

CHAPTER V [82]

# ST. PAUL'S EDUCATIONAL VIEWS

In the opening sentence of his *Philosophy of Education*, Professor Horne<sup>1</sup> says, "There are five great agencies of civilization which conserve the past, preserve the present, and make possible a progressive future. These agencies are the home, the school, the vocation, the state, and the church." While he was not unmindful of the other agencies, St. Paul recognized and gave primary attention to the first and fifth. His educational views are concerned chiefly with the *unit* and the *foundation* of human society: the home and the church.

His views concerning the home reflect the Hebrew domestic training of his boyhood,<sup>2</sup> and are colored by the Christian consciousness of his later life. His views concerning the home as an educational institution are these: The parents are the teachers. The father is the head of the home<sup>3</sup> and the provider of the household.<sup>4</sup> His prerogative is that of *authority*.<sup>5</sup> The wife is the keeper of the home.<sup>6</sup> Her true dignity is in *submission*.<sup>7</sup> Their relation

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1. *The Philosophy of Education*, p. 1.

2. See Chapter I, under "Domestic Education."

3. Eph. 5:22 ff.; I Cor. 11:3.

4. I Tim. 5:8.

5. I Tim. 3:4, 5, 12; Eph. 5:22 ff.

6. I Tim. 5:14; Titus 2: 4, 5.

7. Eph. 5:22, 24; Col. 3:18.



to each other should be atmosphered by love,<sup>8</sup> prayer,<sup>9</sup> and purity,<sup>10</sup> and be characterized consequently by reverence, sanctity, and intimacy:

[83] “Therefore shall a man leave father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the pair shall be one flesh; this is a profound symbol, I mean as regards Christ and the Church.” (Eph. 5:31, 32.)

So St. Paul relates the unit and the foundation of human society to each other. The one is a symbol of the other.

Children are a holy possession.<sup>11</sup> The aim of instruction in the home is obedience.<sup>12</sup> Children are to honor their parents, according to the law.<sup>13</sup> The method of instruction in the home is “discipline” and “admonition.”<sup>14</sup> The attitude of the teacher to the pupil in the home is “forbearance.”<sup>15</sup> The content of instruction in the home is religion, and the subject-matter “the sacred writings that can impart saving wisdom by faith in Christ Jesus.”<sup>16</sup> The result of instruction in the home, thus indicated, should be “faith.”<sup>17</sup> A typical ideal and product of such Christian domestic education was Timothy, “the gentle boy of Lystra,”<sup>18</sup> who grew up to be a man of good

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8. Eph. 5:28.

9. I Cor. 7:5.

10. Heb. 13:4 *et al.* Actual quotations in this chapter are from Moffatt's tr. unless otherwise specified.

11. I Cor. 7:14.

12. Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20; cf. Prov. 6:20; 23:22; Ecclesiasticus 7:24 ff.

13. Eph. 6:2. Cf. Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16.

14. *I.e.*, educated them, bring them up, developing all their powers by the instruction and admonition of the Lord.

15. Eph. 6:4.

16. II Tim. 3:15; cf. Psalm 119:98 ff.

17. I Tim 1:5.

18. Burrell, *Paul's Companions*, p. 51 ff.



reputation,<sup>19</sup> a fellow-worker<sup>20</sup> and collaborator<sup>21</sup> with Paul, and a trusted teacher.<sup>22</sup>

In fundamental agreement with the Hebrew conception that child nature is irresponsible, foolish and rebellious,<sup>23</sup> Paul considered discipline to be the best means of training the child's will and rightly ordering his life.<sup>24</sup> He applied this idea of human [84] nature to life itself and used his own personal experience as a concrete illustration of it. Taking up the pronouncement of the Psalmist:<sup>25</sup> "There is none righteous, no, not one... There is none that doeth good, no not so much as one," he interprets his own experience with great intensity of feeling, when he cries:

"I cannot understand my own actions; I do not act as I want to act: on the contrary, I do what I detest ... . For in me (that is, in my flesh) no good dwells, I know; the wish is there, but not the power of doing what is right. I cannot be good as I want to be, and I do wrong against my wishes... So this is my experience of the Law: I want to do what is right, but wrong is all I can manage." (Rom. 7:15, 18, 19.)

The Apostle therefore considered life to be an educative, disciplinary process, and experience one's own best teacher. His view of "nature" was expressed later in that conception of child nature known as *Nativism*,<sup>26</sup> a view held by Franke, Palmer, Graser and Schmidt, as over against Rousseau's *Empiricism*: "All is good as it comes from the hand of the Creator; all

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19. Acts 16:2.

20. Rom. 16:21.

21. II Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:1; Philemon 1:1.

22. I Cor. 4:17; I Cor. 16:10, 11.

23. See Chapter I, on Domestic Education, beginning Note 102, and cf. Prov. 22:15; 13:24; 23:14.

24. Beside passages referred to above, see also Gal. 4:1, 2.

25. Psalm 14:1 ff., Psalm 53:1 ff., quoted in Rom. 3:10-12.

26. Notes on a lecture by Prof. Paul R. Radosavljevic of New York University, Oct. 18, 1920.

degenerates under the hands of man";<sup>27</sup> and contrary also to the *Genetism*<sup>26</sup> of Meumann and Wundt, namely, that the child does not inherit good or bad traits, but only general tendencies which can be developed either way.

The Apostle has less to say concerning the school, the vocation, and the state. Yet this is in keeping with his habit of subordinating everything to his chief aim. What he has to say about the school is rather about teachers, and what he says about teachers is negative, *i.e.*, he characterizes "teachers [85] so-called," "teachers who are not teachers"—as such individuals who pose as teachers, yet who lack understanding, clarity of thought, and are interested rather in dark speculations than in reasonable things:

“Warn certain individuals against teaching novelties, and studying myths and interminable genealogies; such studies bear upon speculation rather than on the divine order which belongs to faith. Whereas the aim of the Christian discipline is the love that springs from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith. Certain individuals have failed here by turning to empty argument; doctors of the Law is what they want to be, but they have no idea either of the meaning of the words they use or of the themes on which they harp.” (I Tim. 1:3-7.)

Neither is Paul silent concerning the vocation. He expresses himself here chiefly with the relation of “employer” and “employee.” In Moffatt’s translation such words as these are used to express the relationship Paul says ought to exist between them: Without courting human favor,<sup>28</sup> reverence,<sup>28</sup> good will,<sup>28</sup> singleness of heart,<sup>28</sup> justice,<sup>29</sup> fairness,<sup>29</sup> impartiality,<sup>29</sup> modesty,<sup>30</sup> gentleness,<sup>30</sup> forbearance,<sup>30</sup> patience.<sup>30</sup> What an ideal for modern industrial relations! To which also may be added:

“If it is practical service, let us mind our service; the teacher must mind his teaching; the speaker his words of counsel; the contributor must be liberal, the superintendent must be in earnest, the sick visitor must be cheerful.” (Rom. 12: 7, 8).

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27. First sentence of the “Emile.”

28. Eph. 6:5-9.

29. Col. 3:22-25; 4:1.

30. Eph. 4:1, 2.



and

“Every one must remain in the condition of life where he was called. You were a slave when you were called? [86] Never mind. Of course, if you do find it possible to get free, you had better avail yourself of the opportunity...Brothers, every one must remain with God in the condition of life where he was called.” (I Cor. 7:21-24.)

St. Paul recognized and taught that each man must learn to perform his particular function in society well, and that in the performing of that function, as he enters into the lives of others, he must learn to give and take as has been described, if he would live the complete life.

Three brief statements<sup>31</sup> suggest Paul’s idea of the relation of the individual to the state, which may be summarized as follows:

1. Civil obedience is a duty:

“Every subject must obey the government-authorities.” (Rom 13:1.)

2. Civil authority derives its source and sanction from God himself:

“No authority exists apart from God; the existing authorities have been constituted by God.” (Rom. 13:1.)

3. Resistance of and rebellion against civil authority are inexpedient and morally wrong:

“Any one who resists authority is opposing the divine order, and the opposition may bring judgment upon themselves...You must be obedient as a matter of conscience.” (Rom. 13:3, 5.)

4. The Magistrate is God’s servant for the sake of justice to all:

[87] “The Magistrate is God’s servant for your benefit,... and for the infliction of the Divine vengeance upon evil-doers.” (Rom. 13:4.)

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31. Rom. 13:1-7; I Tim. 2:1, 2; Tit. 3:1.



5. The four specifications of civil obedience are the payment of tribute, taxes, respect, and honor, each to whom it is due:

“Pay to them all their respective dues, tribute to one, taxes to another, respect to this man, honor to that.” (Rom. 13:7.)

It is to be noted in the light of the above that he neither recommends nor condemns any particular form of government, but has so framed his language that it is applicable to any or every form. He seems to say nothing concerning patriotism; and yet in a true sense he does, for the law-abiding citizen is really the loftiest patriot, especially so if he follows the Apostle's injunction:

“Well, my very first counsel is that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgiving, are to be offered for all men—for kings and all in authority, that we may lead a tranquil life in all piety and gravity.” (I Tim. 2:1.)

St. Paul's view of the church as an educational institution was of course only part of his conception of the mission of the church in the world. Our present interest is limited by this viewpoint. The Apostle taught that the church is a divinely appointed and animated organism in the world to perform a spiritual service for the world, even as the state is a God-appointed agency to administer justice in the world. “The state and the church,” according to Paul, “each have a place in the world. If God's appointed and established order is preserved [88] neither will invade the function of the other.”<sup>32</sup>

The educational mission of the church in the world is that of instruction and enlightenment:

“In the church I would rather say five words with my own mind for the instruction of other people, than ten thousand words in a ‘tongue.’” (I Cor. 14:19.)

“I was called...to enlighten all men upon the new order of that divine secret which God the Creator of all concealed from eternity—intending to let the full sweep of the divine wisdom be disclosed now by the church to the angelic

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32. Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 232, 233.

Rulers and Authorities in the heavenly sphere, in terms of the eternal purpose which he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, through whom, as we have faith in him, we enjoy our confidence of free access.” (Eph. 3:7, 9, 12.)

For this function of instruction and enlightenment leaders who are qualified and equipped as teachers are appointed in the church. The educative purpose and mission of these teachers as fully described in the previous chapter is to call out the whole man to complete living, in the supreme adjustment of his personal relation to God and man.

May we say that in his attitude toward women teachers, Paul was (as Lowell says of every man) “a prisoner of his date”?<sup>33</sup> The following statements suggest his attitude:

“A woman must listen quietly in church and be perfectly submissive; I allow no woman to teach or dictate to men, she must keep quiet.” (I Tim. 2:11, 12.)

“As is the rule in all churches of the saints, women must keep quiet at gatherings of the church. They are [89] not allowed to speak; they must take a subordinate place, as the Law enjoins. If they want any information, let them ask their husbands at home. It is disgraceful for a woman to speak in church. You challenge this rule? Pray did God’s word start from you? Are you the only people it has reached?” (I Cor. 14:33-36.)

It is quite plain from the foregoing that Paul considered woman’s sphere to be the home. It was here that she might exercise an educative influence among those of her own household. Leaders and teachers in the church were to be men, and the place of the church as an educational influence in the world was to instruct and enlighten men of righteousness.

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33. No woman was permitted to teach in Hebrew schools or synagogues. See, Monroe, *Cyclopædia of Education*, article on Jewish Education, and Güdemann, article on Education, in *Jewish Encyclopædia*.

St. Paul's educational views may be summarized as follows:

1. The child comes into the world with inborn tendencies toward evil. The home is the educative environment in which it grows. The parents are the natural teachers of the child. The aim of instruction in the home is faith in God and obedience to parents. The method of instruction toward these ends is two-fold: admonition and discipline. The content of instruction is religion, and the subject-matter "the sacred writings." Timothy was a typical ideal and product of Christian domestic education.
2. St. Paul has practically nothing to say concerning school education, except characteristics of teachers who are not teachers.
3. Each individual must learn to perform his own particular function in society well, and in the performing of that function, he must learn to give and take as he enters into the lives of others.
4. The state and the church each have a Divinely appointed mission in the world: The state for the administration of justice, and the church for enlightenment and instruction of the sons of men in [90] righteousness. Obedience to its laws, submission to its pronouncements, respect of its officers, and support of its necessities are due to the state on the part of every citizen.
5. In fulfilling her educational function the church is to call out the whole man to complete living in the supreme adjustment of his personal relation to God and man. As a prisoner of his age Paul offered no place in the teaching function of the church to women.

