A Study of the Influence of a Church School Upon Its Youth

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A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF A CHURCH SCHOOL UPON ITS YOUTH

A THESIS
PRESENTED TO
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BY
Esther Jane DeWeerd

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of this Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for making Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline of Procedure</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What the Sunday School Movement is</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs that prompted First Sunday School in England</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions in America that led to Sunday School Movement</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and Growth in America</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Trends Today</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Restating Philosophy of Religious Education Today</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What a Philosophy of Religious Education is</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forces to be Overcome</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources at Hand</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. CHURCH SCHOOL ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School a World-wide Enterprise</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Larger Organization</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Continued

Organization of Church School of First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan... 43
Comparison with Public School Organization and Suggestions.......................... 46

V. THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF CHURCH SCHOOLS........ 51
Function of Religious Education Clarified... 52
Factors to be considered in Evaluating Aims and Objectives.......................... 53
Various Aims and Objectives of Religious Education and Church Schools............. 57
Study of Aims and Objectives of the Church

School of First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan............................... 61
Proposals for Meeting Questions Raised...... 69

VI. CURRICULUM OF MODERN CHURCH SCHOOL.................. 71
Developments that led to present Curricula.. 71
Demands on Present Day Curriculum for Youth of Church.................................. 81
Selection of Material................................. 89
Evaluation of Curriculum of Church School of First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan. 92

VII. METHODS OF TEACHING IN MODERN CHURCH SCHOOL.... 99
Methods in the Past................................. 99
CHAPTER VII. Continued

Characteristics of Effective Teaching.................. 101
Methods Used in Religious Education Today........... 105
Discussion of Methods used in Church School
of First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan................................. 109
Trends in Method.............................................. 112

VIII. EVALUATION IN TERMS OF STUDENT REACTION........... 114
Objectives of Evaluation................................. 114
Description of Techniques Used....................... 116
Interpretation of Student Evaluation............... 119
Conclusions..................................................... 139

IX. GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.................. 142

BIBLIOGRAPHY --- .......................... 146

APPENDIX ---

I. Form Used for Obtaining Reactions................. 1
II. Letter sent to Scholars............................... 11
III. Students Attitude Test Sheet..................... v
IV. Chart of Scores Obtained............................. xi
TABLES

FIGURE I. RANGE OF SCORES OBTAINED BY 56 STUDENTS......120
FIGURE II. ATTENDING CHURCH SCHOOL A WASTE OF TIME.......123
FIGURE III. MORE DISCUSSION IN CLASS.........................128
FIGURE IV. POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REACTIONS : BOYS

VS. GIRLS..............................................133
FIGURE V. POSITIVENESS : BOYS VS. GIRLS.....................135
FIGURE VI. DEGREE OF UNCERTAINTY : BOYS VS. GIRLS.........136
FIGURE VII. STRONG CONVICTIONS : BOYS & GIRLS..............138
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing need for more effective religious training for youth today. Educators recognize this and articles appearing in our magazines and papers sense it too. Studies and research into what the young people themselves feel also indicates that they recognize this lack in their training. The problem is receiving much thought and study by educators, church workers, and legislators alike, and valuable suggestions appear in these same periodicals, showing us ways of meeting this need. A few examples will show us what they are saying.

Concern over this need as expressed by the public is summarized by Bower.¹ He says that making every allowance for the influence of pre-war crisis and what seems a frightened retreat to old securities, he is convinced that the roots of this concern lie in a deep revulsion against fundamental defects in our contemporary culture. Our training in moral and religious values has lagged far behind our scientific and technological achievements.

Educators have expressed what they feel through the National Educational Association when it adopted the following

resolution in 1928 - "Man pleads for a better knowledge of himself, of nature, and of organized society. He hungers and thirsts after righteousness." 2

The youth in the country are beginning to feel that they need more than what they are receiving in the public schools to prepare them for life. In some research studies which Blos made among adolescents he quotes one boy as being typical of what youth are saying, "I think I would like to have a better background in religion -- I mean of the duty, and things like that, to guide people. But, you see, I've had so little background in it at all, and what little I've had was doing some thinking about religion -- because Mother and Dad don't pay much attention to religion and I think it's really pretty important." 3

This is just a glimpse into the difficulty but a study of the problem will reveal what can be done to remedy the situation.

A. PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

One means of attempting to rectify the lag in religious education is through the Church Schools and Sunday Schools in our communities. A study of one individual Church School will reveal its possibilities and limitations in meeting this

situation. The purpose of this paper is to study the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo and to try by means of simple tests, to evaluate in terms of student experiences the influence it is exerting in this direction. This Church School represents what other churches know as the Sunday School. It is the organization of the church which meets on Sunday for imparting religious instruction. The term Sunday School was first used to refer to schools meeting on Sunday to teach reading and writing to the children of the very poor working people. As the public schools grew in efficiency and strength they took over this task and the function of the Sunday School changed to that of imparting instruction in the Bible, and the Christian doctrines. Today the term 'Church School' is gaining in favor with those who wish to link the school more definitely to the church. However, throughout this paper the term 'Church School' and 'Sunday School' will be used synonymously since the larger organization is known as the Sunday School, and in this particular Church they use the term Church School.

This study is being made because the need of meeting the challenge which the statements in the introductory part imply, is urgent. That need is analyzed in the section which follows.
The need for making this study must be clear since the purpose rests on it. The big outstanding need is that indications very definitely point to the fact that youth has problems and must have help in solving them. Youth is faced with three kinds of problems today. The first springs from his physical growth and development. The second is concerned with the social set-up into which he has to fit himself. The third results from the effects of the late war and the unsettled state of the world of today.

Youth is the period which takes the boys and girls from twelve and thirteen to twenty-one years of age. As they enter this period their bodies are beginning to mature. Physical changes are taking place which affect everything they do. They affect attitudes and desires. New instincts begin developing. At the onset the gregarious and migratory instincts are strong. They want the company of their peers and generally those of their own sex. They desire nothing quite as much as the approbation and esteem of their own group.

The migratory instinct leads them out, away from home and away from all bonds that have held them, to explore and

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discover for themselves. When the needs of this period are not met by the Church School, the effect is shown in a survey made by Edmonson.\(^5\) He says -

"It has been asserted that the Church and Sunday School lose 77% of their boys between the ages of fourteen and seventeen.' The survey of religious education in the state of Indiana arrived at the following conclusions regarding the elimination of boys: 'In the Indiana Sunday Schools by the fourteenth year 25% of the boys are eliminated; by the eighteenth year fully 75%, and by the twenty-second year 92%.' Furthermore, the statistical tables gathered for the Sunday School of that state 'show very decidedly that those pupils who have not united with the church by the fourteenth year tend to drop out in large numbers during that year. After the fourteenth year, the elimination is from both groups, the non-church members and the church members alike.'

"One public school writer, discussing the problem of elimination from the public schools, which tends to be very heavy during the same ages that elimination is taking place from the Church Schools, claims the cause to be a physical one. During adolescence, with the independence on the part of the pupil, there is a tendency to break the ties with both the home and the school. He claims that the situation in the Sunday School is probably due to the same causes as the elimination from the public school."

These are two strong forces which youth will seek to satisfy. The Church School must study ways of capitalizing these forces and help youth develop them constructively if it hopes to hold their interest. We can only help if they are in the Church School because they want to be there.

Along with these instincts, the development of the sexual instinct creates problems. Cole lists eight out-

\(^5\) Ibid., Problem 9.
standing problems which the adolescent must solve. They are:

1. He must develop adult attitudes toward sex and establish heterosexual interests.
2. He must establish independence from home supervision.
3. He must make new emotional adjustments to reality.
4. He must attain social maturity.
5. He must achieve economic independence.
6. He must attain intellectual maturity.
7. He must learn a wise use of his leisure time.
8. He must develop a philosophy of life.

Thus, the young people between twelve and twenty-one are laying the foundations for adult manhood and womanhood. A well-planned course in religious training should assure them a guiding hand in this transition period.

The second type of problems is that associated with the society in which these young people are growing up.

The period of adolescence has been lengthened in that society. This is due to a slow materializing of the ideal upon which our country was founded. The constitution of the United States stressed equal opportunity for all. The development of the machine made that ideal a reality for adolescence in general. The machine age requires less workers. Until the emergence of the war, young people of teen age were not employed so that unemployment among adults might be reduced. Closely associated with this was the attempt to

avoid the competition of youth with the older workers. Youth were released from the factories and sent to school. This change to industrialization also led to specialization, for which training is required. More time is now needed in preparation for many jobs.

This industrialization has been rapid and has wrought a complete change in every aspect of our lives. The time in school does not occupy as many hours as the factory did and provides more vacation time. Youth find themselves with much more leisure time on their hands than formerly. The little chores about the home with which they could help have almost disappeared for machinery and electricity have entered there as well. When they seek part-time employment during out-of-school hours and in vacations, the work they find is generally mechanical. As soon as the mechanics have been mastered much of it becomes automatic. "The job no longer gives them the character-calories and the personality-vitamins that build up their individuality as the food which they eat builds up their bodies." 7

Agencies of education in general have only recently rallied to the cause and begun providing for this extra time. Yet the quality of their lives depends upon how they use that

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time. There is a big temptation to spend much of it doing nothing and idleness is corrosive. Human energies, like human stomachs, turn inward perversely and self-destructively, if they have not material to work on. Healthy people without the outlet and stimulus of some kind of occupation are also in danger of getting into one or another sexual muddle. For we are many of us creatures who can be purified only by motion, as the running stream drops out its pollutions when its current grows swift, but gets defiled as soon as it stagnates in shallows. 8 Dorothy Canfield Fisher 9 portrays the sad example of unused human potentialities for happiness and growth, in a pen-picture of an idle young person lounging in listless melancholy on a street corner when he might be throwing his heart into a baseball game on a vacant lot or hiking along a forest trail.

Here certainly is where youth needs direction and an incentive. What shall they do in the several hours of each day when they are under no compulsion from urgent material necessity to work? Many of them seek to be entertained and their search generally leads them to commercial entertainments. Yet we cannot delegate part of the training of youth to commercial interests, for profit motives and proper

personality development do not follow the same course. Among the newer instruments of education, the movie and the radio offer forms of attack but do not produce a consistently constructive purpose. All unsupervised leisure time activities are apt to become obstacles on the pathway to normal, wholesome and stable personality development in adolescence. Many of the activities youth engage in lack a stabilizing influence.

A door is again being thrown wide open for some one to seize the opportunity of supplying youth with what they need. Will the forces of religious education be ready to snatch that opportunity and is the Church School an important agency through which to work? These are questions which we must seek to answer.

Another problem in our life today is the competitive spirit which permeates most all that we do. It leads to the development of so many traits that do not bring harmony and the right kind of satisfaction. It encourages getting the best of one another, greed, ambition that slights the finer things of life, selfishness, and jealousies. This competitive spirit has also entered our church life. There must be some factor in the religious educational process which will lift human life above its present standards and attainments. The church should furnish a fellowship which is being continuously remade by the active participation of its members in common aims and goals. If the community life of a church
is strongly marked and the loyalty of its members well-developed, Christian education is likely to be effective. If religious education is effective, the Church School will be an influence in the community.

Problems immediately arise when we consider the purposes of religious education and their relation to the community. How can religious education be effective within a community which is not itself religious? The subtle forces of community life shape the mind and character of its members far more powerfully than verbal teaching can do. Here, too, is a challenge. If the Church School can become an effective agency in the community, will not the character of that community change and the force it exerts become harmonious with the aims of religious education? This, at least, is worth striving after.

Then there is the immediate situation which is demanding new adjustments from everyone and that is the effects of the late war. It cut deeply into the lives of every individual. Our routine habits had to be changed or modified. The discipline of home, school and church was broken and old loyalties were disturbed or shattered. Some peoples of the world were enemies. Sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, and fathers, left home to fight against them for what they

thought was right. Stories of the horrors of war came back to us. This was all especially baffling to youth. The question of war troubled them. They wanted help in reasoning it out for themselves. Then their own plans and their hopes for the future were vitally involved.

The various ways that the war touched and affected the lives of children and youth left many emotionally unstable. Conditions in the home led to a sense of insecurity. These were adding to influences already caused by broken homes, poverty, and undesirable environment. One of the avenues of escape was delinquency. McFarland, Federal Bureau of Investigation agent, declared at a meeting in Kalamazoo, that juvenile delinquency was one of the greatest tasks faced by law enforcement agencies. He felt that lack of religious training is promoting this delinquency.

These conditions give us reason to pause and ask ourselves to what this is leading. In 1938, Bell in *Youth Tell Their Story*, told us that the United States had, with more or less justification, acquired the doubtful distinction of being the most criminal of all the civilizations of the world. What might be called the "age curve of American Crime" reached its peak between the ages of twenty and

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There is yet another factor which necessitates re-evaluation of those institutions which are passing on our culture to the youth of our land. Our present culture and civilization are being challenged and the danger of losing those very things which have made life in our democratic country most worth while hangs over us like a dark cloud. We are in a time of crisis and it is affecting the whole world. Behind this crisis lies a period when the forces shaping our contemporary culture and civilization, were developing. Those forces, tho' not consciously opposed to Christianity, are weak in that they are un-christian. They ignore the reality of God and the spiritual destiny of man. They regard man more or less as an economic unit or a biological entity rather than as a spiritual being made for eternal life with God. These forces have permeated our social environment and are subtly affecting all of our thinking, and especially that of the youth during their impressionable years. And they want to know what is true and sure, when ordinary footholds are being swept away. They need that which will give them stability, dauntless courage and the security that tells them their goals are worth fighting for. There is the need for them to build on something for tomorrow when good relations will be re-established and regular habits and discipline will again become part of our life.
The real searching and intimate question for each of us then, is framed by Dorothy Canfield Fisher,12 -- How can we develop out of the new and tremendously changed conditions of modern times, a way of life satisfying and rewarding to the best and finest qualities we have -- those qualities which deserve to be called creative? For, if the long-recorded experiences of our race prove anything, they prove that living may become intolerable to complex human beings if it is wholly centered on material securities, even when comfort is added to safety. Only such an influence as will reach the inmost personality, stir the highest motives, and foster the exercise of self-discipline will answer. In a word, only the maintenance and improvement of religious education will suffice.

In beginning a study of this kind I feel it would be refreshing to look at an ideal situation. It will act as an incentive in trying to gauge our own achievement. Blakeman13 presents this interesting and inspiring picture. He says that if, during one generation of thirty years, a given community could so welcome into youth all those who reach puberty each year, and condition them for the city beautiful or the Kingdom of God on earth, or the ideal state,

--that community could transform its social map, erase delinquency, reduce crime to a minimum, and slow up every corroding evil shipped in by influences from without.

Another challenge to spur us on comes from the reaction of a non-Christian in India, who after reading through the four Gospels, returned them and said, "Is this all really true? No, it just cannot be true. There must be a flaw in it somewhere. It must be that in the enthusiasm of my first reading, I missed some things. For if all this were true, you Christians could turn this world right up side down. Why, you have the answer to all that is wrong. But after all these years you haven't accomplished that so it cannot all be true."

There is a need to bring our youth in contact with what this Hindu friend found. It will help them to find the answer to their problems. This is a comprehensive task and the full responsibility cannot be born by any one organization or group of people. It is a phase of education and affects all of life in all of its waking hours. The responsibility must be shared by the Christian home, the Christian Church, and the Church School. This thesis will be confined to the part the Church Schools and Sunday Schools can play in general and particularly how much the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo, Michigan, has
been able to do in meeting the problems of its youth in its senior department.

C. OUTLINE OF PROCEDURE

In making an evaluation of the work of this Church School the following plan was followed.

(1) A brief historical background of the Sunday School Movement is given, showing what the movement is and how it developed in America, and indicating some of the trends today.

(2) A philosophy of religious education is described.

(3) The organization of the Sunday School Movement and of individual schools is discussed.

(4) Aims and objectives of Church Schools are compared.

(5) Curricula of Church Schools are evaluated.

(6) Methods of teaching are discussed.

(7) An evaluation of one department of one particular Church School is discussed in terms of students' experiences, with their possible implications for the work of the future.

(8) Finally a general summary and conclusion are given.
CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT

Before we can properly evaluate a movement we must know what it is and what brought it forth. We should also understand the forces that guided its development in order to understand its major functions as it is operating today. The Sunday School Movement has had a dramatic history and a brief summary of it is now given.

A. WHAT THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT IS

The Sunday School Movement is an important phase in the educational program of the church. The reason for its existence is for the religious development of the young. It is world-wide in its scope and a large majority of the schools are connected with the Protestant Church.

The Sunday School was born out of a sense of need. It is a comparatively modern movement, having its inception in England in the eighteenth century. Prior to this there had been no need for an organization as this, for in England, as in all of Europe, every part of man's life was centered in the church. All the education of that time was conducted by religious agencies and the subjects taught were naturally of a religious nature.
B. NEEDS THAT PROMPTED FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

The first Sunday School was started to aid the poor. In England in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the industrial revolution was causing a great upheaval in society. The condition of the children of the poor in this upheaval was pathetic. Robert Raikes became impressed with the depravity of the children of the working class and thought he might gather them together on Sundays to help them. In 1780 he began to hold classes for them and taught them reading and the catechism. He soon needed help and employed four women to work with him. He used his own printing press to prepare pamphlets on the needs of these children. He enlisted the interest of friends and through their aid bought Bibles and books for his pupils. He soon had little schools starting in many places.

Raikes' idea of holding classes on Sunday for instructing the children was not new. This practice had flourished in several places at different times for centuries under the auspices of the church. But they had always been of a temporary nature. Their purpose had generally been that the Scriptures might be taught and that the doctrine of the church might be perpetuated.

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Cope describes Raikes' motive as being stronger, deeper, and more nearly universal than that which gave birth to the schools before him. He was swayed with passion for the children. He pitied and loved them. To him the child was the reason for the school. That is what made Raikes' school different from those which had preceded them. They were organized for the sake of the child. The wide spread development of humanitarian sentiment going on at this time led to other organizations being formed for the betterment of society and this gave the growth of his schools impetus. The influence of this movement soon spread to America but before we follow its development here we should review the colonial background into which it came.

C. CONDITIONS IN AMERICA WHICH CREATED NEED FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL

In colonial America in the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries, the influence of the church as the center of the life of the community was very strong. The church was the embodiment of the colonists' religious life and it was the nucleus around which their social life revolved. It, too, was responsible for the instruction of the young. The minister was also the

village school master. He used Biblical material freely for Scriptural knowledge was an important part of the school curriculum. The text-books were written to teach religion.

When Harvard College was founded, it was for the education of the English and Indian youth of this country in knowledge and godliness. All the customs of the early settlers were of a pious and religious nature. In the middle part of the eighteenth century, however, other influences began to bear upon the thoughts and actions of these colonial people and gradually to bring about changes.

In Europe a wave of scepticism and atheism was spreading. It was soon permeating their thought and literature and gradually signs of it appeared in the colonies. The low ebb in morals and religion that resulted were soon affecting America as well.

The Revolutionary War in the latter half of the century brought other changes. At its close popular education declined. There was a breaking up of old habits and the church began losing its prestige. The material development which followed broke away from the old domestic customs that had actuated life in colonial days and disregarded the pious observances of earlier times.

With this lowering of interest in religion was combined the influence of the rise of America as a new nation and the

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Ibid., p. 59.
growing sense of political and social solidarity. The principles upon which our country was founded soon became operative in the realm of education. If they were to guarantee religious freedom to all, our schools had to be freed from sectarianism. This led to the demand that the state take over the management of education. Gradually the control of the church gave way to the control of the state. Finally the teaching of religion was forbidden in state supported institutions.

At first little support was given the public schools. Churches maintained their private day schools and private philanthropes supported others. But the public schools' popularity increased rapidly and the parochial schools finally lost their control.

Another influence at work affecting separation of education and the church was the advance of scientific thinking. This affected more and more the processes of daily life and began relegating them to the secular. The work of healing and medicines was being separated from the control of the church because of its scientific approach. Social welfare was developing outside of the church and becoming the work of the state. With the separation of church and state, education became secular. The idea was gradually being formed that life had two compartments, the sacred and the secular.

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The church recognized this division but it made no provision in its interpretation of religion and in its worship, for relating it to these allied vocations. As a result the life of the ordinary man became secularized to a surprising extent because that influence predominated. It is important to note that today the pendulum is swinging back in that education is emphasizing the development of the whole person — physically, mentally, morally and spiritually; the emphasis is upon life as a unified whole.

D. DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH IN AMERICA

For some years after education was placed under the control of the state no provision was made for imparting religious instruction to the children. The ignorance of the rising generation in the knowledge of the Bible and in matters pertaining to the faith of the church was soon apparent. Leaders in the church became alarmed. The effect of the spread of the Sunday School movement in England was also beginning to be felt in America. This helped to focus attention on the need for again providing for the religious education of the children. But the Sunday School Movement was associated with helping the poor. As it made its appear-

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since in this country, it was still with that purpose. People of the better classes refused to send their children to what appeared to be charitable institutions. Yet they wanted for their children what the poor children were receiving.

In one community a father, who was also a teacher, became so anxious that his children receive religious instruction as well as the children of the poor, that he invited his friends to send their children to a class he proposed starting. The idea became popular and others started small classes. These classes as well as those for the poor children were being conducted by laymen. These laymen were members of the churches but the classes they formed and their teaching did not receive the sanction of the church immediately. It was feared that this would interfere with the rights of clergymen to catechize the children and that it would bring too much lay influence into work that by nature was strictly ecclesiastical and clerical.

The number of classes grew rapidly, however, and by 1800 many small schools had been started in several places, tho still outside of church control. This rapid growth brought the church to a realization of the possibilities within the Sunday School. It saw that the Sunday School

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could by used as a means of training its constituency in religious faith. It was also convinced that the movement would succeed independently of the church as an organization if the church refused to recognize it. It was during the second and third decades of the nineteenth century that the church thus came gradually to adopt the Sunday School and it became a school for religious instruction. Its adoption and recognition as an agency or department of the church for the religious training of the young was the most important step in the development of the Sunday School.

When the church's opposition began lessening and before its adoption by the church the Sunday School began to organize itself into Societies and Unions for its promotion. In this way they obtained help in planning what to teach and for lesson aids for teaching. Each group felt the need for pooling their resources that all might benefit from it. Occasional conferences were held so that common problems could be discussed and new plans made.

The movement thus far had been an interdenominational one but in 1830 a new development appeared which broke up for a time this promising beginning. Each denomination saw an opportunity to further develop its publishing business and to be benefited economically. The denominational influence thus became predominant for a time. However, the
seeds of inter-denominational cooperation planted in the beginning were not destroyed. In 1886 the World's Sunday School Association was organized and in 1922 the International Council of Religious Education became the organ for developing new curriculum ideas in harmony with the best education approaches. Thus the movement with which we are dealing is one with an outstanding historical background. It is one whose emergence was born out of need and its rapid growth and strong, steady development has been based upon its ability to respond vitally to the growing needs of the Christian community. As we approach this organization today to search out the possibilities it has for the pressing problems of youth, especially, we can do it with the confidence that where great things have already been accomplished, greater achievements may still lie in store for those who plumb its depths. The present directions of its development will help us to see those possibilities.

E. SIGNIFICANT TRENDS TODAY

There are very significant trends in the movement today and they are paralleling more and more those being emphasized in secular education. There is an emphasis on relating instruction to the pupils' immediate experiences as opposed to the idea of imparting information and ideas as a preliminary to a religious experience to be enjoyed
The psychological approach to learning is being used in that an effort is made to make a point of contact between the learner and the experience to be learned. The learner's feelings must be reached and his emotions stirred and he must be led to think, if his attitudes are to be changed and developed. Then self-activity is the first law of learning and only knowledge that is vital to the pupil will be put into active service.

There is a renewed emphasis upon the place of Christian faith in the program of Christian education. The importance of the Church and of the total program carried on in it is being emphasized.

It is being stressed that we must remember that we are teaching the child and subject matter is only used as a medium for developing knowledge and attitudes.

The necessity for stressing character development is also becoming apparent. It is important that children learn discrimination of values for themselves and not just

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11 Betts, op. cit. p. 52-82
acceptance of adult standards for them.¹² We must pass on to them a workable knowledge and help them to develop right attitudes. Christ-like character and experience does not depend upon one supreme choice but on a series of choices with action and attitudes involved in each.¹³ Christian education is trying to develop the capacity for making wise choices and growth can only take place through the exercise of this capacity.

Religious education is also helping children, young people and adults to consider problems involved in situations they are facing, with a view to discovering what is the Christ-like course of action.

An increasingly important place is being given adult religious education. This includes cultivation of the home life and guidance in using that experience for the purpose of Christian education in the home.¹⁴ It is increasingly realized that the influence of the home can nullify any influence from the outside unless it is working in harmony with that outside agency.

The emphasis on personal religion and on social religion is being fused into an inclusive view that makes both

¹² Coe, loc. cit.
¹⁴ Hayward, op. cit. p. 297-98
inseparable parts of a whole.\textsuperscript{15}

There is increasing recognition of the importance and responsibility of the pastor in the religious education program. The development of professional leadership and lay leaders is slow and this means that the pastor must assume more responsibility for carrying on an effective program.\textsuperscript{16}

These trends are very significant and when measured by the size of the problems today, it is apparent that the ear of the organization has been kept close to the ground. As we go into the details of the operation of the particular Church School of this study these trends must be borne in mind and instances of or opportunity for their application will be pointed out.

As a guide to clearer thinking in this study a statement of religious educational philosophy will be helpful and that follows in the next chapter.
CHAPTER III

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Everyone, whether consciously or unconsciously, forms a philosophy of life as he grows to adulthood because he is so vitally concerned with living that life. But only those who have a definite goal in view form a philosophy about the tasks they do. Leaders in Christian education have always had an aim and a philosophy to guide them. However, as conditions change our philosophy changes and today there are reasons for restating our philosophy of religious education which we will now study.

A. NEED FOR RESTATING THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A philosophy of religious education should be up-to-date to be effective. Changing conditions about us bring new experiences and make new demands upon us. The statement of our philosophy should envelope these new experiences and demands. It must be a working philosophy in the midst of the scenes of economic stress and social and moral upheaval of today. It must recognize that our lives are spiritual as well as physical, and that for full, all-round, maximum development, the spiritual needs nourishment as well as the physical and also exercise. So there is a need to re-state our philosophy of religious education in terms of present day problems and experiences.
B. WHAT A PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IS

A first requirement is to know the meaning of the terms we are talking about. We must be clear as to what is meant by religion, education, and religious education. Meyer's definitions for these terms will be given here.

Religion is the source of spiritual nourishment and inspiration, and is the drawing force of civilization. Education is the method of procedure in civilization's advance. Religious education adopts the methods of education for the purpose of relating persons consciously, actively and of their own free choice to this source of spiritual inspiration for the purpose of creating a better world.

If religious education, then, is to clarify the relationship of God to each individual human life, it must be applied to everyday living, it must have power and must be a demonstration that works. There should be provision within its program for worship, worship that recognizes the manifestation of God and His resources as imminent in this world, and that these resources are available only as man discovers them and meets the conditions of their release.

There should also be an emphasis on the importance of the individual's role in his relationship to God. He

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must understand what the likely outcome will be when a person is in touch with the source of spiritual inspiration and what his responsibility will then be toward the creation of a better world.

C. FORCES TO BE OVERCOME

There are forces active in working against the creation of a better world and youth must understand these forces for what they are if he is to be armed against them. The course he chooses to follow when decisions must be made will depend on this knowledge.

We all have the freedom of making our own choices. We can choose to accept the resources which are God's by meeting the conditions for their release. We are equally free to reject them. More than that, we may choose to act so that love is turned into hate, releasing all the forces of hate in our relations between ourselves and others. It is the action of these forces of hate in the relations between individuals in the ordinary walks of life that culminate in the massing of nations against nations in war. Those forces are especially active today, disrupting the whole world.

Along with the forces of hate are those of cruelty and they are also rampant today. Not only have they been released in greater strength but they are held constantly before us. Our children are learning to recognize that as
one part of life long before they can understand the reason for the existence of these disturbing elements.

A force of evil as destructive as hate and often the foundation for it is that of selfishness and greed. The maxim which seems to hold today for far too many people is to get as much as one can for himself, whether it be in more territory or in hoarding of essential materials. People who ordinarily are thoughtful will have no conscience when taking more than their share of something they want, thinking their ability to pay the cash price clears them of blame.

It is selfishness that can make us as a nation be careless of the economic needs of other peoples. Famine and suffering in other countries draw our pity and help but the methods whereby that famine could be averted are voted down in legislation. Selfishness lies behind so much that is wrong in our individual lives, in our national life and in our international relationships if we but name it correctly.

A more subtle force working against the creation of a better world is that of dishonesty. It is so often veiled and found in half truths. One finds it in high places as well as low, and so many forms receive social sanction. In childhood there are clear-cut distinctions between falsehood and truth but youth comes in contact with this more ingenious type. In school he finds that appearances can cover realities.
Then he sees some succeed in presenting what isn't theirs as their own. The form it very often takes about him in the social and economic sphere is in misrepresenting facts. It is hard for him to see where and when honesty pays. The line of demarcation is not clearly drawn.

The spirit of competition which was referred to as one of youth's problems in chapter one should also be included here as one of the forces to be contended with in society. The principle of free enterprise, already nearly killed by graft and greed, is so often a license to boast one's own interests by implying that another's are everything but what one should expect. Best educational methods are eschewing it from school programs but the student will learn how to make the best record and by means not always fair, when he gets out into the world. Many learn to climb, not by their own merits, but by taking advantage of another's weakness and mistakes. This spirit brings out the worst in us instead of the best.

A large disturbing element about us has been the sense of insecurity. The world appears to be falling down around us. Men and women are losing faith in governments and in agencies for creating good will. Then there is the dread that the destruction prevailing in other countries may prove real for us one day. Home life is broken up, too, because of the war. From some home, fathers had gone into the army. From others mothers as well as fathers were in defense work. Life
for many children was a sort of make shift for the duration. While all this was being done that democracy might survive, may we not be weakening its chances to survive because so many homes are not functioning as such?

Men and women have made supreme sacrifices that our way of life may be preserved. We have fought that the principles of freedom may continue to operate. But our way of life can bear improvement that it may be worthy to be preserved.

Tomorrow rests on the shoulders of the youth of today. We must continually remember that we are educating the children of today to be the moral stamina of our country tomorrow when great demands will be made upon them. Their vision must be kept untarnished. In the midst of hate and cruelty they must have something constructive to build with. It will be their task and ours to build a righteous world where peace will reign. They will need preparation for this in several directions. There is the economic sphere, the political sphere, the social sphere, the international sphere, but interlacing all of these and guiding them should be the spiritual sphere. A real problem then, is the reconstruction in thought and practice of the entirely inadequate and unsatisfactory way of the world with the highest way of life and thought known to man - that found in Jesus of Nazareth. Our task will be to assume this responsibility through re-
igious education and the Church School should be a fitting agency.

When we sit down and think of all that is wrong about us the future looms up dark indeed. But when we have finished we have only part of the picture. There are evils in our contemporary culture and civilization which are thorns indeed. Let us now, however, look at the rest of the picture.

RESOURCES AT HAND

We have resources whose latent power has never been sounded to their depths. They have not been tried and found wanting. They have never been fully tried. The greatest of these resources in love. First of all what is love? Many of us never get beyond the meaning as expressed by the deep feeling of affection we have for our immediate family and love as revealed by devotion to one of the opposite sex. However, this is not all of love. It is what we need to begin with. It is our first introduction to it. But there is too much of self-satisfaction and possessiveness in it. It is when we can give what we love, and can love with no expectation of having it returned, that we begin to understand the true force of love. As we comprehend what human love is capable of and how overpowering it can become, we are ready to glimpse what God has in store for us. God is the source of love but we must be the demonstrators of it and the channels
through which it can flow. Then love becomes a resource for us to use in the making of a kingdom of heaven on earth. It is then a force and a power capable of accomplishing greater things than we can dream of.

If this can be achieved, then surely all other things will be added unto us. But we cannot teach what love is. We can only guide and direct those experiences of children and youth, and open up newer avenues for those experiences as they develop. For this other resources are available. One of these is faith. This can become a very powerful instrument but it is very easily undermined and destroyed unless the foundations are firm. The first step in laying this foundation is learning to have faith in one's self. Our motives must be pure, we must be true and dependable, we must be able to win the confidence of others. Then we must learn to have faith in others. Sometimes this may be hard for there may seem to be so little to have faith in. But when a person knows someone is depending on him it can become the starting point for that particular person to begin to have faith in himself. Knowing how important faith can be may be the incentive to practice it.

Finally, we must have faith in God - faith that He is all that Christ revealed Him to be and faith that the way of life Christ taught us does lead to an ultimate realization of Him.
This brings us to the need of prayer. Prayer is sometimes thought of as an attempt to bring god's will down to fit our own. It is also thought of as an act of begging for what we want. But prayer as Christ practiced it was neither. It was an act of adoration and a means of communion with God the Father. It is one of the supreme privileges to which religious training should open the door. It is in the act of prayer that there is communion of spirit with spirit, of our spirit with God's spirit. It puts us in contact with the source of power which alone can give our endeavors that dynamic which can convert into actuality God's purposes for mankind. The experience of prayer must also become part of youth's heritage through our religious education program.

Ideals and vision also come into the category of resources. They are a motivating power for putting the other resources into action. We may have all that we need materially - a fine political system, physical comforts, material resources, natural and generated power, but if we have not sufficiently high ideals and the proper motivation to make those ideals real in daily life, all these will destroy each other and us with them. Our development of resources and power has far exceeded our development of ideals and their embodiment in character, so that perhaps few of us should be intrusted with the power now in our hands. When the attain-

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ment of these resources ceases to be the prime motive of life and becomes a means to bringing comfort and enjoyment to all peoples everywhere, we may be worthy of this trust. Our material possessions will then be the instrument through which our vision for mankind materializes.

Youth has great expectations of life and is idealistic in its planning. It is a time of looking forward into the future and of expecting great things of the future. Here, then, is one of our important resources lying ready to be utilized by whatever agency makes a strong appeal.

There are forces of evil today, old as civilization itself, yet the crisis they have created is such as civilization has not faced before. The solution to over-coming them is made more urgent because of the sinister form the training of youth is assuming in some other parts of the world. We have resources, which if fully realized and put into practice, could work miracles. This is the philosophy with which religious education can march forward.

Another question to ask ourselves as we proceed with this study is whether the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo has taken cognizance of these forces of evil in its program and whether they are utilizing the available resources in all phases of its work. The first approach will be through a study of its organization.
CHAPTER IV

CHURCH SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

The Church Schools and Sunday Schools have grown into an outstanding organization today. It is interesting now to glance back and note that it was only after the Sunday School had proved its value under the management of outside agencies that it received the sanction of the church and adoption by it as one of its enterprises. It was a significant action for both the church and the Sunday School and has proved to be the most important step in the development of the latter. It is now one of the big phases in the educational programs of the church.

A. SUNDAY SCHOOL A WORLD-WIDE ENTERPRISE

The introduction of the Sunday School has followed wherever churches have been established in most instances. Schools are organized throughout the United States and their growth has been very extensive. In the 1936 report of the Census of Religious Bodies the number of Sunday Schools in the United States was given as 153,899\(^1\) for all the Protestant churches who had sent in a report. The number of children enrolled in these Church Schools was given as 12,395,490.\(^2\) These figures refer only to those Sunday Schools and Church

\[^1\] Census of Religious Bodies: 1936, Volume I. (Washington, D.C., United States Department of Commerce) p. 316
\[^2\] Loc. cit.
Schools connected with individual denominations. Besides these, there are many schools organized as community Sunday Schools and they are inter-denominational. Because of this latter fact their figures were not submitted through a denomination and did not reach the census. However, Hayward gives the figure of all children enrolled in Church Schools of all kinds in the United States and Canada as 21,000,000.3

In the same year of the above census the World's Sunday School Convention, meeting in Oslo, showed a total of 37,441,000 Sunday School scholars and teachers in 129 countries of the world.4 Today there are Sunday Schools in every part of the world except Russia, where they are forbidden by law, and in Afghanistan, where there are no Christian missions.5 It has thus become a world-wide educational enterprise and a brief review of its growth will help us to appreciate its strength and virility.

B. DEVELOPMENT OF LARGER ORGANIZATION

Mention has been made in the Historical Development of the fact that the first Sunday Schools were without the support and guidance of the church. They, therefore, banded

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4 Loc. cit.
together into unions for mutual strength, cooperation, and help. A number of small organizations appeared in this country.

At the same time, or even a bit earlier, organization was on foot in England also. Their first union was in 1803. In 1811 a missionary of the London Missionary Society, on his way to India, stopped in Philadelphia and created much interest by telling of the results of organization in England. Union in this country was first achieved in 1817 and in 1824 the American Sunday School Union was organized. Its purpose was the publication of suitable literature, the selection of scriptural lessons, and the maintenance of schools in needy places.

The Sunday School began holding conventions, following the lead of the public school institutes. The first National Convention was held in 1832 and it organized itself into the National Sunday School Association. Out of this movement grew the International Sunday School Association some years later.

A second National Convention was held in 1833 and

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8 Cope, *op. cit.* p. 83.
9 Betts, *op. cit.* p. 118.
then none was called until 1859, altho the American Sunday School Union continued to thrive. After this the Civil War caused an interlude in all development but at its close a meeting was held in Detroit in 1868. In 1875 the Fifth National Convention became the First International Convention because Canada was also represented. 10 The officers appointed at this meeting realized the necessity of promoting Sunday School interests throughout all the year and all over the country. Through their instrumentality associations were organized and these became affiliated with the International Sunday School Association in 1887. This new Association was born out of a desire for closer cooperation of all workers and agencies, and for greater efficiency. It has played an important part in the Sunday School's development. Cope 11 in describing it says it is the organized expression of the great force of Sunday School enthusiasm.

In 1889 a still more significant step was taken at the World's Sunday School Convention held in London. 12 They organized the World's Sunday School Association, comprising a federation of fifty-one national and international Sunday School Associations or Councils of religious education. It

10 Cope, op. cit. pp. 91-96.
11 Ibid. p. 100
was interested in the entire range of problems involved in Christian religious education of children, youth, and adults.

In 1903 the Religious Education Association was founded, and Chave says that it has probably been one of the strongest influences in stimulating creative thought and cooperative relations in the moral and religious training of children and youth.

The latest outstanding achievement in organization was the merging of the International Sunday School Association and the Sunday School Councils into the International Council of Religious Education in 1922. In this vast organization forty-one denominational boards of Christian education and thirty state councils work together.

Now comes the question of how each individual Sunday School is associated with these larger movements. First of all there is the set-up which unites the Church School and Sunday School with those of the entire denomination. In each district there is generally a committee on religious education. These committees are related to a state, province, diocese, synod, or conference. These larger areas are then related to the general committee or board of religious education for the denomination as a whole. Each denomination also has a publishing board which is responsible for

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the publication of Sunday School literature and other educational material. The schools are also organized into interdenominational and international units in somewhat the same manner, for cooperative work. Every local church has a definite organization as well. The Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo is organized along these generally accepted lines. A detailed study, however, will show that they have pioneered.

C. ORGANIZATION OF CHURCH SCHOOL OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO

The organization and administration of the Church School of this church is under the direction of a Council of Christian Education. This is an advance which only a few schools have accepted as a necessity. This Council is responsible for any alteration in the organization and is directly under the Session of the Church.

The regular officers of the Church School are the superintendent, the secretary, treasurer, superintendents each of missions, cradle roll, home department, visual education and art, the director of music, and the superintendents of the various departments. The Council is composed of the general superintendent, the department superintendents,

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a representative of the session and the congregation. The pastors of the Church are ex-officio members.

The function of the Council is very specific. Briefly stated it is the clearing house for the educational programs of the church. It has supervision over the administrative problems of the Church School. All programs, special events and the like, which involve members or departments of the Church School, are under the control of the Council. It serves to unify the work of the Church School. Through such means as reports and discussions it keeps the various departments informed as to the activities, progress and problems of the school as a whole.

The Church School is organized according to departments. There are departments for the nursery, beginners, primary, junior, intermediate, senior, and adult groups. The classes in the departments beginning with the nursery and going on through the senior group are organized according to the grade level of the pupils in the public school. In the adult group there is also a class for college students, since this is a college town and there are college students attending the Church School.

The enrollment in the Church School according to departments was as follows in 1944:

- Cradle Roll: 128
- Nursery: 43
- Beginners: 55
- Primary: 103
- Junior: 109
The total enrollment in the school in that year was 870 pupils. In comparison with other schools in the denomination this is large and its enrollment compares favorably with that in all other schools as well.

The staff of teachers and officers is composed of about fifty highly qualified members of the church who devote their Sunday mornings to this all important task of training the children in an understanding of the Christian faith.

The officers and teachers of the Church School hold monthly meetings regularly. The Council of Religious Education also meets once a month and its meeting is held just preceding that of the officers and teachers as most of the members of the Council are also members of the second group. All matters of importance to the Church School, which have been discussed by the Council, are immediately communicated to the staff of the school. Questions of general interest and concern to the whole group are discussed at the staff meeting. Often a speaker addresses them on some special phase of religious education. Following the general meeting each department meets separately with their individual

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15 Annual Report, 1942-43, of the First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
superintendent to discuss more detailed matters relating to lesson materials and classroom problems. There is loyalty and interest evinced by the teachers in the fact that there is always a large gathering at these monthly meetings.

A factor contributing to the good fellowship of the staff and officers is the custom of gathering for a simple dinner served in the Church School recreation room during the half hour between the meeting of the Council and the Teachers' and Officers' meeting.

Since the trend today is to adopt the approved methods of the educational field, let us compare those used in this Church School with the methods used in the public schools.

D. COMPARISON WITH PUBLIC SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND SUGGESTIONS

A set of guides given by Caswell for the general elementary field may be used here in measuring the efficiency and practices of the Church School as it relates to its organization.

The first function of organization, administration, and supervision is to provide conditions and services which make possible the most effective curriculum and teaching. The Presbyterian Church has a large church house which very amply accommodates the classes of the Church School. It has

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provided equipment and appropriate rooms in each department for group worship programs. Each class is provided with a separate classroom which has all the equipment to assure desirable educational opportunities. The staff are all well trained, and a variety of curricular material is available to each teacher.

Another function is that the school organization and operation should be based on the participation of the entire educational staff, the parents and the pupils. In the Church School the participation of the entire staff has been provided for and is a reality in practice. A representative of the Church Session on the Council of Religious Education provides for its official connection with the governing body of the Church. Actually a number of the teachers and officers are also members of the Session so that the connection is closer than the organization would indicate. The congregation has its representative on the Council also.

The participation of the parents is a suggestion which all Church Schools and Sunday Schools might adopt with advantage. A common problem in connection with students who whole-hearted interest and cooperation is hard to arouse, is that the parents show very little interest. For the Church School to ask for their participation might be the secret to winning their support. For parents who are
vitaly interested, participation in the program of the Church School in a small way would be desirable. It would be helpful to teachers and parents, alike, to meet informally and discuss problems and aspirations common to both. A Church School Parent-Teachers' meeting held possibly twice a year might be the way to a solution of some of the disturbing problems which confront every teacher at some time during the year.

Participation of the Church School pupils is another phase in Church School and Sunday School organization which needs developing. Children and young people are vitally interested in whatever they have a share in planning or working in. Representation on committees in the Church School would stimulate this interest. Student committees for planning social functions is a way to win their cooperation. Giving students a share in planning and participation in worship programs is another opportunity. Active participation in the planning as well as in the executing of different phases of Church School program is a valuable suggestion in the senior and young peoples' departments, especially. Youth are ready to give their allegiance when they can go all-out for it. They also want to belong. Letting them feel that this Church School is theirs by giving them responsibilities in

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17 This study was made in 1944, and this Church has since modified its organization and improved its curriculum. They have a Parent-Teachers organization which meets once every three months.
it and respecting their points of view when expressed, would help counteract the tendencies also active at this stage in drawing the adolescent youth from the school and Sunday school.

A third function is that the individual school should be the operational unit in program development. This is true of Church Schools generally. The staff of this Church School have planned a program with direct reference to what they felt the needs of the children served were, with reference to their own resources and to the abilities of available staff.

A fourth function should provide for the grouping of pupils in relation to the educational objectives to be achieved. The grouping of children at the public school grade levels has been done with this objective very evidently in mind. Also the grouping of girls and boys separately in certain grades has been done for certain well-defined purposes.

Grouping children at the grade level of their class in school assures a class who will be at about the same stage of mental development. Grouping them according to sex achieves oneness of interest at certain ages. In the nursery, beginners and primary departments the boys and girls are together. Children's needs are very much the same in these groups -- boys or girls. From the fourth grade through to the ninth, the boys and girls are placed in separate classes. Here the boys are given men teachers and the girls women teachers. It is during these years that boys' and girls'
interests lead in diverging directions and when different methods of appeal must be used for each. In the tenth grade the boys and girls are again grouped together. It is during these ages that the social instincts are expanding and the boy-and-girl relationships become prominent. Problems are certain to develop during these years from the tenth to the twelfth grades, and much of them will be on heterosexual relationships. When the classes are brought together in the Church School at this stage, the teacher there has a share, along with the parents and public school teachers, in helping to guide in the solution of these problems with the peculiar resources he has at hand.

A fifth function is that the school organization should provide for extended association with and guidance for each child by a single teacher. The class groups are small enough in this Church School to give each teacher opportunity to know each one of his students personally. There are also occasional social functions during the week amongst the older classes which provides a contact in a more informal and intimate atmosphere.

A final consideration is that the plan of organization must always assure that each child finds the security and stimulation needed for his optimum development morally and spiritually. The study of aims and objectives of the Church School will help to clarify this function. This follows in the next chapter.
CHAPTER V

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF CHURCH SCHOOLS

The first requirement for an organization that it may function effectively and efficiently is for it to have well defined aims and objectives by which to guide its activities. The function of religious education in the Sunday School has always had such goals as its guide-posts but they have differed during the various periods of its growth. There has been a gradual development in them from the time the first ones were formulated. Today as one looks back over its history and compares those first aims with what we now have the change is pronounced.

Many worth-while aims and objectives can be found in present day literature on religious education. These have evolved as needs have been studied and attempts made to meet those needs. The emphasis is not always the same nor are the means of approach used identical. For the sake of this study it will be helpful to learn what various groups have felt essential for goals in religious education, to weigh them over against the problems of the youth of today, and use them as a gauge in approaching the study of the aims and objectives of the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo. But before we go further a statement of the function of religious education will help to clarify our thinking.
A. FUNCTION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLARIFIED

First of all what is the function of religious education? In the beginning it was definitely the transmission of an authoritative interpretation through the learning of the catechism. No thought was given to the needs of the child or to how his needs might be met through what he was being taught. A sort of mystical belief that if the first was done the second would follow miraculously, was very strong. That has not altogether disappeared today but our increased knowledge of psychology and the improved methods used in secular education are now being applied to religious education as well. This gives its function a broader interpretation.

Compare these earlier conceived functions with those given in the Encyclopedia of Sunday Schools and Religious Education. Here we read that Religious education is to develop in a pupil a normal and balanced religious life, in which the intellectual element shall temper the emotional and rightly guide the will; in which knowledge shall be quickened by lofty emotions; and in which feelings and intellect shall in turn be subject to a disciplined will; where knowledge, love, and service shall each contribute

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their full share to the enriching and vitalizing of the religious life.

In 1940 the Educational Committee of the International Council of Religious Education clarified the function of present day religious education as being not simply the transmission of an authoritative interpretation of the Christian religion but also the reinterpretation and enrichment of the Christian faith itself. 2

Another statement of the function of religious education through the agency of the Sunday School might be given simply as the developing of intelligent Christians with a knowledge of what the church is and what it stands for.

Each of these statements tries to express in words what the attainment of a true follower of Christ -- a Christian -- can be. The aims and objectives must be directives which point this way.

B. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN EVALUATING

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In determining what the aims should be, those problems given in the need for this Study in Chapter one, 3 must be born in mind. We must aim at meeting those problems with

3 Chapter I - Introduction, p. 3.
the resources at our command in religious education. That


can be the touchstone of our whole course.

There are other factors to be considered and among

them is the needs of the different age groups. Since this

study is concerned chiefly with the work of the senior de-

partment of the church school under study, only the needs of

this group will be considered here.

Youth is an age of ideals, of vision. They look be-

yond the present, both of time and of environment, and build

air castles and dream dreams. The heroic and the chivalrous

appeals especially to them now. They are physically better

equipped today than ever before, even though army inspections

have pointed out that the physical well-being of our nation

is not yet what it should be. Morally, they meet life more

frankly than previous generations have done. These are won-
derful assets, the utilization and direction for which should

be included in our aims for religious education.

But the trend among young people today is not toward

attendance in Church Schools and Sunday Schools. A signifi-
cant factor which must be considered is that not only is there

a large falling off in numbers as we reach the ages from four-
teen to twenty but the total enrollment in our Church Schools

and Sunday Schools is dropping.⁴

⁴ Although this study was made in 1943, there is nothing
to prove the contrary true today.
A study of the Sunday Schools of seven denominations reveals the fact that the total enrollment has decreased by almost 40,000 since 1932. While the Sunday School enrollment had grown to be consistently higher than the Church membership in most denominations, at present its numbers have dropped to a figure lower than church membership.

To this let us add still another observation. Squires quotes the following from an investigation which he made.

On a chart showing the ages at which 8,631 cases of conversion took place the highest peak was reached at sixteen. On a second chart showing 17,453 cases of adolescent crime, the highest peak for boys was at the age of sixteen and for girls fourteen. Of these cases, no boy committed his first crime after twenty and no girl after twenty-one. The boy or girl who has been brought through the adolescent period without serious stumbling is comparatively safe. What possibilities

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Baptist Church
Congregational - Christian Church
Disciples of Christ Church
Evangelical Church
Methodist Episcopal Church
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
United Presbyterian Church


the last statement holds for the future of Church Schools is
difficult to estimate, but they are tremendous. We cannot
measure the significance of such a statement but it makes us
realize that all the study and effort that the Church School
can put into guiding adolescent youth, is in the right direc-
tion.

Our aim must also include meeting demands life makes
upon youth. Their religious experience should be a part of
life and not tucked away in a little compartment reserved
for Sundays. When they are faced with a decision in a crowd,
such as whether they should go to a questionable place of
amusement, will their only thought be that their parents
will be displeased, or should the school find out, they will
be given demerits? This kind of reason won't hold them long.
But if they have a sound criterion of their own to base their
decisions on, one based on thought and study, it will carry
them through anywhere. If the Church School can pass on to
them a workable knowledge of what is right, and good, and
wholesome, can help them to form their own right attitudes,
can train them in the skill of living, they will have a set
of values which will guide them safely, no matter where they
are.

With all these problems before us we can study criti-
cally some aims and objectives which others have worked out,
and then turn to an evaluation of the objectives of the First
Presbyterian Church in Kalamazoo.
C. VARIOUS AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CHURCH SCHOOLS

Many specific aims and objectives have been necessary to help guide the energies of the teaching staff and to supply the ever growing needs of the children in the Church School. The needs of the teaching staff differ greatly for the teachers come with such a varied background of experience and training. The needs of the children also differ at the various age levels. To supply the help and guidance inferred here is not an easy task. Individuals and groups of leaders have given much thought and study to this important phase of religious education and have expressed the results in their aims and objectives.

Quoting from the problem of the aims of religious education prepared by Edmonson, 7 "one teacher with a rich background of experience declared that there were three specific aims of Church School teaching". He defined them as follows:

1. "To insure that the pupils acquire familiarity with truths and facts of the Bible as interpreted by our Church.
2. "To develop an interest in spiritual matters.
3. "To insure that children affiliate with our church before they have passed through the stage of adolescence".

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7 J.B. Edmonson, Perplexing Problems of the Church School. (Unfinished study, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1943). Problem 2.
Another set of aims for religious training is given by Bobbitt, of the University of Chicago. He would develop the following:

1. "A sense of brotherhood of man.
2. "A full sense of membership in the larger or total social group.
4. "An attitude of and desire for obedience to eternal laws which appear to exist in the nature of things.
5. "A sense of personal security which springs from one's confidence in the beneficience of the general order of things.
6. "Ability, habit, and disposition to follow the leadership of the world's men of vision.
7. "Ability to participate in religious and philosophical thought of the type characteristic of man at his best and highest.
8. "Ability to catch for one's self such glimpses as are permitted, of finite vision of the Being who actuates the universe".

The goals of the United Christian Education Advance for 1943 are more practical and aim at meeting an immediate situation. They are:

1. "To reaffirm and reenforce the religious educational responsibility of the family.
2. "To develop and aggressively apply constructive, comprehensive plans for promoting Church and Church School attendance.
3. "To approach the task of reaching every person with Christian teaching on an inter-church, community-wide basis."

Other aims include an emphasis on the world-wide
unity of Christians, providing a dominating purpose in life, becoming sensitive to the needs of others, learning forgiveness and magnanimity, love of righteousness and truth, right character and personality development, giving vision.

David C. Cook, head of the publishing house for Sunday School Workers, in his handbook, emphasizes the fact that each age level has specific needs. He and his staff have formulated the following aims for the school as a whole and for the Senior and Young Peoples Department:

The General Sunday School -

1. "To make Jesus and His teachings a reality in the life of each member.
2. "To develop a working knowledge of the Bible as God's word and a guide for living.
3. "To encourage the application of Christian principles to basic social problems.
4. "To foster enthusiastic and intelligent participation in the total church program.
5. "To enrich the personal religious life of each individual".

The Intermediate-Senior Department -

1. "To present Jesus as one who commands whole-hearted loyalty and allegiance.
2. "To increase love for the Bible and help boys and girls to use it as a guide-book for everyday living.
4. "To insure a deeper understanding of the work of the church and bring about a fuller participation in it.

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Aims for other departments can be found in the David C. Cook Handbook.
5. "To help boys and girls find social life and friendships in the church.

Young People's Department -

1. "To lead young people to see that the Christian religion offers the only security on which to build in this changing world.
2. "To help young people build a Christian philosophy that will help them to live courageously in the world today.
3. "To develop an increasing knowledge and appreciation of the Bible and our religious heritage.
4. "To prepare young people to play their part in building Christian homes, Christian communities, and a Christian world.
5. "To develop qualities of Christian leadership".

Much of importance is emphasized in these various statements but in looking at them critically in the light of the needs of youth, which must be met, there are certain weaknesses and omissions. All but those given by Cook are weak in providing for using the unbounded energies and enthusiasms of youth. The first group ignores problems of everyday life in its aims all together. The second group lacks distinctive quality which religious training should add to what secular education imparts. The reference to God and the spiritual values of life are too vague for youth. The United Christian Education Advance for 1943 is emphasizing only those aims of religious education which appear most urgent today. Those aims given by Cook come nearest to including in its statements possibilities for meeting all the problems facing young people.
We will now turn to a study of those aims and objectives of the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo, comparing them with those given above and evaluating them in terms of the pressing necessity of youth today.

D. STUDY OF AIDS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

The Council of Christian Education of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo have accepted the following as their guideposts in religious education in their Church School:

The following objectives for the Church School are suggested with the understanding that the Church School has specific functions to perform and is not identical with the whole Church and its responsibility toward the children of the Church. We might express the Christian desire for its children in some such way as this: "It is our hope and purpose that our children shall come into God's keeping as His children, loving in joyful fellowship with Him and in the service to which He calls them".

There are various institutions which should aid this end — the Christian home, the Christian society, the Christian School, the Christian Church, as well as the Church School.

The Church School has a particular function among these institutions and should not be expected to shoulder the whole responsibility for the fulfillment of the Christian desire for its children. This function we see as follows:

1. The Church School is the first experience the child has of the Christian life outside of the home. It must, therefore, be an environment where there is an immediately felt atmosphere of security, affection,
at-homeliness, joyfulness, and of the importance of the individual.

2. The Church School provides the first experience of the child in Christian worship. There should begin with the youngest and carry on through the subsequent years an experience of the dignity of and reverence in worship which should lead to the sense of God's holiness and the enriching possibilities of His worship.

3. The Church School should lead the child into the experience of Christian fellowship -- where the community of the Christian life is felt in shared experiences, of worship, of good times, of opinions and thoughts, of Christian action. For this and expressional societies, conference experiences, discussion groups, parties, service projects should be planned within the Church School program.

4. In as much as ultimate maturity in the Christian life calls for an appreciative and effective Churchmanship, the Church School should plan for instruction and Christian influence that shall lead the child at the proper time into a commitment of life to Christ and uniting with the Church. The gulf which exists between the religious experience of Church School and the later experience of Church must be fully understood and bridged by cooperative effort between Church and Church School.

5. Surrounded by these other objectives, the central function of the Church School is the learning of the Christian faith. This function can best be filled by a curriculum of study which puts the knowledge of God's revelation in Christ at the center and seeks this knowledge through the careful study of the Old and New Testaments, the History of the Christian Church, the great principles of Christian thought and action.

The objectives of this church school begin by aiming at creating a favorable atmosphere. This is most important. A child's first impression, and also that of the adolescent and adult, colors very decidedly his later reactions. When his impressions are pleasing he is more inclined to come again
and his expectations will be more positive. He enters with a sense of satisfaction and his whole mental attitude is more ready to receive what the Church School has to give him.

These objectives emphasize worship as necessary to the child's experience. This factor is not clearly mentioned in the other plans reviewed but it is being realized more and more that true worship is essential in the Church School. It will be helpful here to define what we mean by worship before we discuss its benefits. Worship is said to be a "personal approach to God; our attempt to express ourselves to Him in whatever ways we deem possible and appropriate. It seeks to communicate to Him our attitudes, to establish intercourse with Him, to enter into as direct fellowship with Him as we can". Again it is "any exercise through which man feels that he comes into a special relation with his divinity".13

Athearn gives its meaning as "any thought, feeling or act which brings one into closer contact with God, and through which Divine reaches human life". These definitions are enough to guide us as we think of worship in the Church School objectives.

Children and young people need training in worship.

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12 Weigle and Tweedy, Training the Devotional Life. (New York: Harpers & Bros. 1925) p. 6
14 Laura Armstrong Athearn, Christian Worship for American Youth. (New York: Appleton-Century Co. 1931) p. 8
This training should include both instruction and drill in the elements of worship and actual participation in the service. When the students themselves have a share in planning the worship program and participating in it, it becomes their own. They "cannot adequately participate, however, until they can intelligently understand what worship is seeking to do." This clarification can come through devoting some time to studying its meaning and through careful preparation of the service itself. The worship program can supply effective motivation for memory work and make its meaning alive and real by its association with the theme of the program.

By the thoughtful selection of the elements that go into the program, the experience will develop from an attitude of reverence, love, loyalty, faith, or whatever the theme chosen to make the approach to God may be, into an actual realization of His presence. It gives the Church School student the opportunity to experience God as a loving Father and to realize what communion with Him can mean. When worship becomes meaningful the Church will have a stronger appeal.

Howard M. Bell has found in his study of youth and their

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15 Ibid., pp. 3-15
problems, that "in the minds of the great majority of youth, the church is neither a public forum nor a recreational center. It still retains its original character as a place of worship". We must make that concept a reality.

With the concept of a personal God and the idea of the sacredness of human personality, the experience of worship may thus be sought and gained through training and direction. The responsibility for this rests upon the leaders of the Church School in making available to the students the spiritual values to be gained through this experience of worship.

Within these objectives there are provisions for so planning the curriculum that the gregarious and migratory instincts which become so strong in adolescence, may be directed into useful channels. Forming expresional societies, sending the students to conferences, or letting them act as hosts and hostesses at conferences held locally, directing discussion groups, having parties, or planning service projects, all hold vast possibilities for utilizing the boundless energies of youth. Providing for recreation is another avenue when that is needed but the public schools do that very effectively in most communities. Most of these activities need the assistance of adults as sponsors, but once started, youth between the ages of fourteen and eighteen are capable of directing them themselves.
These suggestions hold possibilities for captivating all the energy and idealism of youth. Yet this Church School, like all of the group who reported in the study previously mentioned, and like all those who did not report, is losing its share of boys, and girls too, between the very ages mentioned above. Questions have been arising in the minds of its leaders as to its cause and its remedy. Are the possibilities within these objectives not used to the extent which they might be? Are they introduced too late to enlist the support of larger numbers before outside interests or just lack of interest causes them to drop out of the Church School? Or are the aims not comprehensive enough to meet the needs of those large numbers who leave? One very hopeful sign, which many studies have proven to be true, is that these young people are not indifferent, for the greater part. Most of them have fairly good ideas of what they would like religious educational agencies to do for them. But they haven't enough interest, or initiative, or is it support from the home, to remain and try to get what they feel they need.

Right here is where a careless attitude which many parents and adults have assumed has had a great influence. They have laughed and joked at the idea of being good. There are standards and principles which all must maintain but if a person wins the reputation of being good he loses in popularity. Going to Sunday School and Church often comes within
the category of being good and therefore there is a tendency to shy away. At the same time, in the heart of nearly every parent is a desire that their children will attain that goodness about which they so lightly joke. They really esteem goodness highly but our young people have adopted their joking attitude all too often. Even so, youth is ready to be enlisted into active service by whatever agency can claim their attention and allegiance.

The ultimate goal that these objectives have placed before the workers in the Church School is that the students will become active members in the Church as they reach adulthood. Instruction and Christian influence are planned to lead them to a commitment of their lives to Christ and uniting with the Church. This goal is what every Christian parent and leader wishes for children but should it not be made more immediate? If we try to encourage them to become active members of the Church School, that organization of the Church to which they are qualified by age and experience to belong, will it not be possible to create a felt need for Church life and participation in it which will still be active later?

I feel quite sure that it can. It would mean student participation in the government of the Church School and student representatives appointed to its Council. Here would be real scope for leadership training.

A little instance occurred last Easter which strength-
ens my feeling that we must change the phrase "joining the Church" or "uniting with the Church" to one with more meaning to the young people making this decision. A father asked his young son if he wouldn't like to join church on Easter Day. The son looked up at his father with almost a hurt expression and asked, "Don't I belong to the Church?" Probably just here lies one of our weaknesses. Wouldn't stressing the fact that children brought up in the Church do belong there and emphasizing the fact that Christ demands individual, personal commitments to His cause from all of His followers, create a stronger appeal to youth? Those not brought up in the Church can then be urged to join by making the same commitment. Along with the growing independence of youth there is a strong desire to belong and to be an active part of some group or organization. The objectives of the Church School should capitalize on this urge.
E. PROPOSALS FOR MEETING SOME OF QUESTIONS RAISED

The success of our endeavor lies in finding workable solutions to these many questions. The committee on the United Christian Youth Movement in the International Council of Religious Education, recommends that the following special emphases be made as a basis for youth programs: special Bible study, more definite prayer, sacrificial giving, the reaching of newcomers in the community, increased inter-church activity, maintenance of contacts with men and women in military service, building bridges of Christian understanding among people of different races and classes, and constructive action in preparation for world peace.

This paper can only offer a few other suggestions based on the limited study made. First, we must sense the need for recapturing the enthusiasm of youth. Secondly, youth must be given a dominating purpose for his life. Thirdly, he must be made to feel that he belongs. Fourthly, we must realize that they do not expect adults to solve their problems for them. They do expect sympathy and understanding and discussion which may help them to think more clearly and eventually to arrive at an intelligent solution themselves.

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In the discussion of the curriculum for the Church School which follows the inclusion of other suggestions leading to a solution will be discussed.
CHAPTER VI

CURRICULUM OF THE MODERN CHURCH SCHOOL

The curriculum of the Sunday School has undergone tremendous changes during the years of its existence. The traditional type based on knowledge won early acceptance and still persists in many schools. At present a new kind of curriculum is emerging, based on the experiences of the learner. The stages of its growth and obstacles which have been overcome by curriculum builders in the Sunday Schools of yesterday are a challenge to us today.

A. DEVELOPMENTS THAT LED TO PRESENT CURRICULA

The curriculum of the first Sunday Schools, if it can be called that, was very simple. In England it was learning to read the Bible and the catechism and write. Because illiteracy was less prevalent and public schools more efficient in the United States than in England at that time, there was less necessity for teaching the fundamentals of general education in the Sunday School here. We, therefore, turned more easily to distinctly religious teaching.

These beginning Sunday Schools carried on the authoritarian tradition of the Reformation. They taught the

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George H. Beets, The Curriculum of Religious Education. (New York: The Abingdon Press. 1924) p. 77
Bible and the catechism, especially the latter as it contained the accepted interpretation of the Bible. The emphasis was upon memorization for it was important that these teachings become part of their very being and be passed on to succeeding generations with fervor. Education was hardly considered, especially not as a means of grace for the spiritual regeneration of individuals and the evangelization of the world.

This type of curriculum content, however, was not acceptable to everyone, even at this early date, and criticisms appeared. Betts\(^2\) quotes Dr. Watts as saying that "the holy things of our religion have not only been made an aversion to children, but have been exposed to disreputation and contempt by teaching them such a number of strange phrases which they could not understand".

Memorization finally reached the stage of being a craze and to counter this the question book\(^3\) came into use. These were questions and answers based directly on the Bible. It was a return to the formal method of the catechism used by the earlier church but the content was now Biblical material and not doctrine.

Progressive teachers and leaders began deviating from this by planning lessons for their individual Sunday Schools. A Scripture passage was chosen and a lesson de-

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 85
\(^3\) Ibid., P. 105
veloped on its contents. Then in 1824 the advent of the American Sunday School Union brought with it the introduction of a series of lessons based on the life of Christ planned to cover one year. There were demands for them immediately and soon a second year's lesson series appeared.¹

This new type of lesson aroused new interest in the Sunday School. The two Sunday School conventions held in 1832 and 1833 helped to publicize them and as a result a five year course was prepared. It was felt that that was an adequate curriculum for the Sunday School, for they didn't expect children to attend for a longer period than five years. All these efforts at lesson planning had been carried on by interdenominational groups. The trend toward uniformity was broken by the appearance of the denominational publishing houses and boards in the field of curriculum making in 1830. Each denomination began publishing its own lesson plans and the Union plans were opposed. These organizations and facilities for planning lessons were much more limited than that of the Sunday School Union had been.

The number of leaders available in each field were very limited and working alone they didn't receive the encouragement that working in the larger group had brought. Whereas before all new plans which were developed were sent

¹ Ibid., P. 117
in to the Union and became accessible to all, now the available material was narrowed down considerably. Consequently, all attempts at organizing a curriculum were weakened and forces were scattered. A very confused period followed and much enthusiasm was lost.

During this period of independent lesson planning the public schools were making great advances in their curriculum building and methods of instruction. Teachers in the public schools were also in the Sunday Schools. They were very aware of the discrepancies between the two schools. In 1844 Bushnell's "Christian Nurture" appeared. Here was an attempt to make the teaching of religion personal. He also introduced educational methods into religious teaching. He claimed that rather than let the child grow up in sin and be converted as an adult, every child should be trained with every effort and expectation that he grow up a Christian. If this new emphasis did not cause a new era of religious education to begin, it certainly marked the beginning of one. A wave of revival fervor swept through the churches and attention turned from doctrine to personal conversion. This was to influence the trend toward educational method still further.

In 1865 Vincent, a Methodist minister and Sunday

School enthusiast, began experimenting with different lesson courses in his own church. He wondered at the practicability of uniform lessons for all schools and began preparing a two-year series of lessons called "Two Years with Jesus". They became popular immediately.

A Baptist layman, B. F. Jacobs, saw great possibilities in these uniform plans. His idea was that if they were such a good plan for one denomination, then why not for all denominations and for all schools in the United States. He promoted them at state institutes and conventions and presented them at the Fourth National Convention in 1868. Through his efforts uniform lessons became widely talked of. As a result, in 1872 representatives of twenty-nine denominational publishing houses met in New York where Jacobs again made his appeal. A committee was appointed to prepare a series of uniform lessons for 1872. Difficulties over denominational viewpoints arose and many compromises were necessary. Because many demands had to be satisfied, several plans were combined and the continuity of the first plan was lost. The result was a first quarter of work based on Acts, Hebrews, and Revelation; the second portion upon Elisha and Israel; the third on the Epistles; and the fourth on Daniel. This was adopted by the National Sunday School Association in 1872 and each

Ibid., pp 124-128.
denominational board was left free to issue its own lesson helps. It was still felt that the Scriptures were all the curriculum necessary for children and youth in order to instruct them in the ways of Christian living.

In 1875, when this body became the International Convention, the lessons were called the International Uniform Lessons. These consisted wholly of Biblical material and made the curriculum of a large proportion of Protestant Sunday Schools in this country as well as in Canada and England.

The five-year cycle of uniform lessons first started by the Union was now enlarged to extend over seven years. It was the aim of these lessons to cover all the Bible in a cycle of seven years but there was no attempt at continuity in their approach. The plan of skipping about from quarter to quarter, first delving into the Old Testament and then into the New, continued. This type of lesson plan is still being widely used in our Sunday Schools.

The gap caused by the emergence of denominational boards was now closing and the different boards were again combining their efforts. This was one of the big results achieved by the wide adoption of the International Uniform Lesson. This period also marked a breaking away from using the study of the catechism in place of Bible material and it opened the way for introducing the newer results of scientific study of childhood into the curriculum of religious
education.

Educators were not satisfied. There was no continuous study of the Bible, but rather a fragmentary, skipping here and there, method. There was no opportunity for teaching denominational doctrines, nor for including lessons on missions and social-reform movements. Nor was the church year sufficiently recognized. The emphasis was still only that of amassing Biblical knowledge.

The effect of the progress in the public school educational program continued to exert its influence on religious education. The public schools had become thoroughly graded by this time. There was a growing educational consciousness among the membership of the churches. The primary teachers were finding it very difficult to adopt the given lessons to the little children. They began urging lessons especially prepared for them. Thus, in answer to this demand, leaders began gradually to prepare different material for each separate grade in the Sunday School. Other than the denominational publishing houses soon began publishing them and these series prepared by outstanding leaders were soon available to all who desired them.

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8 Geo. H. Betts, How to Teach Religion. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1919). p. 130

All these influences were having their effects in the International Uniform Lessons committee. On the other hand, there were those who urged strongly the continuance of that community of feeling created by knowing that in every Sunday School in every land, all were studying the same lesson on a given Sunday. But this was rather an adult idea and had very little association with the life and spirit of growing children in the classes.

A compromise between the two groups was finally reached in the preparation of Group Graded Lessons. This provided three sets of material for each department in the Sunday School, one for each of the three years the child would be in the department. This plan made it possible for smaller schools to place all the children within the age range of the department, in one class. Thus in three years these children, too, would have studied all the material outlined for the department.

Secular educational progress continued to exert its pressure. By 1906 the International Lessons Committee took cognizance of this but still hesitated to issue graded material. In the meanwhile, Blakelee started preparation of a closely graded series. He died before completing the work and Scribners' Sons took over their publication. By 1908 graded lessons were being widely adopted. The Protestant churches of North America were recognizing the fact that an educational approach was of major importance in religion.
education.

There followed in quick succession the Beacon Course, the Christian Nurture Series, the Lutheran graded series and the Westminster Series. All these series are being published today and have been often revised. The new developments in the study of the nature of the child, the differences among children, and the examination of the process of how children and adults learn were finally being incorporated into the curriculum of religious education. The religious life is now being regarded as a vital process which should be dealt with by methods of nurture.

The Uniform Lessons continue to be greatly in demand and are still widely used too, because of a false impression that they are easier to use. They have outstanding weaknesses, however, other than that their material is not equally suitable to all ages. They have, nevertheless, created a sense of mission among Sunday School leaders and imbued them with the importance of their part in the whole program of Christianity. But, with such handicaps, they cannot meet the demands of today. They are fragmentary, skipping here and there about the Bible and giving little or no continuous study of it. Their emphasis is upon the amount of material to be assimilated in a given time rather than upon the problem of helping the child grow and develop. The teachers become slaves to material and the needs and capacities of children are neg-
lected. They do not introduce other material of religious value which makes an appeal to the interest of children.
B. DEMANDS ON PRESENT DAY CURRICULUM FOR YOUTH OF CHURCH

One of the important requirements of any curriculum is that of accomplishing the aims and purposes which the Church School has chosen for itself. It must be the framework into which these objectives can fit and materialize.

As one looks over those aims and objectives for the Senior department, he finds that one of the biggest demands put upon the curriculum is to provide for the needs created by the physical development of the adolescent youth. How is the Church School going to stem the tide away from its doors? What is lacking that it cannot prevent this falling off in attendance at the most crucial stage in the development of boys and girls?

First there are certain pronounced tendencies which we must seek to satisfy when planning the curriculum. We must supply an outlet for the gregarious instinct which still persists in the tenth grade. These boys and girls can come together in their own little groups under the auspices of the Church School as well as under the auspices of outside influences. It generally is a matter of the one who enlists their interest first.

Another tendency which we must provide for is the excess enthusiasm of youth. They have unbounded energy which needs to be directed. This energy will seek an outlet
and if we in this movement are not resourceful enough to give
them opportunity for expression within our program, they can
find their own outlet. They must be going places and doing
things. There are many avenues into which this energy could
be directed with profit. One way of finding which would fit
a particular group best is to put the question up to them.
They will have many suggestions and from among them a choice
can be made. One group of high school students wanted a
"club" room for their meeting place. Of their own accord,
they found a small barn which was deserted and in a delapi-
dated condition. With the help of two of the fathers they
obtained permission to use it and fixed it up to suit their
needs. The fathers were asked to remain as sponsors of the
group. Couldn't a Sunday School class fix up its own place
of meeting and call it a club room? Oldsters are welcomed
to these enterprises if they but have the spirit of youth.

Youth is idealistic. We've said it before and so
have others. They are hero-worshippers. The curriculum
must provide ample material on the romance and heroism of
Christianity to attract them. There are many stirring tales
of deeds performed by real heroes in the heritage of the
Church. These must be made available to the youth at this
stage and presented with all the thrill and love of adventure
with which their High School teacher presents 'Daniel Boone'.

The adolescent in the senior department of the Sunday
School is beginning to feel his and her adulthood. They no longer want to accept decisions made for them. They often disagree with a very good proposal in order to exercise their desire to make a choice. Wouldn't it be wise, then, to allow a certain amount of freedom in making choices within the curriculum? There are a number of heroic stories suitable for these groups. For example, two or three might be presented and the class allowed to choose the one they would like to read. If the one who presents them is really enthusiastic himself, a few may even volunteer to read the other stories and bring a review to the class. When the suggestion is theirs, there is practically no limit to what they will do.

Freedom of choice can also be made in the matter of class procedure many times. Often the simple question, "How shall we go about this?" enlists the whole-hearted support of the class. Letting the majority decide is much more effective than the teacher-made decision.

A second demand made upon the curriculum is that it must equip the children with the necessary knowledge for living an intelligent, Christian life. The most important source of this knowledge is the Bible. In using the Bible with children, we must remember that most of the material therein is beyond their comprehension. It is written by adults and for adult use. Much of the beauty and helpfulness of passages is lost when presented to immature minds, whose limited ex-
perience makes it all meaningless. Ligon tells of an investigation which was made to understand the various teachings of Christian philosophy in the parables of Jesus. It was learned that they first have meaning to those in their adolescent years. This, then, is the period for which the curriculum should provide a study of Jesus' teachings, through parables.

Little children can understand God as a loving father but they can only comprehend it from evidence as revealed by an older person. They will understand and love stories of the birth and boyhood of Jesus, of Moses and Samuel. Likewise, there are many stories for older children which need not be told with all their background but are complete for this purpose in themselves. I do not feel that any of the Psalms should be taught to children, however. The twenty-third Psalm is always included for children. The beautiful thoughts which the Psalmist expresses can be simplified for children but the beauty of his utterance is lost. Those same thoughts can be taught children from illustrations nearer their own experience and within their comprehension. When they are old enough to understand the poetic phraseology, we can turn to this Psalm to learn how David knew God. It will come to them with new force and power when it comes within their understand-

ing. When a child responds with meaning to a situation, he learns.

A children's Bible can be used very effectively here. I refer to the kind that takes actual portions from the Bible, choosing only such passages suitable for children.

It is also important not to impress children and young people with the idea that they must read the Bible. There is something about a "must" which makes them rebel sooner or later. Rather, we should try to impress upon them by implication and practice the fact that the Bible is our greatest source book for further enlightenment and inspiration. We want to learn how Jesus lived in order to try to make Him a pattern for life today. We should learn what He taught to see if His teachings can fit our problems. Later, when adolescents are studying their own problems, they should turn to the Bible as a reference book for help and guidance. With its great record of religious experience, it gradually becomes an indispensable aid. Studying its pages becomes a means of extending the Christian fellowship back to Jesus and forward toward fulfillment of the prophetic ideals.

The practice of using the Bible as a source book in finding answers to our problems requires more of the teacher than trying to fit a given passage to everyday experience. The preparation can be made quite pat in the case of the latter, while the first practice can become a constantly
growing experience. The teacher will be led to new research with his students. The Bible thus becomes something vital and real. An intelligent attitude toward the whole store of past knowledge in the Bible will be developed and a love of righteousness can be instilled.

Other material besides the Bible must be included in the curriculum in order to supply this necessary knowledge. Books which tell how devoted Christian men and women have developed and grown are helpful sources of material. The use of historical material to give authenticity is an answer to the adolescent's search for truth. There is a wealth of material written on the Bible and about Bible characters which should be explored for use in the curriculum.

Included in this demand for knowledge must be an understanding of what the church is and what its program stands for. Its historical background is important here but we must also give a conception of its bigness today and instil in each student a vision for its future. There is greater need now than ever before for each Christian to feel himself a part of that larger church, the Church Universal. They must also be prepared to shoulder the greater responsibility which such membership implies. This can only be accomplished by means of education and the foundation for this should be laid when young people study the Church.

There must also be provision for instruction on the
problem of evil in the curriculum for young people. The signifi-
cance of evil in the human personality should be stressed.
We must give youth a picture of the progress which has been
made by Christian civilization from the time of Christ until
today. They must also be led to recognize the achievement
which is possible when men hold an indomitable faith and will
not surrender.\(^\text{11}\)

A third demand upon the curriculum is to meet the re-
ligious needs of young people in relation to their social en-
vironment. It is important to help them grasp the idea that
religion is something we believe. Bower\(^\text{12}\) conceived of the
curriculum as all those factors that go to make up a situation
to which the learner responds with meaning. This will include
all the problems with which they are ordinarily confronted
in adolescence. Discussion of personal problems should also
find a place when the need for them arises. Sometimes such
a need will not be expressed but an understanding teacher
will sense that it is there.

There should be some definite provision within the
curriculum of co-ordinating all the experiences of the
learner. The child should not grow up feeling that life
is broken up into compartments, one for Church School, one

\(^{11}\) Ibid., p. 278

\(^{12}\) C. A. Bower, \textit{Lesson Material in the Church School}
\textit{(Nashville, Tenn.: Cokesbury Press, 1929)} p. 19
for public school and one for home life. Sometimes young people develop a feeling that a certain type of behavior is permissible during the week but that we act differently in Church and Sunday School. The objective of religious education is not only to bring Christian meaning and control into the personal conduct of life but also to prepare the immature to take their place effectively and intelligently in the Christian community.\textsuperscript{13}

There must also be some provision for teacher-training within the curriculum. We are requiring training in every walk of life today and how much more important is it in this essential of all tasks - teaching in the Church School.

Provision should be made to have all those who have been chosen to become teachers, to join a preparatory class. Even those who are public school teachers should join for a short time.

The purpose of this class should be, first of all, to acquaint these new enlistees with the aims and objectives of the Church School. They must be given a glimpse of the whole picture so that they can see and feel their part in it. Their enthusiasm for the possibilities open to them must be aroused. Also this course should seek to enlist their loyalty to the course of religious education.

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 166.
For those who have no foundation in teacher-training, a short course in simple child-psychology and methods should also be included. Without this preparation, teachers will be inclined to teach as they have been taught. This generally means emphasis on content and little thought of preparation for the needs of the child at the varying stages of his development.

The technique of the classroom is not only used for the purpose of correcting and improving human conduct. All should be used consciously and intelligently in the larger inclusive purposes of God, that of transforming this world into a more complete expression and realization of His wisdom and His love. Much resource material becomes a necessity in meeting these demands.

C. SELECTION OF MATERIAL

Having a framework within the curriculum and a knowledge of all that is required of it and us, we now turn to the problem of selecting the most helpful material aids to assist us. Here we must take cognizance of an important limiting factor and that is the time available to us. If one whole hour a Sunday is devoted to religious education, it means but fifty hours for the entire year. Yet, not even this amount is available. Usually there is only a half hour
set aside for the Church School and this leaves us but twenty-five hours for the year's work. Then when we realize that the average for attendance in the Church School is fifty per cent, we have a very realistic picture of our task.

Taking a glimpse here of other groups engaged in religious education, by way of comparison, will prove enlightening. The Roman Catholic Church provides 200 hours of religious instruction in their curriculum plans. Some Jewish children are receiving as much as 335 hours a year of religious training.\(^\text{14}\)

With that picture before us, we must realize the importance of utilizing every moment to the best of our ability. It is vital that we seek the best material available to accomplish this. A very good guide to use in selecting our material is found in Dr. Bowers\(^\text{15}\) book on the curriculum of religious education. Dr. Bowers conceives of the curriculum as being experience centered and he speaks of the material required in terms of these experiences. The guide is excellent, however, even when the curriculum is built up on a slightly different plan and it is given here:


1. Experience must be real to the learner.
2. Situations should be typical of those in the community.
3. Situations should involve alternatives and choices.
4. Experiences should be chosen that are continuous.
5. Experiences that are capable of absorbing the largest amount of knowledge and which are capable of expansion should be chosen.
6. Experiences selected should be capable of indefinite expansion.
7. Experiences should be those that are social and shared.
8. Should be provision for discipline of the will.

We must think in terms of the student's whole environment when selecting material for the curriculum. We cannot think of ministering just to his spiritual needs when we consider this task for they cannot be separated from life. They must be kept foremost, however, for there is the danger of training only on a social and moral level without a spiritual drive when centering on experience. The social and moral are tremendously important but they must be guided by and directed toward spiritual goals.

In our planning and arranging of material, we should reflect the belief that ability and opportunity to learn continue throughout life. Because we expect deeper meaning to come with more experience and more lasting values to be discovered with further study, the content of the curriculum should point in that direction.

Also in our Church School environment, we should reflect the democratic way of life. The teacher should be looked upon as a guide and leader by the committee planning the curri-
culum material. This will affect the kind and amount of material chosen. More reference matter will be needed and more classroom equipment will soon prove an essential element.

In the senior and young people's department, especially, there should be abundant material on subjects such as the art of living, Christian citizenship, choosing a vocation, and the work of the Church, both at home and abroad.

We will now turn to the curriculum which the Council of Religious Education has planned for the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo. This curriculum has evolved after much study and research and an attempt to evaluate it will now be made.

D. EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM OF CHURCH SCHOOL OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO

The curriculum of this school, when taken as a whole, is very well planned. One year's work leads right into that arranged for the next year. When the student has completed the twelve years of study, he will have had a well-rounded course in religious education. The portions for the nursery, beginners, primaries, juniors, and intermediates are especially well planned, ending with the life and teaching of Jesus for the ninth grade. This is the proper time for the introduction of Jesus' teachings, according to the survey referred to previously in this chapter.
In the senior department, the course for the tenth grade starts with the life of Paul and the early Church. Topics studied include: how the Christian Church began, its creed, its symbols, its worship, its history, its personalities, and an analysis of their character, with a careful and minute study of the life of Saint Paul. This subject holds many possibilities for this age group. Paul's life was heroic and filled with adventure. The study of the early church and how its symbols and worship developed appeals to the imagination. There is scope for dramatization and opportunity for conducting a Church School worship service according to the ritual of this early Church.

The printed course of study for this class, as well as for all the others, is rather brief. A fuller outline, which has been worked out by a committee and the teacher giving more details and suggestions and including alternatives for making choices in the procedure, would provide the teacher with a better guide. This would be especially helpful when the teacher must discontinue before the year is out and another has to take up the work.

This age seems a little early to go into too detailed a study of any one character. Their interest lags too soon and life for them at this time must be one little excitement after another. As part of the outline of how the Christian Church began, it would seem wise to include other
leaders also, as John Mark, Peter and Luke.

Life at this stage is also beginning to stem with personal problems and decisions which to them are difficult to make. Many too will not have made their personal decision to dedicate their life to Christ. In the discussion of the life of these early Christian leaders, such topics as meeting difficulties and making decisions could be included.

There must be a clear and distinct connection between this study and our Church life today maintained throughout, so that opportunity for individual spiritual growth may be provided.

In the eleventh grade, the history of the Christian Church from the fifth century onward is studied. Here again the Church School is meeting one of the essential demands made upon the curriculum, that of imparting a knowledge of what the Church is and what it stands for. Special consideration to the Reformation and the development of Presbyterianism is given. Topics include forming and growth of the Roman Catholic Church, the work and significance of such men as Augustine, Benedict, Gregory I, Gregory VII, St. Francis, Innocent III; the Church in the Middle Ages as regards doctrine, government influence, background of the Protestant revolt - humanism, tax on abuses, conflicts with national interests, etc.; the protestant reformation - Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Anglicanism, radical protestantism, puritanism; the counter refor-
mation; the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, England, America - its theology and polity; protestantism in America with glances at such phenomena as fundamentalism, mormonism, spiritualism, Christian Science, etc.

As one studies through this outline, he can readily see the great possibilities for romance, heroic stories and studies of spiritual conflict. However, the time available in the Church School will be entirely inadequate to cover all these topics. With forty-five minutes given to this study each Sunday there would only be forty hours at best for the whole year's course. This will allow for but a cursory glance at many of the topics suggested. Admirable opportunity for making a choice of topics is offered here, as for instance, choosing a study of two or three of the men mentioned in connection with the growth of the Roman Catholic Church; taking either the Presbyterian Church in Scotland or England.

There will be a danger of treating this course as another class in history, especially by the students. This was evident in the comments made by students in an attitude test given in this department. A change in emphasis might be given by studying the growth of the Protestant Church as revealed in the lives of its great leaders. There should be constant practice in the use of the Bible as a hand-book. The Bible should be used when studying the new emphasis these leaders were giving to Christ's teachings, and also as
a basis for confirming or rejecting arguments which caused
the reformation. The course should end with personalized re-
ligious teaching on a subject such as, - what it means to be
a member of this great Church. This is the age of great de-
cisions and we must use every opportunity at our command to
influence those decisions toward consecration to worthy en-
deavors and life vocations.

In the twelfth grade, the emphasis is on our world
and how to live in it. The purpose of this course is to
gather together the instruction of the school during the
past twelve years, and to formulate it into an individual,
workable, practical Christian philosophy of life. The stu-
dents help select the topics to be discussed and these usually
include present day world events, analyzed from the Christian
point of view. Such topics as the following have been dis-
cussed: should women be drafted; should eighteen year-old
boys be called to active service; the racial problem in the
United States and in the world at large; the problem of al-
cholism; the problem of the conflict between capital and labor;
the question of the indifference to and the ignorance of poli-
tical problems by the people.

This course offers a wide scope for application of
the teachings of the New Testament to the topics discussed.
This is a need which is felt by the students themselves as
revealed in the attitude tests.
The title to this course is very suggestive for helpful lesson periods but great care should be taken that the teacher does not stay only on the level of an ethical and moral basis. Further guidance to choosing a vocation would be a helpful addition to the course.

In this year's work the students exercise a choice in the selection of material to be studied. This also involves student participation and this could be carried further by having the class divided into two sides for purposes of discussing some of these topics.

Instruction in the missionary enterprises of the Church is given through the channels of the worship period. This can be very effectively done, especially when maps and costumes of the different countries are made available. In this day of visual aids in education, we should not neglect pictures in presenting missionary work and the country in which it is being carried on. Pupils in the intermediate department have often begun correspondences with pen friends in other countries and information thus gained will add a personal touch to missionary programs. The missionary enterprise is an important phase of an active Christian Church's life and instruction in it should be vital.

The effectiveness of a well-rounded curriculum will depend upon how well it is presented by the teacher. This method of approach and presentation is very important and we
will now turn to a discussion of methods of teaching in the Church School.

Note: At the present time the First Presbyterian Church in Kalamazoo is using the new curriculum for Church Schools based on Christian Faith and Life, which was completed in 1947 and is published by the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. It is a very inspiring plan which furnishes plenty of useful and attractive materials with which to work. It embodies many of the suggestions made in this thesis.
CHAPTER VII

METHODS OF TEACHING IN THE MODERN CHURCH SCHOOL

Much has been said of the Sunday Schools and Church Schools of the past in this paper. It has been with the purpose that we may better understand the basis upon which the schools of today have been organized. It also gives us a picture of their definite growth, not only in numbers but in their sphere of usefulness as well. In the field of methods we can see marked progress over the past. What those methods were has been implied in previous chapters and only a brief summary is given now.

A. METHODS IN THE PAST

The word "education" means to lead out -- to call forth. In religious education in the past we have overworked the traditional aspects of religion and neglected these explorative aspects of our common spiritual experiences. Teaching in the past led to acceptance of ideas about religion. One had to search for instances in his experiences to exemplify these ideas. Often the examples given were not within the

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experiences of the students. This produced an attitude of not being vitally connected with these religious experiences, an attitude of standing on the sidelines and looking on. This has the effect of postponing rather than encouraging active decisions on the part of young people.

Continuity and growth in experiences was not provided for in these older methods. Lessons were arranged by topics suggested by the lessons themselves. This made a unified whole in an outline but bore little connection to the actual experience of the student at the time they were being presented. A relationship to life situations was not created and this often led to a sense of unreality.

The teaching of the Bible was very formal. It was a book that must be read — inspiration and help were then sure to follow. Much of the Bible was read to children and taught them before they were old enough to experience its true meaning and beauty. This has blocked the ability of a great many for a real deep appreciation for the Bible. They have failed to find its teachings practical guides to everyday life because they have never learned how to use it.

It takes the experience of an adult who has read the Bible for the first time, to impress one with the help and guidance in these pages when one "understands" what he reads. It has been my privilege to talk to an educated Indian who had just finish reading the four Gospels for the
first time. He was an earnest seeker after truth and as he spoke to me he could hardly suppress his excitement. His first reaction was that these things could not possibly be true. The promises made there astounded him and he couldn't believe them. Then he went back and reread them. When he returned to me a second time, the beauty and inspiration which he had received revealed new meanings which I had never read before. This is the experience of every student of the Bible but the way toward its understanding by children must not be hindered by a wrong approach. A right approach can be made by effective teaching and method. What effective teaching can be, will first be considered.

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING

The measuring stick by which we can appraise the qualities of a teacher will ultimately be the influence he exerts upon his students. But there are certain outstanding qualities which all who would strive to be effective teachers must aim to develop.

Of first importance is respect for the child's personality. The whole personality of the pupil should be kept in view by the teacher. In the background must be kept the original nature of man. Then we must also study the effects of the pupil's earlier experiences about his present environment and its influences upon him, as well as what current events
in the pupil's experience are actively directing him. All these factors should determine what the teacher does and what method of approach he uses.

At the very beginning a teacher must realize and accept the fact that individuality is sacred and work to develop it rather than to obtain a mass response to emotional or other exciting influences.

An effective teacher must observe the concept of readiness in his pupils. Pupils learn best at the moment when they actually experience a need. Teachers should be consciously looking for these moments and be ready to recognize them and meet them when they occur. Their programs should be elastic enough to adjust to these situations.

At a first glance, this would seem like a very inefficient procedure. But an experienced teacher knows that certain needs recur with every age. The curriculum should be planned to meet these reoccurring needs. However, they may not always occur in exactly the same order and in the very same manner. So a resourceful teacher must adjust his curriculum to suit the needs as they arise. Sometimes he may have to create needs which do not occur with a particular group. This can be done by bringing in illustrations or using actual experiences of his own or of others.

Another characteristic of effective teaching will be shown in the selection of material used for instruction.
This will be outlined in the curriculum but the teacher will make the final selection and decision as to how he will use it. This material should be chosen in reference to the present requirements of growth of the pupils. It should provide for activity as well as study. Including that which provides opportunity for pupils being guided to make their own decisions and which utilizes their interests, is important.

Effective teaching will offer such experiences which bring children to grips with reality. A person does not usually learn by having a general truth taught him and the application made for him. He may think it a lovely idea but will proceed along his old way. Habits are formed only when opportunity is given for actually putting the truth into action and then by repeating it often.

The final requirement for effective teaching is a good teacher. Paul H. Vieth\(^3\) gives us four good qualifications such a person should possess. A good teacher must have a personality. Most often it is a person and not a lesson learned which is the most important influence in our lives. Some think that personality is something we are born with and those without can do nothing. But personality can be developed by taking thought and effort to bring out one's innate talents.

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\(^3\) Paul H. Vieth, *How to Teach in the Church School*.
A person must have richness of experience to be a teacher. He must have found the solution to his own personal problems and have a real experience in Christian living. He must be a man of convictions. He will not be able to teach others Christ's way unless he himself has begun putting it to the test and been satisfied. Added to these he must have mastery of what he teaches. He will be able to win his students by the first three, but if he is to help them grow and develop he must have thorough preparation for what he is to give them.

There are a few more qualifications which may be said to be included in those named above but which are worthy of being singled out. The teacher should have intelligent insight into human nature. This will give him sympathy and understanding of another's difficulties. He must have absolute sincerity. I don't believe there is anything that can shatter a student's confidence in his own convictions quite so thoroughly, as to discover insincerity in the person he has come to admire and esteem. Then the teacher must be a man of prayer. He must have discovered for himself the secret of communion with God and the strength and joy such fellowship can give if he is to lead others to that same fellowship.

Such a picture should not discourage one longing to teach. It should rather help that person to attain that
which will make him effective.

Much will also depend upon the methods that are used. Method is very important. There are some ways of working which have proved more efficient than others. It is helpful to know that certain results can only be achieved by employing a particular way of approach where others are sure to fail. The next section discusses methods that are being used.

C. METHODS USED IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Someone has said that we hinder the children's approach to the Master quite as much by what we leave undone as by what we do amiss. One thing a teacher must do is to develop skill in methods of procedure as a part of his preparation. The right methods are important from the very beginning of our work with children. A child's earliest impressions are the most lasting and the earliest influences that act upon his life are most powerful in determining his outlook. The harm that a false concept of God, given in childhood, can do is difficult to estimate but anyone who has worked with young people will know how hard and patiently one must work to change such a concept.

The first method used with children and one used quite commonly throughout the Church School is the story telling method. This has an immediate appeal and makes truths clear and vital. Little children like to dramatise
and important lessons can be put into practice this way. Older pupils are quick to make applications from stories to real life if the story is well planned and well told. The influence of a story is lasting for it is easily remembered.

A second method is the conversational method. This is often used with story telling. The teacher will converse with the pupils about current happenings in their life which lead up to the story. Conversation often follows the story, at which time the pupils are encouraged to make application of it to what they can do. This method is not effective for a long period of time but is constantly used along with other methods.

The expository method is often used when introducing portions to be memorized. It is also used when giving a background to group discussions, to dramas and sometimes to stories.

The lecture method can be employed to advantage many times but great care should be taken in its use. It offers the teacher an opportunity to present his thoughts in a clear, concise, and well-organized manner. But when he uses this means of presentation he should allow for questions and discussion at the close. The danger in this method lies in the temptation for the teacher to impose his ideas and interpretations upon the class while they remain passive and just accept what is being given. This latter cannot arouse creative thinking nor active participation in constructive
planning by the class.

The use of group discussion recognizes the teacher as a guide. This requires preparation on the part of both the teacher and the students to make this method most effective. The teacher's function here is to help his group to discover facts and to learn how to use them. He must also help them to reach proper conclusions as to the relation of these facts to daily living. He in leading them to think creatively and to work cooperatively. The teacher, as a member of the group, will also need to seek more information and inspiration in source material. An atmosphere of unity in a common enterprise can be created here and students are learning how to solve problems without being dependent upon the teacher.

Dramatization must be preceded by one or more of the other methods described. It often follows story telling and can climax group discussion. It is a very vital and real way of presenting a truth and one which can very effectively lead to action.

Another method which combines several methods is the project method. This can be used in many Church Schools today where separate class rooms are provided. It is democratic and creative and teachers should find many occasions for using it.

In the senior department especially, the research
method should find a ready acceptance. It centers around assignments and here again the teacher needs to beware. Assignments can be just one more task which is conveniently forgotten. On the other hand, a resourceful teacher can stimulate interest and curiosity in introducing her problems and create a desire for seeking the answer.

Visual aids are a most important asset in any teacher's program. The use of religious art can be very helpful in teaching appreciation and giving understanding and background. There are other forms of visual aids which can become very worth while. Slides projected on a screen make a picture become lifelike. They are most helpful when discussion accompanies the pictures. Moving pictures are most realistic and help one to relive scenes of the past. These aids appeal strongly to the imagination and help to give reality to situations recorded in the Bible and others brought up for discussion.

Memorization has a place in all curriculum activity but it should have a purpose and an aim. There should be some opportunity for putting the memorized portion to use at once as a demonstration of the purpose.

Using the experience of resource leaders is a method which should not be overlooked. These leaders are persons with specialized knowledge of a particular subject, such as a negro leader speaking on the race problem, a juvenile court
judge leading a discussion on problems of youth, or a missionary telling about his own field. This method should lead to active discussions by the class. Care should be exercised in not overdoing this, however. It should never become a substitute for regular class instruction.

A method which can be utilized in the worship period especially, is choral speaking. This allows students to respond emotionally to religious literature.

Many of these methods are being practiced in the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo. Following is a discussion of how they are used with suggestions for variations and the introduction of new material.

D. DISCUSSION OF METHODS USED IN CHURCH SCHOOL OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO

This Church School has admirable facilities for putting into practice the best in methods of instruction. Each department has its own room for its worship service. Following this service the classes pass into individual classrooms where curtains screen them and give them privacy. Each classroom has a blackboard and wall space, part of which could be used for canvas and bulletin boards. The teacher has a desk and the students sit on chairs which can be arranged conveniently in the classroom.

In the senior department the discussion method is
Generally used. Some research is used in making assignments and a very little dramatization is done. In the tenth grade greater use of this latter method could be made in their curriculum. The costumes used in worship in those early times can be demonstrated to the class by a committee assigned to library research on that subject. The worship service of the early church could be worked out by another group, and, as previously suggested, used in a morning worship program in the department. This method would provide for action so necessary for this group still, and stimulate an abiding interest.

The use of religious art would add much to this course, and also the use of slides and reels of moving pictures. These are available at church publishing houses and other educational supply companies, often at a small rental, on many subjects related to the curriculum. Copies of one or two pictures studied, which had appealed especially to the class, might be purchased by the class to be hung on their wall. This cements interest in their work.

This course offers opportunities for actual projects being carried out, other than dramatizing. The creeds and symbols could be reproduced, when studied, and kept for reference in a scrap book.

In the eleventh grade the research method is quite extensively used, as is the lecture method. The members of
the class are encouraged to make reports at different times on topics being studied. A large selection of pictures is studied in this course and a great deal of interest evoked through them.

In this group also, dramatization holds possibilities for further use. Library visits are one of the projects of the work in this class and the result of these visits could be dramatized for the department.

A great deal of opportunity should be provided for discussion in this group. Students of this age are not generally anxious to discuss their own problems but do desire studying questions that will throw light upon decisions they may be facing personally.

The twelfth grade syllabus offers a wide application of several methods. There is much discussion in this class of the many subjects studied. This might occasionally take the form of a debate to help the class see both sides of questions. A great deal of research into the teachings of Jesus and their application to these problems should be made.

This class might make a project of one of the problems to be studied. The race question or alcoholism would lend itself to this treatment and studying one actual situation might be attempted. This would develop the student in so many ways. Coming into contact with real problems
in other people's lives opens up avenues of service unthought of before. Other suggestions are included in new trends for they apply to teaching in general.

E. TRENDS IN METHODS

A brief discussion of the direction new methods in religious education is taking, will help us to visualize possibilities in our own situation.

Reference has already been made to teacher training courses and these are receiving more and more attention today. Prospective teachers feel the need of this preparation and are asking for it, while schools are beginning to visualize what can be accomplished as a result of this training.

Another trend in the right direction is directed study periods within the Church School time. Public school authorities have already used this to great advantage and it is proving just as helpful in religious education. The teacher can best help the students in preparing their work and has more opportunity for motivating her work.

A new department in all educational work in personal counseling. This is a field which has great possibilities for helping the young people in our churches and one which should be given thought and attention by those who plan the work in religious education.

The chapter which follows might almost be included
in new trends for it is a new departure to evaluate our work by means of attitude tests. The results of this evaluation will give tangible evidence of the effects of our planning.
CHAPTER VIII

EVALUATION IN TERMS OF STUDENT REACTION

The crucial point is whether the students, for whom the Church School is planned and set up, are receiving help from the results of these efforts. An attempt has been made to find the answer to this question by means of an attitude questionnaire based on student responses. But before we discuss the values which the students of the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo have given to all they have received through the medium of their school it would be helpful for us to first consider the reasons for making an evaluation.

A. OBJECTIVES OF EVALUATION

With a few definite objectives in mind as we consider the evaluation of the work of this Church School, we will have a clearer view of how to proceed. We can state these objectives in the form of questions for which we will seek the answer in the results which the students themselves have given. The first question to ask ourselves is whether the learner has a grasp of the subject matter with which he is dealing. Does he make his appraisal and criticism from a background of intelligent understanding? It is only after he has been able to assimilate what has been given him, that
he can effectively determine whether or not it has been helpful to him.

Then we should try to determine whether growth is taking place. Do the older students and those with more experience respond more intelligently to situations? Is their character and personality developing and growing more stable, positive and strong? Their decisions should show more seasoned judgements as they grow older.

Another question we will want to ask is whether the desired change and development of attitude is taking place. In adolescence attitudes are prone to be biased, brutally frank, rather conceited at times, and to show a tendency to look out for one's own welfare. Are their attitudes displaying more sympathy and understanding? Understanding should be manifesting itself in their thoughts and decisions. The older group should respond to another's problems with more sympathy than they formerly showed. Is a tendency to look out for the welfare of the group developing? Is the idea of service appearing in the reactions they express?

A final question to ask ourselves concerns the primary aim and purpose of the Church School. Are the young people led to a commitment of their own lives to Christ, to become His active followers and to join the active fellowship of the church. Is there a general positive response to taking this step or is interest in the Church beginning to wane?
As we read through the responses made by the students, we will learn what they desire and what they heartily disapprove of. A description of how these responses were obtained follows.

B. DESCRIPTION OF TECHNIQUE USED

The plan proposed by Stephen M. Corey of the University of Chicago for securing classroom attitudes, was followed in obtaining the students' attitudes toward what they were receiving in the Church School. The first approach was very carefully planned. The students were reminded of the thought and prayer that must have gone into the building up of their Church School. They were told briefly that Church Schools and Sunday Schools had come into being to meet certain needs of children and young people. Now they were being asked just what the Church School was giving them or what it was failing to do for them. They were also asked to include any suggestions they might have if they desired changes.

A printed form had been prepared on which the students were asked to give their grade, age, and to state whether a boy or girl. Their names were not asked so that they might feel free to write down what they really thought and felt. The students responded very willingly. Judging by the ques-

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1 Stephen M. Corey, Steps in the Construction, Administration, and Scoring of Informal Classroom Attitude Questionnaires. (University of Chicago, Department of Education).
tions asked by a few while they were writing, they were seriously weighing the benefits of the Church School to themselves. A class period of forty minutes was used for this and from three to five statements were made by each student.

A number of students were absent on the day this was done and an attempt was made to include them too. A form, accompanied by a letter, was sent to each one and many sent their replies. All the statements thus obtained were then taken, duplications and statements of fact discarded, and the remaining were written out in questionnaire form. There were 77 such statements. These were again given to the students. They were asked to read through the questionnaire thoughtfully and to note their reaction to each statement. Their reactions were to be recorded by means of the following signs:

- If they agreed
○ If they agreed strongly
° If they disagreed
● If they strongly disagreed
? If they were not sure of their reactions

Another period of forty minutes was used for this and fifty-seven students were present. The same information as before was asked at the beginning of the form - their grade, age, and sex. All appeared to give this their thoughtful consid-

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2 Form and letter - Appendix I
eration, and a few even stayed over the forty minutes in order to finish.

The method of scoring used by Corey was also followed here. According to this each symbol had one of two values, depending upon whether the statement showed a positive or negative reaction. The values given were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For statements showing positive reaction</th>
<th>5 4 3 2 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For statements showing negative reaction</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statements No. 5 and 40 appeared to be a bit ambiguous and some of the students added qualifying statements in order to make themselves clear. For purposes of scoring, therefore, these two were eliminated. This left seventy-five statements and the highest possible positive score thus to be obtained would be 375. The lowest score obtained was 204 and the highest 304. Figure No. 1 shows the score result in a graphic form and it will be noted that the majority were well on the positive side. However, this chart also shows a very critical response and many of their criticisms are worth noting. In the next section the subjects covered by the students and their criticism under each will be discussed.
C. INTERPRETATION OF STUDENT REACTIONS

Practically every subject pertaining to Church School was touched upon by the students in this questionnaire. In the appendix a copy of the questionnaire itself and a chart showing the student markings are given. The students clarified their reasons for coming to the Church School, gave many helpful comments and suggestions on the worship service and the curriculum, named attitudes which the Church School had helped develop, stressed a desire for student participation, listed many benefits they had received from attending, told how it had helped them in choosing their friends, and in preparing for active church participation, and indicated where they desired change. They also laid their fingers upon some of the weaknesses in various parts of the set-up.

The students were very definite about why they came to Church School. They did not come because of pressure from the family, from force of habit, nor because the lessons were carefully planned, nor particularly because they felt it their duty. They were quite negative on its being unpleasant and a waste of time. It is interesting to note here how the negative reaction becomes stronger in the older age groups on the statement that the Church School as it is at present is a waste of time. The contrast of the degree

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3 Appendix II & III
FIGURE I

RANGE OF SCORES OBTAINED BY 54 STUDENTS

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Scores obtained by students in questionnaire.
of development of a negative reaction between ages fifteen to seventeen with a corresponding decline in the positive attitude on this question in Figure 2. There is but one who is uncertain about his answer to this statement in the seventeen year old group. They have come to feel a need for this hour and they come because they enjoy it.

They also venture to give the reason why many do not come. They believe it is because the Church School has no meaning for them and that coming means being "goody-goody". The idea that it has no meaning for them gives us reason to pause and consider why. Somehow their needs are not being met and so there has been no response on their part. One way to discover these students before they leave us would be through a department of personal counseling. The thought of being goody-goody to an adolescent is a sign of weakness. This again throws into sharp outline the fear young people have of being thought good.

Much constructive criticism was given about the worship period. They would like more variation in the programs. An occasional outside speaker is suggested and also the resumption of their orchestra. They voted fairly strongly for more student participation in the service. This is where the emphasis should be for participation leads to taking responsibility. All that they ask for fits in well with what leaders in religious education are proposing today.
In their reactions the students also make many helpful comments on the curriculum. They emphasize more study of the life of Christ and his disciples. On the general question of more study of the Bible and the religious side of life, the younger group is negative but strongly positive reactions appear among the older group of students. The tenth grade are the most positive in stating that they have learned to read the Bible and to understand what they read but it is in this class that particular emphasis is given in that direction. Much more needs to be done, however, for many are negative or undecided on this point. They are quite positive that on the whole the Church School has taught them much about the Bible, the life of Christ, and about Christianity, all of which helps them to understand the church service more easily. The indication of a desire for more Bible study throughout the senior department shows us what young people really want. Hence all that we include in the curriculum must be correlated to a more definite Bible study program.

In referring to the study of the history of the Church, they admit the good background which this study gives and one of the main objectives of that part of the curriculum is thus being fulfilled. But they are also realistic and want an application of what they learn to the present as well. They do look to the Church School for help in solving the problems they face and the wide range that they suggest shows us that
FIGURE II

ATTENDING CHURCH SCHOOL A WASTE OF TIME

Percentage

reaction by Age Groups

Positive  ---
Negative   ---
these touch all their experiences. The only justification
then for including a study of the past is that they can con-
stantly see that it helps clarify present situations. There
must be a constant linking up of the lesson to the present.

It is here too, that they suggest a danger of which
we must be constantly aware, when they say that most of the
discussion is a repetition of that found in the history class
at school. The response to this is very negative but the fact
that it was felt does indicate that a spiritual emphasis must
constantly be kept before the class. The greater number of
positive reactions appears in the groups where the curriculum
relates to those topics in which danger in dealing in only a
historical or social sense is greatest.

They express themselves in various ways concerning
the problems to be included in the curriculum. They enjoy
the discussion of present day problems but they wish the les-
sions to apply to their ordinary daily experiences. They feel
that they are learning much from such discussions and the
application of religious truths to them. When it comes to
the concrete suggestions of acquiring ability to think
straight on public and social problems, many feel they are
learning but many more do not. Some have grasped the signi-
ficance of religion in helping to solve disturbing questions
that arise and they are very positive in their reaction to
the statement that they must apply religious truths to these
discussions. They are but emphasizing the fact that if religion is to deal with all of life, it must be concerned with every experience and decision with which we are daily faced.

Mention of another criticism should be made for the response to it was very positive. The students feel that much of the work is repeated, and tho' it may be for emphasis, many lose interest. There is a very real possibility of just this happening. For instance, the curriculum for the fifth grade in this particular school is the "Life of Jesus according to the Gospel of Saint Mark", while that for the ninth grade is the "Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ". Unless the teacher in the ninth grade reviews carefully all the work the students have had before they come to him, there might be just enough duplication to make them feel they had already studied it all. With a fell knowledge of what has been emphasized in the first course, constant reference can be made to it as being a framework into which new knowledge and understanding is built.

The reaction to more student participation is very positive. They have also made a few suggestions as to the direction this participation should take. They wish to help choose the problems to be taken up for discussion. But concerning more discussion in class, there is a difference of opinion, especially between the boys and girls. In general the girls are more positive than the boys in their reaction to this suggestion. In Figure 3, comparing their reactions
according to age groups, we find that the boys develop a very positive attitude between the ages of 15 and 16. Also in the 16 year age group of boys a degree of doubt and uncertainty is arising. They become very negative in the last age group but this may be partly explained by the fact that in the twelfth grade they already have quite a bit of discussion in class. Their conclusion may indicate that because they have it, more is not necessary. Among the girls, on the other hand, twenty percent are doubtful of their reaction in the first group. This decreases in the second group and disappears in the last, while their reaction grows much more positive. They seem to indicate that what they have is good but they want more of it. They are all emphasizing here a very important part of the curriculum and one which it would do well to try to satisfy.

The students feel that they have developed many new attitudes through the influence of the Church School, while others have been made more positive. They have become more thoughtful, more reverent and more tolerant. They are learning the right attitude toward life and they feel good will is being promoted. The Church School has interested them in other people and taught them appreciation of many things. They have become more interested in the history of the Christian religion and they have learned good principles for guiding their conduct.
Among the benefits received from the Church School, those about which the largest number are most positive are that it has given them a goal and helped them to live better, it has taught them the ways of a Christian and helped them to understand the teachings of God, and it has given them a greater belief in the fact that we are watched over by a divine Father. Many of them feel that attending Church School on Sunday gives them a more satisfying feeling during the week following and makes them think more of God when they are at home. In this last the girls are much more positive than the boys. Many have gained a better understanding of the Church through a study of its history and have a deeper appreciation of the Church service as a consequence. They feel that it has helped to form their character, created in them an interest in reading the Bible and increased their understanding of it.

Then they feel the Church School is a place where desirable friendships are formed. Many interesting comments were made on the question of friendships. The Church School has proved to be a place where desirable contacts are made, has helped them to make more friends and to choose those that are desirable and congenial. This touches a very important phase of their life at this time. Interest in the opposite sex is developing and their social interests are broadening. In this they feel the Church School a definite
FIGURE III

MORE DISCUSSION IN CLASS: BOYS VS. GIRLS

Comparison by Age Groups

Boys
Girls
asset. This admission made freely on their part makes it very important that the Church School be made a very desirable place for young people to gather. The physical aspects should be made attractive and create a feeling that this is where they want to belong. Also what is offered must be satisfying as well as instructive.

Another subject touched upon by the students was that of the preparation for more active participation in the life of the Church, bringing a direct answer to the last question raised in the objectives of evaluation. Most of the reactions to this statement were quite positive, indicating that the Church School had paved the way for better church participation. However, when it comes to declaring their allegiance publicly as followers of Christ, the records show that the response has been rather slow. According to these records covering a period of four years there have been approximately one hundred and twenty pupils passing through the senior department of the Church School. Of this number thirty-five have made a public confession of their faith and become active members of the church. This percentage is too low when one of the cardinal aims of the Church School is to lead their young people into a commitment of their life to Christ and uniting with the Church.

In looking for possible reasons for this, the first thing to consider is that outside influences are beginning
to exert a tremendous influence during these very years and youth must learn how to evaluate and cope with them. Churches are all facing this same problem. It does show us very definitely that after every effort has been made to meet all the requirement named so far we must do more. The curriculum for each grade should include more decided topics relating to decisions we must make. Then we must not leave prayer out of our considerations. Corporate prayer and individual prayers must be the bulwark upon which this entire plan rests.

A very strong desire for more social activity under the auspices of the Church School is expressed. This is an opportunity we have been slow to grasp in the past and it holds such a wealth of possibilities. At this age life centers around their good times and when the Church School becomes the focal point for these, it can much more easily assume greater importance in the more serious aspects of their lives. This is part of the program of ministering to the whole of life -- and to life as a whole.

Another very interesting result is shown in their negative reactions to the statement about receiving help in solving their personal problems. They bear out the fact indicated earlier in this paper that the youth of today do not ask for help in solving their problems. They want to solve them themselves. They do feel that through a general discussion in class they can get the direction which they
need in trying to solve them.

In studying the development of their attitudes many interesting subjects present themselves. There will be space here to follow through only a few and one of the outstanding ones is that of a steadily growing positive feeling toward the Church School. In Figure 4, the number of positive answers given by boys and girls is contrasted with their negative answers. The boys' reactions are 54% positive and 36% negative while the girls are 60% positive and 30% negative. There is a very small percentage of uncertainty, only 10% in each case. Much of their general attitude is made clear in this picture. They are all for the Church School and what it has to give them, even though they have criticisms and suggestions to make. Given this chance to say what they wanted to say, they did not proceed to tear it all down. Rather, their basic idea was to build it up to something more effective than what we now have. This is a healthy condition and one with which we can do much. They have also shown us that we can take them into our confidence when trying to effect some of these changes. We need this youthful enthusiasm and dauntlessness in our program today. Their vision is unhampered by thoughts of former failures or fear of future defeat. They are ready to try and try again.

When a comparison is made between the boys and the girls on the development of positive reactions as shown in
Figure 5, we find that they do not differ too greatly from each other. The girls reach a positive swing upwards before the boys do but they are further along toward physical maturity than the boys, and this may be but a manifestation of that. The important thing to note here is that this change is taking place between the ages of sixteen and seventeen.

As we study the reactions of the entire group to the statements made, there is a very small degree of uncertainty shown, but when individual cases are taken there are instances of grave uncertainty. On Figure 6, the average at the different age groups is shown but a glance at Appendix IV will show individual expression of doubt. In the fifteen year age group we will find seventeen and eighteen statements marked with a question mark. In the eighteen year group of boys there is one student who admits of twenty-two instances of doubt in his reactions to the seventy-five statements.

Returning now to Figure 6, we find that at the fifteen year level there are both individual girls and boys who are undecided about a large number of statements. At the sixteenth year there is a lessening of doubt, especially for the boys. When we come to the seventeenth year, the girls show still less uncertainty, but there is a marked increase among the boys. We have indications here that might lead to a further study into the effects of the present unrest
FIGURE IV

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REACTIONS: BOYS VS. GIRLS

Number of answers
75,
70
60
50
40
30
20
10

Positive Answers

Negative Answers

Average number of answers given

Boys
Girls
upon our young people today. Events in the world at war present more of a hazard for the boys and some of them are not so sure of themselves. Never-the-less, a marked degree of uncertainty regarding fundamentals as expressed by individuals always represents a great need. In the Church School we have a positive message to present and these young people must have a vital experience of its application to their need. Here again, personal counseling would be one way of detecting these individual needs and of applying special solutions to each case.

Another study shown on Figure 7, was made on the number of very strong reactions given to all the statements. Here during the sixteenth year both boys and girls have made the largest number of very definite answers. The curve comes up from the fifteen year group, reaches its peak at sixteen and recedes to the fifteen year level at seventeen and eighteen. On an average, two out of every seven were strong reactions. This reveals a very important fact. The students in the sixteen year group had decided opinions. They were best prepared to make decisions. It was also at this stage that they expressed the least amount of doubt. Yet, earlier in this thesis, it was shown that the Church Schools and Sunday Schools are losing large numbers of young people at this very age. Here then, is the crucial age. They are physically and mentally ready to make vital choices and

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Figure 6
FIGURE V

POSITIVENESS : BOYS VS. GIRLS

Number of answers

Boys
Girls

Reaction by Age Groups
FIGURE VI

DEGREE OF UNCERTAINTY: BOYS VS. GIRLS

Number of answers

Boys
Girls

Reaction by Age Groups
are actually making them. Can we key our curriculum so as to captivate their youthful ardor at this point?

One of the answers becomes self-evident. We must place a strong emphasis upon making decisions here. To make the appeal effective our preparation should begin with the fifteen year group. The lessons could be arranged in units, each unit ending with a call for a definite personal decision. In the sixteen year group a little personal influence on the part of the teacher or a special speaker can be exerted from time to time, directing their thoughts toward making a definite commitment of their lives to Christ and to His service in and through the church. This will prove a satisfying and stabilizing factor in adult life, one that will point the way to security no matter what problems beset their path.

The students themselves have asked for more study of the life of Christ. Using discipleship as a general theme, Christ's call to His disciples and their training could be made one or two of the units in this course.

It is significant that nowhere in the statements made by the students was a reference made to prayer. It has not become a reality to them and yet it is at this very period that they need such an anchor in their sea of doubts. A unit on Christ and prayer could lead them to a personal experience of what prayer is and can do for them.

The matter of making decisions should be continued
FIGURE VII
STRONG CONVICTIONS: BOYS & GIRLS

Number of answers
75
70
60
50
40
30
20
10

Reaction by Age Groups
Boys
Girls
into the seventeenth year, where a study of vocations will prove helpful. Youth are now at the threshold of life and idealistic in their outlook and planning. The idea of service as the criterion of their choice will have a strong appeal.

D. CONCLUSIONS

In concluding this chapter it is well to make a general appraisal of the course in the light of the student's evaluation. In outlining the need for this study the problems of youth as related to their physical growth, their preparation for participation in society, and the existence of war were discussed. We may now ask whether the Church School is adequately dealing with these problems through its program.

Part of the answer to this question comes from the students themselves. Those who are enrolled in the Church School have shown a definite desire to have a part in the program. Their enthusiasm has been aroused. We find the rest of the answer in the fact that the Church School still fails to attract and enlist the interests of a large number who turn away and seek satisfaction elsewhere. We are not yet enlisting the full loyalties of all those who attend. We must expand our program even more and try to hold all those who come into the Church School as little children
until they become adults. There are avenues not yet exhausted and some not even tried. The students themselves have said that what is taught must have more meaning in order to hold the interest of those who now drop off in attendance. A few more suggestions have evolved with this study.

One suggestion which was made earlier, is to have a department of personal counseling. This seems to be a 'must' today. Those joining as counselors would need preparation. But in most church organizations there are well qualified persons who could equip themselves with a little private study. This is becoming a very important item in secular education and surely we who are engaged in this all-important task of imparting religious instruction should use every proven resource.

There is need of a stronger emphasis on daily devotions. What the young people learn during the hour in Church School on Sunday needs to be exercised. To be taught that the Bible holds the answer to their problems will prove fruitless unless they discover that help daily. To be a force in their lives, God as the Father must become a reality to them. If they are to be led to dedicate their lives to Christian living, they must learn to look to Christ for guidance and direction. They must learn to experience prayer as a source of strength and power in their lives. A plan of daily devotions will be a strong aid to this.
Another suggestion is that the Church School should make a stronger emotional appeal to enlist the enthusiasm and loyalties of its youth while they are still actively attending, and before outside interests draw them away.

In our modern civilization we have achieved vast developments of material resources. This has brought us untold luxuries and almost limitless power. But a great danger lies in the fact that the development of our spiritual resources is lagging. Civilization can only be creative and life-giving in the proportion that it is spiritual.
CHAPTER IX

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study of the program of religious education in
the Church School of the First Presbyterian Church of Kala­
mazoo, and its evaluation in terms of student reaction has
proven a very worthwhile undertaking. Many values have
emerged from the research into background materials and
from the study of situations today. In concluding this
study these values should be summarized.

1. The study of the Sunday School movement has given
me a greater appreciation of the role it has played in pre­
serving our Christian heritage. It has helped me to see how
much we have to work with and to realize the tremendous pos­
sibilities within its scope for guiding youth in the right
direction.

2. Today the Sunday School is still the best agency
through which to work to meet the needs of the hour because
of the very fact that it is interdenominational and inter­
national in character. The organization, however, is a
framework. Into that framework, men and women in the past
have woven a tapestry that has endured. Today men are step­
ning into their places to continue the weaving. The need
for more of such men and women with vision and a sense of
urgency to continue what has been so worthily bequeathed
The experiment of going directly to the students to obtain their immediate reactions and using the statements they made as a basis for evaluating the work of a particular Church School has proven most satisfactory. The complete co-operation and utter sincerity of the students was yet another proof of their willingness to work along with groups doing constructive work in their sphere. For the most part they showed a capacity for weighing questions and giving well thought-out answers. Doing this may have crystallized for them the benefits they themselves were receiving.

4. Much is being done to make life for our growing young people more meaningful. Leaders everywhere are becoming alert to the situation. Experiments are in progress but efforts are scattered for many groups are working by themselves. However, as the results of these projects become known, and their experiences are pooled, constructive work can be done.

5. The Council of Christian Education of the First Presbyterian Church has really been pioneers in trying to adapt the Sunday School to meet today's problems. They have beaten new paths. Where weaknesses have been pointed out, it is with the desire to help them more effectively to reach their goal.

If this study has helped in this process of pooling
what has already been done and of clarifying the issue so that more concrete work can be done, the efforts put into it will be rewarded.
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APPENDIX I
This is part of a study in which I am trying to find out what your Church School is doing for you. Will you help me by writing down three or four statements which represent your attitude toward it? What you write will be treated confidentially. Your thoughtful cooperation will be appreciated.

By way of illustration you might write down something like the following:-

1. The Church School has taught me to take more seriously the responsibilities with which I'm entrusted.
2. The Church School contributes much to my personal happiness.
3. The Church School does not do as much for me as I think it should.
4. My experiences in the Church School have made me more reverent.

Directions:

Please write below what you feel the Church School is doing for you -

1.

2.

3.

4.
Dear Church School Scholar,

I may be a stranger to you but I have visited your Church School several times this winter and I've become very interested in it. Now I'm very anxious to learn what you think about it. This last Sunday I visited again and asked each one present if he would write down what he felt about the Church School. You were not there then but would you be willing to write down what you think and mail your answer to me?

I've spent some time learning about how all the plans for the Church School were made and I've learned that a great deal of time and much prayerful thought and effort have been put forth to try to help each Church School Student. Have you been helped? We have to make choices every day of our lives and make new decisions often. Does your experience in the Church School help you here? Or just what is it doing for you. Why do you come or why aren't you very much interested in coming?

Would you read carefully the sheet I've enclosed? You need not write your name, just whether you're a boy or girl and your age. Then I've given a few suggestions to start your thinking. Possibly the Church School doesn't help you in the way you need help. Will you tell just where it is not meeting your need? What change would you consider more helpful.

Would you mail your reply by Thursday? I'll appreciate all you can do to help me.

Sincerely yours,
STUDENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD CHURCH SCHOOL

Student's Grade or Class .................................................................

State whether girl or boy ........................................... Age ............

Here are a number of statements regarding your Church School. You will, no doubt, agree with many of them and also, disagree with some. Will you read each statement through carefully and then mark it in one of the following ways:

⊕ if you agree strongly;  + if you agree;

⊖ if you disagree strongly;  − if you disagree;

? if you are undecided.

Examples: I would like a course in Bible study 
we can learn all of this in school

1. The Church School provides a restful place of worship on Sunday morning ..................

2. The opening service is planned for young people which makes it interesting. ..................

3. I would like more songs in the opening program. ..................

4. I think more students should participate in the opening service. ..................

5. I would like to have the opening period longer and the class period shorter. ..................

6. More variation would make our opening service better ..................

7. It would be nice to have an orchestra again. ..................

8. I would enjoy having an outside speaker occasionally. ..................

9. I have learned many important things about the Bible and worship. ..................

10. The Church School has helped me to understand the Bible better. ..................

11. I have learned something about the history of the church which gives me a good background. ..................

12. The Church School has taught me to be more thoughtful. .................
13. I would like to learn more about the life of Christ and the lives of his disciples.

14. I would like the Church School much better if we studied more of the Bible and the religious side of life.

15. The Church School has encouraged me to be more interested in the history of the Christian religion and the men who have helped to establish it.

16. The Church School has taught me to read the Bible and helped me to understand what I have read.

17. The Church School has taught me all I know of the life of Christ and other well-known Bible characters.

18. I find it hard to understand most of what we have studied.

19. The Church School has paved the way for better Church participation on my part.

20. The Church School should meet after the Church Service so that we could attend church more conveniently.

21. The Church School has taught me much about the Bible, the life of Christ, and about Christianity, which help me to understand the church service more easily.

22. The Church School has given me a goal toward which I can work, one that helps me to live better.

23. The Church School has made me more reverent.

24. The Church School has made me think more about God and the Church when I'm at home.

25. One of the reasons I come to Church School is that the lessons are planned so carefully.

26. I have gained a greater belief in the fact that we are watched over by a divine Father.

27. I feel that much of the work is repeated, probably for emphasis, but many students lose interest.

28. I have learned the ways of a Christian in Church School.

29. I come to Church School every Sunday because I feel it my duty to help it to function.

30. The Church School would please me more if we had more discussions in class.
31. The Church School has helped me to understand the teachings of God and what He says is right.

32. I feel the Church School definitely adds enjoyment to my Sundays.

33. The Church School building is so lovely that it inspires me.

34. The Church School gives me refreshment that I get in no other place.

35. After going to Church School I have a more satisfying feeling during the week following.

36. I would like the Church School to help me solve my personal problems.

37. I believe problems should be discussed from a religious viewpoint and general discussions be left for day school.

38. The Church School teaches me to think straight on public and social problems that confront me every day.

39. I enjoy the discussion of every-day problems and what we can do about them.

40. My experiences in the Church School had helped me in my reactions toward war.

41. Through class discussions many of my problems are solved and this gives me the determination to make the best of everything.

42. I believe the class should help choose the topics for class discussion with the guidance of the instructor.

43. It would be more helpful if the lessons were applied to what we do every day.

44. We study the history of the Church but I find it is hard to apply that to everyday life.

45. The Church School gives me the right attitude toward life.

46. Good-will is promoted in the Church School and I have benefited by it.

47. I feel that the Church School has helped me to be more tolerant of other people's religious and social problems.

48. The Church School had made me more interested in people through its instruction about people who established the Christian religion.
49. I think the Church School should also have such activities as parties.

50. The Church School provides us with another social contact with young people of this city.

51. The Church School has increased the number of my friends.

52. The Church School has helped me in forming desirable friendships.

53. I would like to see a larger attendance because I feel that we would then have more Church School spirit.

54. I wish we could use quarterlies or other lesson helps because they really furnish more information about what we are studying than we get by reading the Bible.

55. I believe many do not come to Church School because it has no meaning for them and they think it is 'goody-goody'.

56. The Church School gives me something to carry in my thoughts through the week.

57. We have formed many friendships here and then we have companions whose beliefs and high morals are like ours and thus they are more congenial.

58. Church School has always been unpleasant to me, partly because the time is inconvenient.

59. The main reason I come to the Church School is pressure from my family.

60. The class would be more interesting if we could discuss present day affairs.

61. The Church School has taught me to appreciate many things.

62. I didn't learn much because the teacher had such an uninteresting, dull way of giving historical facts.

63. The Church School has helped me to become interested in some parts of the Bible with which I was not familiar.

64. I think participation of the students will help to promote interest in the church.

65. Most of what we discuss is just a repetition of discussions held in my history class at school.
66. The Church offers me more knowledge of the Bible than the Church School.

67. I think it is all right to discuss current problems but not politics.

68. The Church School has not taught me much but has been interesting.

69. I have enjoyed coming to Church School.

70. I have learned in what ways religion helps to solve present day problems.

71. Our teacher talked about things that would have meant something had we been able to discuss them ourselves.

72. I have learned about the people who helped Christ save our world.

73. The main reason I come to Sunday School is from force of habit.

74. I feel the Church School has filled a part in my life that would be terribly vacant if I had not had this training.

75. I feel the Church School a waste of time until they begin to teach us better Christian living.

76. The Church School not only teaches me about the Bible but helps to form my character.

77. I haven't learned much about any single study but I've learned the principle.
APPENDIX III
### Chart of Scores Obtained

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**Note:** Questions number 5 and 19 are omitted - See page 19.

For purposes of scoring, "O" circling numbers indicates negative statements.