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A STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF THE CONTEMPORARY
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL MOVEMENT

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Christian Education
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Religious Education

by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED	1
The problem	1
Statement of the problem	1
Importance of the study	1
Definitions of terms used	2
Education	2
Public school	3
Private school	3
Christian school	3
Parochial school	3
II. EARLY BEGINNINGS IN AMERICAN EDUCATION	4
III. LEGISLATION EFFECTING RELIGION AND	
EDUCATION	10
Relative amendments	10
Solutions of the States summarized	12
The "released time" program	12
The McCollum Case	13
IV. THE EXCLUSION OF RELIGION FROM EDUCATION . . .	17
V. THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL	21
The private school	21
The Christian school	23

CHAPTER	PAGE
Fundamental principles of the Christian school	25
VI. THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL MOVEMENT	30
Agencies fostering Christian day schools . .	31
The National Union of Christian schools	31
The National Association of Christian schools	33
VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	37
Summary	37
Conclusions	38
BIBLIOGRAPHY	41

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

In recent years much has been said about the secular trend in the public schools. Many American people have become concerned about what is being taught and what is being left out of the public school curriculum. Some legal decisions have influenced this secular trend.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to show the importance of religion in the early beginnings of American Education and in the establishment of colonial schools; (2) to consider Constitutional amendments and recent decisions of the United States Supreme court in relation to the question of religion in public education; (3) to face some of the problems involved in the secular trend of education; (4) to justify the position of the private school, and present the Christian school as a solution to the problems; and (5) to point out the significance of the Christian School movement.

Importance of the study. America's system of public schools takes root in religion. With the passing of generations there has been an increasingly distinct line drawn

between education and religion. Recent legislation indicates that the familiar phrase "separation of church and state" is being emphasized more than ever before.

This secular trend has brought innumerable problems to Christian parents. Much has been written as to a possible solution. The Christian School movement offers tangible solutions to many of the problems.

Some objections to the establishment of Christian schools have been raised. This study was made to determine whether the Christian School movement is feasible. Advocates of such schools maintain that it is.

Edward K. Worrell,¹ in his recent book entitled Restoring God to Education, has made this statement.

Christian educators--spurred on by the present educational trend toward secularism--press forward toward the mark of the prize of their high calling in Christ Jesus. They are assured that the foundations of God's infallible Word will stand, whatever happens to anti-Biblical systems built on the shifting sands of naturalism. Despite the barrages of rationalistic philosophy, the impregnable Rock of Ages remains immovable. Christian certitude grows from the conviction that "Forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in Heaven." Encouraged by these convictions Christian school curriculum-makers are incorporating into courses of study wisdom that proceeds from the counsels of Eternity.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Education. The term education was interpreted in

¹ Edward K. Worrell, Restoring God to Education (Wheaton, Illinois: Van Kampen Press, 1950), p. 18-19.

this study to be "the conscious and intentional attempt of a people to transmit to its young the operative values that it most deeply cherishes and upon which it depends for the perpetuation and extension of its life in the future." 2

Public school. The public school was referred to as a school which is sponsored and controlled by the state and supported by public taxation.

Private school. A private school was defined in this study as a school which is supported by an individual or group of individuals.

Christian school. The term Christian school was interpreted to be a private school, usually sponsored by a group of individuals rather than any organization, which has a Christ-centered philosophy and curriculum.

Parochial school. The parochial school was referred to as a school, sponsored and supported by a local church. This school might also have a Christ-centered philosophy and usually stresses some particular doctrines. It is distinguished from the Christian school by the difference in the way it is supported and controlled.

2 William Clayton Bower, Church and State in Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 30.

CHAPTER II

EARLY BEGINNINGS IN AMERICAN EDUCATION

The foundations of the American nation were laid in religious faith. The European backgrounds of this faith were predominantly Protestant. In most of the early colonies religion was the first and primary concern of life. It follows as a logical consequence that the earliest education in America was predominantly religious.³

The early settlers did not enjoy freedom of life and worship in the old home lands so they came in bodies to America with the purpose of setting up a civil government and beginning life anew. They brought with them their post-Reformation ideas as to religion and the training of children and this background marked the beginnings of American education. The majority came from among those lands and from those peoples who embraced some form of Protestant faith.⁴

Cubberley recognizes the relationship of religion to the origin of the public schools; "The colonial legislature enacted a law requiring the maintenance and support of schools by the towns. This law became the corner-stone

³ William Clayton Bower, Church and State in Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 23-24.

⁴ Ellwood P. Cubberley, Public Education in the United States (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1934), p. 12

of our American state school system."⁵

The English Puritans who settled in New England made the most significant contribution to the future development of education in America. Education of the young for membership in the church, and the perpetuation of a learned ministry for the churches claimed their immediate attention.⁶

The Middle Colonies, best represented by New Jersey and Pennsylvania, were settled by a mixture of peoples-- English, Dutch, Swedish, German, and Scotch-Irish-- all Protestants in their faith but representing a number of different churches. Each denomination developed its own schools since no church was in the majority. Clergymen usually taught in these church schools and the instruction was in the language of the different peoples. This created a dependence upon church and private property for educational advantages and provided opportunity largely for those who could afford to pay.⁷

The settlers of the Southern Colonies were largely of English stock and had come to America for gain rather

⁵ Ellwood P. Cubberley, The History of Education (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), p. 366.

⁶ Ellwood P. Cubberley, An Introduction to the Study of Education and to Teaching (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925), p. 1.

⁷ Ibid., p. 2.

than for religious freedom. They had no particular urge toward either education or religion. However, it seemed that English practices were followed and either tutors were employed in the homes or small select private schools were established for the well to do while the poor were left with only such advantages as apprenticeship training and a few pauper schools.⁸

Three typical attitudes have shaped our future educational development. The first was the New England Puritan idea of a religious State, supporting a system of common schools for the children of all the people, and higher Latin schools and a college for the preparation of a learned ministry. These schools were maintained by public taxation. The second attitude was manifested in the parochial school arrangement of the middle colonies. The church controlled all educational effort and resented State interference. The third type is known as laissez faire. Education was chiefly for orphans and only children of the poor were to be provided for by the public. The State assumed little or no obligation even to assist in supporting them. Children of the upper and middle classes paid for their education in private or church schools.⁹

⁸ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 3-4

Most of the textbooks used were religious. The Bible, the Catechism, the Hornbook, the Psalter, and the New England Primer were used for the classes in reading and the pupils were graded according to their progress in these books. Learning to read was essential because it would then be possible to read the Scripture, know the will of the Heavenly Father and enjoy personal salvation. Elementary schools were maintained that children might learn to read the Bible.

In some of the colonies a definite need existed for Latin schools, colleges and universities in order that there might be trained leaders in the schools and churches. The Dutch of New York were the first in this country to start a Latin school, in 1633. It was the beginning of King's College which now is Columbia University. Boston was begun two years later. The movement then took on momentum and secondary schools sprang up rapidly, some of them advancing to college rank. Harvard offered courses with the training of the clergy in view. Rutgers College was begun in 1764, then Princeton was established by the Presbyterians. Everyone of these colleges prepared young men for public employment in the church and state.¹⁰

¹⁰ Gerrit Verkuyl, Christ in American Education (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1934), pp. 28-29.

W. C. Bower notes that:

As late as 1860, of the 246 colleges, only seventeen were state institutions. Even now, of the 1,690 institutions of higher learning in the United States most of the 1,090 privately controlled were founded and now operated by the churches.¹¹

With these early Americans, education was an intimate part of the religious movement. The Christian concept of the sacredness of personality was behind all their educational endeavors. Religion was not taught as an appendage to an educational program but as a unifying philosophy for the whole of education.¹²

The idea that schools were civil affairs and their purpose was to promote the interests of society and the welfare of the State, not the Church, came into prominence about the beginning of the nineteenth century. The new goal of the schools was to prepare for a life here rather than a life hereafter.¹³

Finally amendments were made forbidding the division of public funds with sectarian schools and prohibiting the teaching of sectarian religion in the public schools.

¹¹ Bower, op. cit., p. 40.

¹² John O. Gross, "The Church and Its Faith in Education," Christian Education, 32:304, December, 1949.

¹³ Cubberley, The History of Education, op. cit., p. 507.

Today there is an accepted principle of separation of church and state. The secularization of public education is complete.¹⁴

¹⁴ Bower, op. cit., p. 28.

CHAPTER III

LEGISLATION EFFECTING RELIGION AND EDUCATION

When the Federal Constitution of the United States was established there was in it no mention of education.

Relative amendments. There were two amendments that were considered to be relative to education and religion. The First Amendment to the Constitution forbade the establishment of a national or state religion and demanded the restriction of religion to the domain of a private concern, to be sustained on its own. Religion was taken out of the sphere of public control and made a voluntary activity. Religious institutions therefore, have been private organizations dependent for their support solely upon private contributions.¹⁵

The Tenth Amendment ratified in 1791, provided that "powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." The control of schools and education passed as one of the unmentioned powers to the different States to handle in any manner

¹⁵ R. Lawrence Siegel, "Church-State Separation and the Public Schools," Progressive Education, 26:108, February, 1949.

which they saw fit.¹⁶

Many of these State laws pertaining to education were general permissive laws which granted to the people of the communities the right to meet and organize a school district and to tax themselves in order to maintain a school. However, this permission was gradually changed to compulsion, State aid was given, the powers of the district school officers were defined and a School Code for each of the States was slowly built up.¹⁷

In 1800 there were sixteen states in the Union. Eight of these states had adopted constitutions containing references to education, which indicate that their framers recognized education as an activity to be fostered by the state.¹⁸

The states of Connecticut and New York and the United States Congress had laid plans for promoting schools from revenues derived from the sale of public land. There was an atmosphere of faith in the new government, and in education as one of its most effective agencies. Plans took shape slowly and their realization in practice even more slowly but the American people established the foun-

¹⁶ Ellwood P. Cubberley, An Introduction to the Study of Education and to Teaching (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925), p. 53.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 54-55

¹⁸ Frederick Eby and Charles Flinn Arrowood, The Development of Modern Education (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1934), p. 549.

dations of a new type of school system.¹⁹

Solutions of the States summarized. The States evolved their own solutions of the age-old question whether government, the family or the church should have control of the education of the child. In broad outline they were found to provide:

1. that the state shall have prescribed standards for education and make adherence to them compulsory;
2. that to promote the ideal of universal education, the state shall provide free public, tax-supported schools;
3. that the basic principle of separation of church and state requires that religious indoctrination be excluded from these schools;
4. that the parents shall retain full freedom to use the public schools for the education of their children or if they choose, to educate them instead in private schools at their own expense, provided these schools conform to the standards prescribed by the state.
5. that education of all children up to a stated age shall be compulsory either in a public or private school.²⁰

These solutions indicated that religion was left out of the educational system in America. Yet there was a desire on the part of many parents to have their children receive religious instruction.

The "released time" program. In 1914 a released time program for religious instruction was inaugurated in Gary, Indiana, and this type of program was carried on effectively

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 553

²⁰ Siegel, op. cit., pp. 104-105.

for many years. The program was begun as a weekday church school.

There were variations of detail in the manner in which these programs were administered. Usually the sessions were held in church buildings and the children were taught by teachers supplied by the churches, under church supervision and support. Sometimes instruction was given by several denominations to the children of their own constituencies. The predominate trend was found to have been the offering of religious instruction co-operatively under supervision of an interdenominational council. In some places such religious instruction was given in public school property by teachers provided by the churches. In a few instances religious instruction was given in the public schools by teachers certified by the state, but at church expense.²¹

The McCollum Case. In 1940 a group of citizens of Champaign, Illinois held an informal meeting with the school board. They wanted the school to co-operate with them in presenting courses in religious instruction. They said many parents would like to have their children released from the regular school program so they might attend a weekly period of religious instruction in their particular

²¹ Bower, op. cit., p. 38.

faith. Separate classrooms were to be maintained for the different religious groups. Only those children whose parents expressly consented to the classes were to be accepted for this instruction. They also suggested that the teachers of religion be furnished by the Champaign Council on Religious Education, which consisted of Protestant, Jewish and Catholic church officials. They asked too that the classes be conducted on the school premises so as to eliminate traffic hazards. The school board agreed to carry on such a program after consulting its attorney. The program worked effectively for a number of years. However Mrs. Vashti McCollum from Champaign, started a suit against the Board of Education of Illinois. She complained that her son Terry, aged eleven was being forced by embarrassment to risk his freedom not to believe in religion. One day he asked his mother to permit him to go to this religious class. She did not want him to attend.²²

Her lawyers argued that the Champaign system violated especially the First Amendment. The attorneys for the school board contended that the program was voluntary and that the benefit received by religion was incidental.

²² George E. Reed, The McCollum Case and Your Child (Washington D. C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1948) pp. 3-4 .

An appeal to the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois unanimously affirmed that the plan was not compulsory and that there was merely an incidental aid to religion which did not conflict with the State or Federal Constitution since neither of them looked upon religion with disfavor.

The Supreme court of the United States held otherwise. It stated that the Champaign plan violated the establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment on two counts, first that tax supported property was used for religious classes, and second that the compulsory education laws of the State helped provide pupils for religious classes.²³

Mark Fakkema, Educational Director of the National Association of Christian Schools, says that this decision did far more than rule out "released time" in one certain community.

It legally blacked out religious teaching in all public schools. Religiously interpreted, this court decision warns us: If we want our children to have a God-fearing education, we must not send them to the public school. Stated positively, it implies: If we want our children to receive a Christian preparation for life in the day school, we must send them to a private Christian school. Morally interpreted, this decision tells us: If we would train our children to live moral lives, we must send them to a private

²³ Ibid., pp. 4-7

school whose moral instruction is based upon the
Christian religion.²⁴

²⁴ Mark Fakkema, News Letter, Release Number 17.
National Association of Christian Schools, Chicago, Illinois.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXCLUSION OF RELIGION FROM EDUCATION

Can religion be excluded from education? Bower attempts to answer the question:

History raises grave doubts whether a purely secular ethics can bear the load of the moral demands of modern life, and especially of democracy. Democracy as a way of life is quite as dependent upon the support of a free religion as a free religion is dependent upon democracy.....American democracy, as many are beginning to feel in the present crisis, must find its way back to God.²⁵

Some effort is being made to achieve a new democratic education, in which each human personality is considered as an end, not as a means.²⁶

In view of the unquestioned intelligence and the unusual sensitivity of the leaders of the effort to achieve a new, democratic education, it is surprising that they ignore religion. Religion has no place in their philosophy, their plans, or their strategy. They design to introduce the child to the complete culture, but they leave out of their reckoning one of the basic aspects of all the historic cultures; they wish to educate the whole child, but they refuse to consider one of his fundamental needs; they aim to reach the basic motives of both men and societies,

²⁵ William Clayton Bower, Christ and Christian Education (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943), p. 112.

²⁶ J. Paul Williams, The New Education and Religion (New York: Association Press, 1945), p. 4.

but they ignore the methods which over and over again have been shown to be the most effective in the control of actions and ideas.²⁷

The cultural inheritance of the nation's children and youth is dependent upon a religious interpretation of history. Since religion has largely been excluded from educational circles the children and youth of the nation have been denied that portion of their rightful heritage which is rooted in faith in an ordered universe.

Fakkema states that there are seventeen million American boys and girls of the twenty-six million now attending elementary and secondary schools who receive no religious instruction. Boys and girls are expected to take up the responsibilities of life with no moral or spiritual training and with a view of life that knows neither God nor His Word. They are being trained in schools whose textbooks have substituted a philosophy of relativity and uncertainty for the absolute and ultimate.²⁸

Broad religious principles have been included in educational philosophy, both in theory and in practice. These have often been humanistic in character rather than definitely Christian. Great educational thinkers have

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

²⁸ Mark Fakkema, Christian Schools the Nation's Foremost Need (Chicago: The National Union of Christian Schools,) pp. 7-8.

supported praiseworthy ideals for human behavior. They have held conceptions of worthy character, home-life, industrial relationships, and citizenship but have lacked a definite Christian theology.²⁹

Eakin has stated in his philosophy of education that religion is the proper integrating center about which all knowledge should be organized, for religion has to do with basic assumptions about God, man, and things, and their inter-relationships. A pertinent philosophy of education must be characteristically a religious one.³⁰

Churches have not offered an adequate solution. F. Ernest Johnson said in a speech entitled, "Religion and Public Education,"

..... religion is prior to all ecclesiastical systems, and society can no more allow the church to monopolize religion, than the church can allow the state to monopolize education. If we would maintain the separation of church and state as a means of safeguarding religious freedom we must either be reconciled to a progressive religious illiteracy or find some way to make provision for the study of the religious heritage that does not offend against the First Amendment.³¹

Indifference to religious teaching was found to be prevalent. The old idea that religion was to be left

²⁹ Eugene K. Eakin, "A Christian Philosophy of Education," Christian Education, 32:35, March, 1949

³⁰ Loc. cit.

³¹ F. Ernest Johnson, "Religion and Public Education," Vital Speeches, 16:311, March 1, 1950.

to the churches was still in effect. The teaching of hygiene was not left to the doctors and hospitals. The teaching of civics was not left to the government.³²

It is agreed that the churches have not offered a satisfactory answer to the problem since they fail to reach more than half of the children and young people of the nation and since they are limited by existing circumstances as educational institutions.

The maximum instruction that most Protestant children receive is about thirty minutes per week in a Sunday School which simply cannot maintain the same academic standards as a day school, public or independent. Little wonder therefore, that many Americans today, educated in the public school where the teaching of religion is banned, are generally ignorant of the Bible.³³

³² Thomas S. Gates, "Spiritual and Moral Values," School and Society, 69:276, April 16, 1949.

³³ E. Laurence Springer, "Religion in the Independent School," The Atlantic, 182:58, December, 1948.

CHAPTER V

THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

The private school. The private school has been a protection against any threat to liberty in the field of education. Its existence has been an assurance that the government has not had excessive control. Reinert has ably declared that the basic philosophy behind the American school system demands the right of private education.³⁴ Each American child will have his own personality, his own individual differences, his own special abilities and talents. Each student will have certain goals and ambitions toward which he will be striving. So it is the duty of the American school to offer all its knowledge, facilities, and advice to help the student develop his personality, to bring his abilities into full flower, to guide him towards the place in life, the vocation, the objective which will best fit his talents, his ambitions, his environment.³⁵ Private schools have a rightful place in American democracy. Some parents have preferred to have

³⁴ Paul C. Reinert, "Does America Need Private Education?" Vital Speeches, 16:372, April 1, 1950.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 372-73.

their child's talent and abilities developed in a school under private administration. Some have preferred a smaller school or one which has been more specialized than the typical public school. Some parents have the sincere conviction that their child will be better prepared for his work in life by an education which synthesizes the whole of knowledge. They feel that the dual system of private and public education has been the secret of a successful school system in America.³⁶

Another reason for the existence of the private school is that it offers competition to the public school and in this way has helped to maintain high standards.

Most Americans would agree that for schools, as elsewhere in our society, competition is healthy. The better the nonpublic libraries and art museums and golf courses, the less likely are we to be content with poor public ones. We have never tried to increase the demand for good municipal golf courses by forcing the country clubs to confine themselves to polo, or called rental libraries "anti-democratic" because some people find them more convenient than the public libraries. In education, too, it seems reasonable that good independent schools should stimulate the desire for good public schools.³⁷

Privately supported schools have taken two forms. First, those sponsored by church groups which are known as parochial schools; second, those sponsored by individuals

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 373-74.

³⁷ Herbert W. Smith, "State Monopolists vs. Free Schools," School and Society, 169:356, May 14, 1949.

which have been called private schools. The second group has been divided into two kinds; schools in which one or more public spirited individuals provide educational opportunities for children, and schools in which the parents have provided education for their own children.

The Christian school. A curriculum that ignores religion in effect says to students that they can become educated persons even though they remain ignorant of their religious heritage. Separation of religion from life is a reactionary tendency which the very persons who call for it do not really, deeply and permanently want.³⁸

Verkuyl has said that the subjects of the curriculum would be without value except for the human lives they enter.³⁹ Buildings have been erected, equipment has been provided, teachers have been chosen, and the curriculum selected with but one end in view, the wholesome development of persons. To leave Christ out has been to leave out the supreme factor in the developing process. The true purpose of education has been the development, not of the intellect, nor of the hands, nor of the eyes, but of the whole person; it is for a life, more than for a

³⁸ F. Ernest Johnson, "Religion and Public Education," Vital Speeches, 16: 312-14, March 1, 1950.

³⁹ Gerrit Verkuyl, Christ in American Education (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1934), p. 50.

living. Within the child are found spiritual powers which secular instruction has not awakened or developed.⁴⁰

Only in full-time religious schools is religion believed to have a parity with science, history, mathematics, and the other subjects taught in the school. According to those who hold this view, a child whose education in secular subjects is received separately from his religious training can never develop into a religiously integrated person. By integrating religion with all education, there will be no conflict between the intellectual and the moral, or the moral and the spiritual. It is only by blending religious and moral teaching with the total curriculum that a well-rounded religious person can be developed.⁴¹

The Christian schools had their beginning about 1900. They have usually been referred to as Parent-Society schools. They arose from the waning parochial schools which had already been established in some Christian Reformed congregations. This parent-society Christian school movement was started by people of Holland extraction. The schools are described as a family tutor system conducted on a communal basis. Instead of each family having its own instructor, several families of like-minded religious outlook would employ as many teachers as the instruction of their children together might call for. Present indications point to a new era of expansion for Christian school organizations. In various parts of the

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 50-51

⁴¹ Lawrence C. Little, "A Syllabus on Religion and Public Education," Religious Education, 44:169, May, 1949.

country schools have been established outside of areas that are specifically of the Reformed persuasion.⁴²

Evidence indicates that a Christian school revival is at hand. Legal decisions have awakened the people. "Having lost God our secular instruction has become a compass needle that has lost its polar attraction."⁴³ True education is Christian education. Parents have come to realize that they themselves must fulfill their divinely-ordained task of "training their children in the way that they should go." The establishment of the Christian school provided opportunity for so doing.⁴⁴

Fundamental principles of the Christian school.

The philosophy of the Christian school is based on the Word of God.

.... it holds that the unity as well as the ultimate reality of "all things" must be sought in God

⁴² Mark Fakkema, "Supplement - The History of Privately-Controlled American Education," Course of Study for Christian Schools, prepared by The Educational Committee of the National Union of Christian Schools, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), pp. 377-78.

⁴³ Mark Fakkema, "A Reawakening of Christian School Interest," News Letter, Release Number 17. National Association of Christian Schools, Chicago, Illinois.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

in whom we "live, move, and have our being" and "of whom, through whom and unto whom are all things" ... Irrational creation is a reflection of Divine attributes; rational creation (man) is the image of God. This unites and separates God and creation--it makes God immanent and transcendent.⁴⁵

The Christian school philosophy affirms that man's nature is sinful and there is "none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God". The life "after God" has been lost by the fall of mankind; thus preparation for life must be redemptive and restorative in design. Education should present to the undaved, the Gospel which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth". Education should present to the saved, a two-fold program. "Put away as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit--and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth".⁴⁶

The God-centered philosophy of education integrated the teaching of every school subject. "The earth is the Lord's and fulness thereof." All His works reveal His wisdom skill and providential control. To see, acknowledge, and reflect in our lives God's glorious attribute makes God's glory our supreme objective in

⁴⁵ Surveying the Educational Field, pamphlet prepared by the Executive Committee of the National Association of Christian Schools, (Chicago: National Association of Christian Schools), p. 4

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 5.

a most personal sense...."The invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they (the heather) may be without excuse; because that, knowing God, they glorified him not" (Rom. 1:20, R.V.) ... These "invisible things" of God revealed in creation are just as clearly seen on the pages of history as they are on the pages of nature's book. By viewing the conduct of history's personages in the light of scriptural truth, one learns to know the will of God in one's own life by seeing this will honored, ignored or transgressed in the lives of others.⁴⁷

The secular historian has often failed to see the hand of God overruling in the affairs of men. He has not thought of history as a revelation of God's "everlasting power and divinity".⁴⁸

Davies said that the education of Christians differs from all others.⁴⁹ Secular education offered knowledge of facts, suggested mental discipline, and developed the intellect, but in contrast with Christian education, it did not shed sufficient light on right and wrong, good or bad, truth and beauty. Christian education reveals God at work.

The Educational Committee of the National Union of Christian Schools has set forth six different processes

⁴⁷ Edward K. Worrell, Restoring God to Education (Wheaton, Illinois: Van Kampen Press, 1950), pp. 92-92.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 93.

⁴⁹ George K. Davies, "Educating Christians," Christian Education, 32:255, December, 1949.

in defining Christian education.

First, Christian education is a process by which the mind of the educand is being delivered from confusion and conflict by having a philosophy that claims God is above all and that He is the one who brings unity to life.

Second, Christian education is an adjusting process. The pupil is properly adjusted in this world when the spiritual realm is not ignored.

Third, Christian education is a redemptive process. Redemption is the work of the Holy Spirit. Regeneration is far too delicate a matter to be intrusted to man. In the redemptive process there is the element of sanctification, of growth in grace.

Fourth, Christian education is a humiliating process. This process is in direct opposition to the secular process which develops self-assurance and a spirit of independence. Secular education has made man the center of the universe. Christian education shifts the focal point to God. Man is but an insignificant part of this world although he is marvelously made and highly exalted in creation. He was made to serve God and Christian education has sought to present this beautiful and abstract idea.

Fifth, Christian education is a God-glorifying process. It seeks to interpret accurately the divine

thoughts in nature and providence. This education claims as its highest function to train the pupil to glorify God. To become acquainted with a great deal of information about the world is not enough. To make the most out of this world for oneself is not the aim.

Sixth, Christian education is a restorative process. An undoing of what sin has done is the final suggestion.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Educational Committee of the National Union of Christian Schools, Course of Study for Christian Schools (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), pp. 27-30.

CHAPTER VI

THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL MOVEMENT

At the present time the private school is making great strides. Of every one hundred school-going children in 1920, seven went to private schools and ninety-three went to public schools. In 1945, ten went to private schools and ninety went to public schools. During the last three years the private schools have increased significantly. Now thirteen children attend private schools, whereas eighty-seven go to the public schools.⁵¹

Much interest in the Christian day school movement has been stimulated by the modern trend toward statism. In some communities public instruction has been completely secularized. This has stirred many Christians to action. It has been difficult for devoted Christians who believe that "only that which is done for Christ will last" to prepare their children for life in a secular school that legally ignores Christ.⁵²

⁵¹ Mark Fakkema, "The Christian School Cause on the March," News Letter, Release No. 25, November, 1949, National Association of Christian Schools.

⁵² Mark Fakkema, "N.A.C.S. in Action," News Letter, Release No. 29, National Association of Christian Schools.

Agencies fostering Christian day schools. Certain agencies have come into being for the purpose of fostering Christian day schools.

The National Union of Christian Schools. This is a union of schools which have as their unifying objective a Reformed or Calvinistic doctrine. Most of the children in these schools come from the Christian Reformed Church. The Union has not tried to direct its schools but it does offer service to them and in this way is directly connected with the schools and actual situations in these schools.⁵³

These various schools are grouped together within eight geographic districts in the United States and Canada. At a stated meeting of the schools of a given district, board member(s) are chosen to represent the district on the Board of the National Union. The number of board members representing a particular district is in proportion to the number of schools in that district. These board members, all with years of experience in Christian school work behind them, are elected for a term of three years and may be re-elected once to serve for a total of six years of continuous service. The constituency of the Board is properly varied, making for the healthy difference of approach that spells lively discussions and wide awake policies....The board shapes Union policies, employs the key personnel to carry out these policies in a well ordered program and raises money to conduct the work of the Union...The policies of the Union are put into effect by the personnel of the National Union office. They...are dedicated to this aggressive program of furthering Christian

⁵³ Edward Heerema, United Christian Education pamphlet published by the National Union of Christian Schools, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1949. p. 6.

education in a thorough-going way. By education, years of association with the Christian school system as teachers or administrators or otherwise, and by positive devotion to soundly Calvinistic principles, these men are qualified to carry out the program of the National Union of Christian Schools.⁵⁴

From the Christian School Annual for 1949, which has been a compilation of statistics of the National Union of Christian Schools, certain figures have been noted.

There are now 133 Christian schools affiliated with this Union. The enrollment figure for September 1948, was 2,570; while the enrollment in September 1949 is given as 3,970, or an increase of fourteen hundred pupils. This is a 6.2 per cent gain in enrollment for the year. Eighty-eight of the 133 schools reported an increase averaging fourteen pupils per school. Thirty-one schools reported decreases but the decreases averaged only eight pupils for each of the thirty-one schools. Nine new schools were added during the year 1948-49 and the enrollment reported for the new schools was given as 432 pupils. These 133 schools are located in nineteen states and in three provinces in Canada. Fourteen of them are Christian High Schools.

Statistics recorded over a period of ten years show that there has been a 75 per cent increase in enrollment

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 6-8

during the last ten years. There has also been in the last ten years a 68 per cent increase in the number of schools.

Fifteen new Christian school buildings were dedicated during the year 1948-49, and work was begun on others.⁵⁵

The Union achieved another important thing during the year 1948-49 in the creation of the Christian School Educational Foundation. This Foundation purposes to finance the publishing of Christian school textbooks and to support educational projects of direct benefit to the schools comprising the National Union of Christian Schools.

The Union is concerned with the Christian School movement as a whole and has planned to confer with educational leaders of other parental and parochial groups such as the Lutherans, and Mennonites, for the purpose of discussing national trends in Christian education.⁵⁶

The National Association of Christian Schools.

To tell how the National Association of Christian Schools

⁵⁵ Christian School Annual, 1949, Christian School Statistics, Annual Reports, compiled and edited by The National Union of Christian Schools, Grand Rapids, Michigan, pp. 53-54.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 67.

originated it has been necessary to refer first to the National Union.

During the first fifteen years of its existence, the National Union of Christian Schools (a school movement officially committed to the Reformed doctrines) existed in comparative isolation. In more recent years its nation-wide promotion activity met with increasing response. A steadily growing number of so-called "outsiders" requested that their children be enrolled in the Christian schools of Reformed persuasion. It was felt that if this trend continued the number of "outsiders" might endanger the Reformed character of the schools. Besides children of "outsiders" enrolling in local Christian schools, one Christian school, whose constitutional basis was considered un-Reformed, sought to affiliate with the National Union. The Board of the National Union also felt that it had an obligation to those on the "outside". To close the school door to some "outside" children without offering any help, and to tell outside schools which applied for membership in the National Union to go away and get warm -- this did not seem to be the Christian thing to do.⁵⁷

This Union wanted to maintain the purity of its own schools which were of the Reformed persuasion and committed to Calvinistic principles, and yet it wanted to help the "outsiders" so its board decided to take action. After several meetings of the Board of Directors of the National Union and after a resolution was passed by the Annual Convention of the National Union a decision was made authorizing the General Secretary of the Union to bring a request of the Union's Board to the National As-

⁵⁷ First NACS Anniversary, "For Such a Time as This," published by the National Association of Christian Schools, Chicago, Illinois.

sociation of Evangelicals and ask them to initiate an "overall" Christian school organization. The Union's request was made at the convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1947. This Convention endorsed the idea and turned it over to its Board for final action.

On May 13, 1947 the Board of the National Association of Evangelicals decided to organize an affiliate of their Association now known as the National Association of Christian Schools. It has the same doctrinal basis as the Nation Association of Evangelicals and makes no denominational distinctions.

This Association is in no sense a ruling or governing body. It is merely a service institution which seeks to give guidance and assistance wherever such help is requested. It seeks to cooperate with all existing Christian school organizations.⁵⁸

The National Association of Christian Schools estimate that their office has helped over 100 communities start local schools. In some cases schools have come into being. In other cases, school activity has not gone beyond the launching of local Christian school organizations. In the year 1948 the Association reported that twenty one

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 2-4.

schools had affiliated with them. In 1949 the figures increased to thirty-eight schools.

In 1949 a "Christian Education Conference" was held in the Park Street Church of Boston.

The Association also offers teacher placement service. During the past year thirty-seven institutions have solicited teacher applicants. As far as the records show the Association has helped place nineteen teachers. The placement agency desires to serve all Christian institutions including Christian elementary and high schools, Christian colleges, Bible institutes, and seminaries.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Mark Fakkema, "N.A.C.S. in Action," News Letter Release No. 29, National Association of Christian Schools.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary. Many American people and particularly Christian parents are concerned about the secular trend in the public schools. In early American schools religion was of prime importance. Today it is being almost left out of the educational curriculum.

This study shows the importance of the Bible, the clergy, and an experience of personal salvation in Colonial education. There were three types of educational practices in operation in the colonies by the beginning of the

Eighteenth century: the state school with a strong Calvinistic influence, the parochial school or church controlled institution, and private instruction sometimes carried on in the home.

When the United States Constitution was formulated the First Amendment forbade the establishment of a national or state religion. This has prohibited sectarian religion in the public schools. The Tenth Amendment directed the states to control education. The states set up five governing principles for public education: (1) compulsory standards, (2) universal education, (3) religious indoctrination excluded, (4) a choice of either public or private instruction, and (5) compulsory attendance.

These principles made no provision for religious instruction. However in 1914 a "released time" program was initiated in Gary, Indiana, whereby the children might receive religious instruction during the regular school week. This plan was carried on effectively for many years. Then Mrs. McCollum from Champaign, Illinois, started a suit against the Board of Education of Illinois, which was later carried to the Supreme Court of the United States. She complained that the "released time" program violated the Illinois Constitution in that public property was being used for sectarian purposes. The Supreme Court decision ruled out "released time" programs. This ruling even more firmly established the prohibition of religious instruction in the public schools.

Conclusions. It is doubted that a purely secular educational curriculum can be maintained. Religion is a part of the rightful heritage of American people. It is an integrating factor in life. The church has not provided an adequate program of religious instruction since it fails to reach more than half of the children and young people of the nation.

The Christian school is a feasible answer to the problem, offering a Christ-centered philosophy of education. Such a school is usually maintained and controlled by

interested individuals and parents of children who desire that their children have a well-rounded and integrated curriculum in their school. In such a curriculum religion is not a marginal discipline but is a part of each subject taught in the school.

The Christian school began in about 1900 as it arose from the waning parochial school which had been established in some Christian Reformed congregations. Today the Christian school is making notable progress. Recent legislation has awakened parents to the secular trend in public education and they are looking to the Christian school to meet the needs of their children.

There are two significant organizations which are ready to serve in helping to organize Christian schools and assist in the problems of those already established. One is the National Union of Christian Schools in Grand Rapids, Michigan, which is assisting schools of the Calvinistic Reformed persuasion. The other is the National Association of Christian Schools in Chicago, Illinois, which is serving all evangelical groups who subscribe to its doctrines.

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