___	E. An intentional congregational decision to grow is necessary for church school growth.

---

*Collated responses to the questionnaire. Eight teachers received a questionnaire. Five completed questionnaires were returned.

Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	
5	___	___	F. Each church must decide for itself what "growth in quality" and "growth in numbers" mean for its church school.
4	___	1	G. Church school growth or decline is related to teacher effectiveness.
2	2	1	H. A church school may be growing in quality of program but not in numbers.
3	___	2	I. A church school which meets the felt needs of persons will grow.
5	___	___	J. The goal of church school growth is growth in effectiveness.
4	___	1	K. An effective church school is growing in quality of program and in the number of students.
5	___	___	L. An ongoing program of visitation is essential for church school growth.

Complete this sentence: Church school growth is

1. Application of the Great Commission

2. Reaching inactive church members and unchurched

3. Seeing attendance grow/seeing spirituality grow

4. Essential if we are to spread the word in our area

5. Of most importance. If no growth then death, and failure to

follow the Great Commission

DETERMINING WHICH FACTORS TO STRENGTHEN

PURPOSE

Answer the question: which factors will we work to strengthen in the coming year?

PROCEDURES - we will:

1. Evaluate the church school in relation to the factors of church growth.

2. Make priority decisions about which factor or factors we will attempt to strengthen.

Note: If you wish to ask students, parents, and other church leaders to be involved and included, make extra copies of this check-list and distribute to them in advance of the workshop and collate the results to be presented at the workshop. Note also the Opinion Sheet.

Collate the results of your survey among the leaders and planning committee below.

FACTOR	S	D
Church School Priority	43	10
Pastor who participates	10	38
Intentional planning	37	16
Student/Parental satisfaction	35	15
Dedicated/Caring leadership	25	28
Attendance Goals/Promotion	26	9
Ongoing Program of Visitation	34	4

If you make a survey of others outside the planning committee, note the results below, and add these results to those immediately above to get the total picture.

SELECT THE PROGRAM TO STRENGTHEN THE FACTORS

PURPOSE - try to answer the question: what programs will potentially strengthen each factor on which we have decided to work in our church school?

PROCEDURES - answers to this question will include:

1. Programs already taking place in the church

2. New programs which can be held in the coming year

PROCESSES - in selecting programs for each factor, you may wish to:

1. Indicate what the factor will be like when it is strengthened. For example, what will show that the factor "A congregation which considers the church school a major priority" is strengthened? (Efforts to inform persons about the program of the church school? Increased budget for the church school? etc.)

2. List all the programs which potentially will strengthen the factor. Consult the suggestions for this in the following pages. You may think of other possibilities as you review the checklist on Factors of Church School Growth.

3. Select the program or programs to be implemented in the coming year.

Factor to be Strengthened	List of Possible Programs	Programs to be Given Priority

FACTOR: A CONGREGATION WHICH CONSIDERS THE CHURCH SCHOOL A MAJOR

   PRIORITY

The congregation will give preferential treatment to the program of the church school through its participation, provision of leadership, planning, budget, and prayerful support.

Guidelines for strengthening the factor

-The church school should be envisioned as an integral part of the church's total mission and program. It should be treated as a priority within, but not separate from, the church's total program.

-There should be attempts to keep church school teachers and other leaders from becoming too heavily involved with other leadership responsibilities so that they can expend the necessary time and energy in their church school responsibilities.

-The church's budget should reflect the priority status of the church school; and budget makers consequently should be informed about and involved in planning for church school growth.

-Publicity for the church school should describe the program for all ages and reflect the priority status of the school.

-Efforts are needed to develop a sense of "ownership" of the church school by the congregation. This necessitates involving as many persons as possible in participation, planning and leadership.

-It is essential to recruit and train a board or committee of Christian education to plan and implement the church school as a priority program.

Programs to strengthen the factor

-Regular reports to the congregation through announcements, bulletins,

newsletters, etc., to keep the church informed about the church school

program and to reflect the priority status of the school.

-Regular reports to the budget makers of the church (trustees, finance

committee, etc.) describing the accomplishments and plans of the church

school.

-Involvement of the congregation in developing and adopting a statement

of purpose for the church school. At the same time an official vote

of the congregation may affirm the priority of the church school.

-Involvement of church school students and groups, including leaders, in

worship services. Intercessory prayers for students and leaders in

worship services.

-Displays on Sunday and as part of special events in order to show the

curriculum, activities, and projects of the church school.

-A slide or multimedia presentation on the church school as part of the

church's annual meeting, an all-church dinner, or other special

occasion.

-Parents' nights to inform persons of the nature and significance of the

teaching-learning experiences within various classes and departments

and to explore family and church school relationships.

-An open house for the congregation and community during the church

school hour or at another time.

-Specified Sundays when parents and others can observe in classes

and/or departments.

-Use of church school class time to explore with youth and adults

  (older children?) what "an effective church school" is.

-Development of an agreement or "contract" with teachers and other

  leaders at the time of recruitment to explore their expectations in

  light of the priority given the church school.

-A sermon or lecture series on "the teaching church," educating adults

  in the significance of the teaching ministry of the church.

FACTOR: A PASTOR WHO PARTICIPATES IN CHURCH SCHOOL PLANNING AND

         PROMOTION

         As a professional staff person in the church, the pastor will

support the church school through active participation in planning and

promoting the church school.

Guidelines for strengthening the factor

-The pastor needs to believe in the church school as a primary program

  of teaching-learning.

-The pastor and the congregation together should establish the church

  school as one priority for the pastor's involvement.

-The pastor will work closely with the board or committee of Christian

  education in all its work. Together the board and pastor will decide

  the nature of the pastor's involvement in planning and promoting the

  church school.

-It is important that the pastor take the initiative to see that

  Christian education leaders participate in available training

  opportunities and that training opportunities are provided within

  the church. The pastor can play a significant role as a resource

person in planning and leading training events.

-The pastor's active and positive role in promoting church school
enrollment and attendance may be one of the key elements in potential
growth in number of students.

-The ways in which the pastor personally relates to church school
planners, teachers, and leaders can influence the quality of the
program and the accomplishing of established objectives.

-The pastor may be helpful in (1) identifying potential leaders
within the congregation for the church school and (2) sharing new
trends and possibilities for the program of the school.

-The pastor's involvement with church school planners will be enhanced
through the development of his or her skills of problem solving,
reconciling, and planning.

-Church school planners will need the help of the pastor in envisioning
"church school growth" and in planning for it.

-The pastor should be encouraged to develop a personal program for self-
evaluation and development of the skills of planning, problem solving,
and promotion.

Programs to strengthen the factor

-Sermons on themes of teaching and learning, focusing on such Scriptures
as Deuteronomy 6:4-9; I Corinthians 12:27-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; etc.

-Announcements and personal reflections from the pulpit related to the
church school program and participation in it. (Such sharing will
seek to relate stories about happenings in the church school as
related by teachers.)

-Use of bulletins and newsletters to explain the church school program,

to encourage participation in classes and departments, and to interpret the role of the pastor in planning and promotion.

-Participation of the pastor in monthly meetings of the board or committee of Christian education.

-Periodic conferences of the pastor with the church school superintendent and other administrators to offer support and encouragement in their planning.

-Participation of the pastor in training events to develop his or her skills as an educator.

-A personal word of encouragement and appreciation to individual teachers from the pastor through notes, telephone calls, and home visitation.

-Interpretation of the church school program as part of the visitation of the pastor in the homes of church members and prospective members.

-Interpretation of the church school program by the pastor, as appropriate, in counseling sessions, meetings of boards or committees, and informal settings.

FACTOR: INTENTIONAL PLANNING

A sense of purpose and direction for the church school will be developed through intentional use of a planning process for the church school year.

Guidelines for strengthening the factor

-A designated board or committee is essential for intentional planning of the church school. Such a group must be commissioned to plan the school as a priority program of the church.

-To be most effective, church school planning must be done in relation-
ship to the total church program, not in isolation.

-Participation of the church school superintendent and pastor in
planning is essential.

-Church school planners need orientation and skills related to their
designated responsibilities, the steps in planning, and the relation-
ship of the church school to the total life and program of the church.

-Intentional planning includes a defined purpose for the church school,
specific objectives, assignment of responsibilities for implementation,
and periodic evaluation.

-Effective planning will take into consideration the expectations of
the congregation as a whole as well as those of the planners.

-Planning must be done in response to the needs and potential of the
congregation and the wider community.

-It is essential to involve students, parents, teachers, and others in
the planning whenever major decisions affect them. Although these
persons do not make the planning decisions, their input will enable
planners to make decisions that respond to the needs and interests of
the persons involved.

Programs to strengthen the factor

-Planning sessions for the board or committee of Christian education to
plan for the church school year.

-Involvement of board or committee me.:bers and other church school
planners in training events to develop their planning skills and to
broaden their vision of the potential of Christian education.

-A plan for discovering the expectations of the congregation for the

church school.

-A planning conference for the total church, in which leaders and others in the congregation develop goals and objectives for the total program. Such a conference may include consideration of the church's total mission, development of overall goals and objectives for a specified period of time, and time for boards and committees (including the board of Christian education) to plan for their specific areas of responsibility.

-Development of a statement of purpose for the church school.

-A survey of the congregation and personal interviews to discover the educational needs and potential of the congregation and the wider community.

-Consciousness-raising programs to broaden the vision of planners-- speakers (community and denominational), field trips to churches with other styles of ministry or planning, involvement and sharing with other persons in training events, etc.

FACTOR: STUDENT AND PARENTAL SATISFACTION

Students and parents will participate regularly in the church school and share spontaneously with others when their experiences in the church school are helpful, meaningful, and exciting.

Guidelines for strengthening the factor

-Satisfaction with the church school is dependent upon the discovery of the needs and expectations of students and parents and concrete ways to meet those needs and expectations.

-Helping students to feel wanted and accepted in classes and departments

will help to ensure regular attendance in and a positive attitude toward the church school.

-Enhancing the feelings of satisfaction of parents will result in increased attendance of members of their families.

-The attitude of leaders toward the Bible and its use in teaching is often one of the strongest elements in fostering student and parental satisfaction.

-Good communication among students, families, and leaders is essential in developing student and parental satisfaction with the church school.

-A physical setting, which is conducive to an atmosphere of acceptance, and proper furnishings and equipment for each age group and situation are necessary in developing student and parental satisfaction.

-Curriculum selection will reflect the varied needs of students and families in the church school. Selected curriculum materials will reflect the purpose defined for the church school and will help teachers and students meet the expectations which the church has for the church school.

-In an effective church school students and parents are given opportunity to indicate ways in which they are satisfied with the church school.

-The satisfaction of students and parents is dependent upon their relationships with teachers and other church school leaders.

Programs to strengthen the factor

-Visitation in the homes of active and inactive students to discover the positive and negative feelings about the church school.

-Training events to help teachers develop skills in working with groups, in relating to individuals, and in planning meaningful classroom experiences.

-Regular communications to students and families about the program of the school, classroom experiences, special activities, leaders, etc. (through mailings, newsletters, bulletins, bulletin boards, newspapers, etc.)

-A monthly church school newsletter highlighting the program, featuring write-ups on leaders and classes, indicating ways the family and the church school can work together for Christian education, etc.

-Periodic survey (interviews or use of a questionnaire) to discover the satisfaction with the program and to determine new needs.

-A welcoming committee to greet new students, to aid in assimilating them into the program, and to orient individuals/families regarding the church school.

-Social events in the homes of leaders or students.

-Checking out with students and their families potential plans for new or revised programs before finalizing such plans.

-Discovering the expectations of the congregation for the church school.

-Evaluation of the physical setting of the church school by the trustees and board of Christian education to discover ways of making the setting more conducive to an atmosphere of acceptance. What physical improvements or new equipment is needed for each age group?

-Involvement of older children, youth, and adults in the planning for their classroom sessions.

-Involvement of students, families, and staff in the maintenance of the

appearance of the physical setting, such as in painting projects, spring cleaning of closets, etc.

-Curriculum selection to respond to the varied needs of individuals and special groups.

-Extracurricular activities sponsored by classes (picnics, celebrations, etc.).

FACTOR: DEDICATED AND CARING LAY LEADERS

Meaningful teaching-learning relationships within classes will be fostered by the provision of leaders who are dedicated to God and the mission of the church, who are committed to the purpose and program of the church school, and who care about persons and their growth as disciples.

Guidelines for strengthening the factor

-Church school growth in quality and numbers is dependent upon the recruitment and development of dedicated and caring leaders.

-Lay leaders need a feeling cf "team spirit" or a team relationship with other leaders for their own growth and development as persons and as leaders.

-Lay leaders need training, support, and recognition to be effective.

-The task of finding, motivating, and enlisting lay leaders for the program of Christian education is approached as an ongoing task by effective administrators.

-Developing a motivational climate is essential both to recruiting new leaders and to retaining present leaders.

-Methods for creating a motivational climate for leaders must be

consistent with the purpose and objectives of the church school.

-Leaders need guidance in discovering, affirming, and developing their
own "gifts" which may be used in leadership roles in the church school.

-Providing adequate leadership for a church school reflects the
priority of the church school in the total life and ministry of the
church.

-The feelings of satisfaction of leaders in fulfilling their roles will
enhance their ability to be positive and effective. The leaders'
satisfaction is enhanced when their assignments are appropriate to
their interests and skills, when they experience good working relation-
ships with co-workers and students, and when they are involved in
determining the objectives and programs of the church school.

-Recruitment of each leader for a specific length of service and
periodic evaluation with the leader to discuss expectations and
disappointments and to set personal goals for his or her work are
important motivational techniques.

-Periodic evaluation of the total church school program is needed to
determine future leadership and training needs.

Programs to strengthen the factor

-Development of comprehensive, churchwide strategy for leadership
selection and recruitment, including the development of criteria for
selecting leaders.

-Periodic teachers'/leaders' meetings for prayer, sharing, study, and
enlarging visions of the potential within the study program of the
church.

-An ongoing, basic training program for teachers and other leaders,

with periodic courses, workshops, and other events related to the
Bible, the mission of the church, planning methods of teaching/
administering, history of the church and the denomination, etc.

-Periodic interviews of or use of a questionnaire with leaders to
discover their needs for support and training.

-Development of support groups for leaders (teachers' meetings,
departmental leaders' meetings, informal gatherings of committees or
task groups, etc.)

-An annual dedication service for church school leaders as part of a
churchwide worship service, annual meeting, or other event.

-Special recognition of a church school leader whose life and work have
contributed a great deal to the students and the total church school.

-A write-up on "The Teacher/Leader of the Month" in the church bulletin
or newsletter.

-A reception or open house to honor leaders of the church school.

-Presentation of inexpensive gifts (a flower, book, etc.) to leaders
as part of a special occasion or event.

-An appreciation dinner for church school leaders and their spouses.

-A study group for teachers and other leaders on evangelism.

-Provision of adequate budget to underwrite the participation of
teachers and other leaders in local, state, regional, or national
training events.

FACTOR: ATTENDANCE GOALS AND PROMOTION

The number of students participating regularly in the church
school may be increased by establishing attendance goals and promoting

regular attendance.

Guidelines for strengthening the factor

-The congregation needs to determine its rationale and philosophy of

attendance promotion.

-The board of Christian education and the superintendent will determine

attendance goals, promotional techniques, and a plan for evaluation of

attendance promotion, as well as assign responsibility for implement-

ing promotional plans.

-Attendance promotion will attempt to increase the regularity of attend-

ance of persons already enrolled as well as to enlist new persons in

the community.

-Attendance goals that are appropriate and realistic are based on

present attendance and enrollment and on the potential within the

community.

-The potential for numerical growth of the church school is dependent

on several factors of the community: the total population, the trend

of population growth or decline, the number of churches, the total

membership of all churches, etc.

-The potential for numerical growth at any age level is dependent upon

the total number of unreached persons of that age level within the

church and community as well as the projected population trend of

the age level for the immediate and distant future. Consequently,

realistic attendance goals and expectations should be set separately

for each age level to reflect the potential.

-Selected promotional techniques will reflect the significance of the

purpose of the church school and a concern for the wholeness of

persons (their needs, personhood, and growth).

-Each promotional technique should be an appropriate means to the end
but not an end in itself. In considering techniques, planners need to
ask: What will the use of this technique communicate to persons?

-The congregation and students should be encouraged to bring visitors
to the church school.

-An attendance program requires a plan for welcoming visitors and
following up on absentees. Such a plan will involve class members,
teachers, parents, and other leaders.

-The attendance records should provide appropriate data for the ongoing
program of attendance promotion and follow-up.

-Students, parents, and the congregation should be involved in determin-
ing attendance goals and promotion, giving input to the board of
Christian education.

-<u>Above all</u>, in the promotional efforts, concentrate attention on
individual persons and their attendance and growth rather than on
overall attendance figures.

<u>Programs to strengthen the factor</u>

-Appointment of a committee to recommend attendance goals and techniques
to the board of Christian education.

-A survey of the community and congregation to discover the numerical
growth potential of various age levels.

-Orientation of older students, teachers, and other leaders regarding

(1) the purpose and evangelistic potential of the church school and

(2) the promotional goals and techniques selected.

-A program of visitation by students and teachers to encourage inactive

and potential members to participate regularly.

-A workshop for teachers, administrators, and selected students to
develop a plan for follow-up of absentees. (The plan would include
such things as sending a card to the student after one absence,
telephoning the student after two consecutive absences, etc.)

-Publicity of the attendance goals and promotional plans in the church
bulletin and newsletter and through announcements in worship services
and other gatherings.

-A telephone campaign with students and leaders phoning inactive and
potential participants.

-Development of a brochure describing the church school and its
classes and departments and distribution of the brochure in the
community.

-Descriptive promotional material distributed to newcomers in the
community through realtors, the Welcome Wagon, or other means.

-Posters in the church building and community inviting persons to
church school groups. Persons of all ages may be encouraged to
develop posters.

-A church school newsletter, distributed separately or with a church
newsletter, focusing on the church school program and special events.

-Specified hours for enrolling new students, possibly in connection
with worship services or other church events.

-Availability of the church building for use by such community groups
as Girl Scouts, 4-H Club, etc.

-A transportation program for persons in the community (cars, vans, bus).

-A church school open house for the community.

FACTOR: AN ONGOING PROGRAM OF VISITATION

Good relationships among students and leaders and increased attendance in church school classes will be developed through an ongoing program of visitation.

Guidelines for strengthening the factor

-Visitation of present and prospective students is a must for church school growth.

-The visitation program should be developed as a genuine expression of a loving, caring community of Christians.

-The board of Christian education, including the superintendent, will need to determine the nature of the visitation program and to designate the person(s) responsible for administering it.

-The pastor and church school administrators can model for teachers what the visitation can be by visiting teachers.

-It is important to involve a wide range of persons in visitation efforts. Visitors should include students, teachers, and other leaders, visiting in pairs whenever possible.

-The expectation that teachers and administrators will be involved in the ongoing program of visitation needs to be indicated to these leaders when they are recruited for their jobs.

-Clear objectives should be established for the visitation program, such as the following: to acquaint teachers and students with the home and family situations of persons visited, to increase the regularity of attendance of enrolled persons, to encourage prospective students to attend, etc.

-Visitors will need orientation and training to make effective calls.

-Efforts to interpret the objectives and plan of visitation to the
congregation are important for the effectiveness of the program.

-Teachers should be encouraged to make informal home visits at the time
of birthdays, other special occasions or observances, illness, etc.

Programs to strengthen the factor

-Workshop of the church school staff to develop the objectives and plan
for the visitation program of the coming year.

-Appointment of a committee to develop and maintain a list of prospec-
tive students for the church school.

-Prospect cards for use in church school classes and in pew racks.
Individuals in the congregation can use these to suggest names of
persons to be visited and invited to the church school.

-Specific days or weeks set aside for visitation, with a kickoff meet-
ing or dinner and designated report times/sessions.

-An orientation/training session for visitors.

-Use of visitor's report cards so that visitors can indicate from the
visits special concerns which need follow-up by an appropriate person
or group in the church.

-Development of a mimeographed or printed brochure to describe classes
and departments and for use in the visitation program.

OUTLINE A PLAN OF ACTION FOR EACH PROGRAM

DEFINITION - action plans are programs and plans for carrying out the objectives. They answer the questions:

1. What will we do?

2. When will the program(s) be scheduled?

3. Who will be asked to serve as leaders?

4. Who will be responsible to see that the plans take place?

PURPOSE - When you have finished this step, you will have an action plan for each objective.

PROCEDURES - use the following outline to work out your action plans for each factor chosen to strengthen church school growth.

Objective:

Program (general description)

Possible leaders:

Persons responsible:

When and Where will this happen?

What will be different or changed? How does this proposed change relate to the Church School Growth Factor(s)?

Date written:_____ By whom?_____ Approved _____

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Each action plan must be assigned to responsible people

2. Assign them to an individual or group

3. Someone should co-ordinate all of these activities

EVALUATION

1. At the end of the year evaluate each program put into action

2. Compare the program with the growth factors

3. Ask each program leader to turn in a written statement or report on:

    (1) In what ways did the program strengthen the factor of church school growth to which it was related?

    (2) In what ways could the program have been more effective?

4. At the end of the year the planning group should look again at the factors it selected to strengthen and at the evaluations of the programs held during the year. It will consider such questions as:

    (1) In what ways did the programs strengthen the factors of church school growth?

    (2) In what ways did our church school grow in quality of program and in the number of participants in the past year?

    (3) Which factor(s) of church school growth should we attempt to strengthen next year?

APPENDIX B

Growth Evaluation

Circle the number which reflects your evaluation of your growth and
your students' growth during the last year. (1=least noticeable
growth/6=greatest possible growth).

			Least	---	Greatest	
I.	A.	My knowledge of the Bible	1 2 3 4 5 6			(3.875)*
	B.	My love for the Bible	1 2 3 4 5 6			(4.875)
	C.	My interest in Bible Study	1 2 3 4 5 6			(4.875)
	D.	My time spent in Bible reading and study	1 2 3 4 5 6			(3.875)
	E.	My relationship with the Lord	1 2 3 4 5 6			(4.875)
	F.	My commitment to the Sunday School	1 2 3 4 5 6			(5.000)
	G.	My commitment to the Church	1 2 3 4 5 6			(4.625)
	H.	My love for teaching	1 2 3 4 5 6			(4.750)

---

*Collated responses to the questionnaire. Eight teachers
received a questionnaire. Eight completed questionnaires were
returned.

		Least --- Greatest	
I.	My concern for my Students	1 2 3 4 5 6	(4.750)
J.	My involvement in the lives of my students	1 2 3 4 5 6	(3.375)
K.	My daily witness for Christ	1 2 3 4 5 6	(4.125)
II. A.	My students' knowledge of the Bible	1 2 3 4 5 6	(3.625)
B.	My students' love for the Bible	1 2 3. 4 5 6	(3.750)
C.	My students' interest in Bible Study	1 2 3 4 5 6	(3.857)
D.	My students' time spent in Bible reading and study	1 2 3 4 5 6	(3.166)
E.	My students' relationship with the Lord	1 2 3 4 5 6	(4.000)
F.	My students' commitment to Sunday School	1 2 3 4 5 6	(4.375)
G.	My students' commitment to the Church	1 2 3 4 5 6	(3.857)
H.	My students' daily witness for Christ	1 2 3 4 5 6	(2.833)

III. What is the basis for your responses in part I above?

Evaluation of Christian commitment/feelings/love/personal

evaluation/time spent in Bible reading and study/training

sessions/work with teachers

IV. What is the basis for your responses in part II above?

Observation/love/concern/use of Bibles/personal responses/class

involvement/discussion of events in life during the week/class

response/attendance record/willingness to pray/witness to

spiritual growth/behavior of students/enthusiasm of student/some

guessing

V. How could your evaluations of your students been made more

objective?

Longer teaching tenure/more involved with their personal lives/

individual evaluation/tests

Church School Questionnaire

June 27, 1983

Dear Colleague in Ministry:

I am in the process of writing a Doctor of Ministry dissertation in

the field of Christian education focusing on church school growth.

It would be most helpful to me if you would take a few minutes to

honestly fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me in

the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.

If you were newly appointed to your church/charge this June please

pass this questionnaire along to your church school superintendent or

someone who can accurately answer these questions.

Your help is deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,

Harold W. Custer

HWC/ka

CHURCH SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

for United Methodist Churches in the Wheeling District

of the West Virginia Annual Conference

1. Describe your church school attendance record over the last 10 years.

       a. declining   (15)*

       b. stable   (9)

       c. growing   (3)

2. Describe your church school in terms of quality of Christian education over the last 10 years.

       a. declining   (5)

       b. stable   (17)

       c. growing   (5)

3. What is the average amount of time the teachers spend together each month in church school meetings, planning sessions, training sessions, etc.?

       a. less than one hour   (18)

       b. one to three hours   (9)

       c. four or more hours   (0)

4. What is the average amount of time the pastor or other professional staff person spends with the teachers each month in church school meetings, planning sessions, training sessions, etc.?

---

    *Collated responses to the questionnaire. Forty-seven letters and questionnaires were mailed. Twenty-seven completed questionnaires were returned.

a. less than one hour   (20)

b. one to three hours   (6)

c. four or more hours   (1)

Pre-Test/Post-Test

1. List five (5) principles of church school growth.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. On the back of this page write the Apostles' Creed.

3. Name the founder of the Methodist Church. _____

4. What was the "quadrilateral" of the founder of Methodism?

_____

_____

_____

5. Discuss the basic differences between the theology of John Wesley and that of John Calvin. (Use the back of this page.)

6. Briefly outline on the back of this page the development of church history beginning with the New Testament Church and ending with the United Methodist Church revealing the roots of Methodism.

7. How much time do you spend reading the Bible per week?

   0-30 min. _____   30 min.-1 hr. _____   1-2 hr. _____

   2-3 hrs. _____   more than 3 hrs. _____

8. Describe your Bible reading and study habits: (check appropriate responses)

    a. Old Testament only _____; New Testament only _____; Old and New Testaments _____.

    b. Read and study randomly _____; Read and study systematically _____.

    c. I keep study notes _____; I do not keep study notes _____.

9. Why are you using the curriculum you are using?

    a. It is denominational curriculum _____.

    b. The church officials directed its use _____.

    c. It is my choice after careful evaluation process _____.

10. Briefly describe the correlation between teaching and learning theories. (Use back of this page.)

11. Briefly describe communication theory focusing on the small group setting. (Use back of this page.)

12. On the back of page three of this questionnaire briefly describe your approach to the development of a written lesson plan.

13. Where would you place yourself on your spiritual pilgrimage? (Circle the number which best identifies your position on the growth scale.)

Absolutely lost.

Absolutely perfect.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

14. Rate yourself on a scale of 1 - 10 regarding your -

		Low	Average	High
a.	commitment to the church	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
b.	commitment to the church school	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
c.	love for teaching	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
d.	concern for your students	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
e.	involvement in the lives of your students	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
f.	daily witness for Christ	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		

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Abstract

This study deals with a major problem of the United Methodist
churches in the West Virginia Conference, the Wheeling District, and
the Steelton United Methodist Church, New Martinsville, West Virginia,
namely the rapid decline in church schools. The goal of the study
is to identify at least one foundational church school growth principle
and to develop a model for church school growth based upon the founda-
tional principle.

Statistical evidence verified the decline in church schools.
The literature search revealed ten explicit church school growth
principles. A careful study of these explicit principles led to the
discovery of an implicit, foundational church school growth principle--
DISCIPLING TEACHERS. Experimental research in the form of questionnaires
and other measuring and evaluation instruments was used with the teachers
of the Steelton United Methodist church school to develop a model of
church school growth. Developmental research was basic to the entire
study. As facts were discovered they were presented to the teachers
and directly applied to the local church situation.

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one states
the problem of church school decline and outlines the basic strategy
for the development of a partial solution. Chapter two presents ten
explicit church school growth principles and one implicit, foundational
church school growth principle. It is upon this principle--DISCIPLING
TEACHERS--that a model for church school growth is to be developed.
Chapter three discusses the proposed model. The biblical foundation of

the model is presented based on Jesus' model of discipling His twelve

disciples; the content of the model is discussed focusing on numerical

growth content, cognitive growth content, and spiritual growth content;

and finally the mechanics of how the model functions in the local

church situation are presented. Chapter four exposes the development

of the model as it occurred in the Steelton United Methodist Church,

New Martinsville, West Virginia. Chapter five concludes the study

with a restatement of the problem, a survey of the findings, certain

conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

There are four major conclusions of the study. First, growth--

numerical, cognitive, and spiritual--is a biblical principle and,

therefore, desirable in the church school. Second, growth can take

place in United Methodist church schools in the West Virginia Conference

of the United Methodist Church. Third, the church school is vitally

important to the total church program of United Methodist churches.

Fourth, there is at least one foundational church school growth

principle upon which a model for church school growth can be developed,

and that this model, when applied to a local church situation, will

produce growth.

This final conclusion must be somewhat qualified. The study

demonstrates a model for church school growth can be developed based on

a foundational church school growth principle--DISCIPLING TEACHERS.

It also demonstrates that the development of the model produced growth

in the Steelton United Methodist church school. However, the fully

developed model has yet to be tested in settings other than the

Steelton United Methodist Church. Until this further testing is

completed no generalization of this final conclusion can be made.