THE CONTRIBUTION OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENT PERSONALITY

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

By

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To my parents

whose love and sacrifice

made possible this endeavor

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A. Statement of the Purpose

In a world filled with intellectual confusion and personality conflict, the need has been felt for a study of that which determines effectiveness in life, that intangible something called personality. Psychologists and lay leaders alike have manifested an increasing interest in the study and implications of personality to modern life.

Among Christian leaders there has existed the question concerning the place of Christ in the building of a wholesome personality. Is it true, for instance, that a person who wholeheartedly embraces the Christian faith is more likely to develop a healthy, well-rounded personality than the one who does not? Can Christ be the integrating principle around which the factors of personality center? Or does allegiance to Christ and to the Christian faith lead to a fanaticism and narrowness of life with subsequent detriment to the personality?

This problem which is pertinent in its relation to adults is even more significant in its relation to youth who, by reason of the increasing complexity of mental life and the coming of maturity, finds himself in a state of bewilderment and turbulence.

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Thus it shall be the purpose of this thesis to make a study of the relationship of the Christian faith to the development of adolescent personality and to ascertain the factors basic to an adequate program of Christian education of youth.

B. The Value of the Study

In recent times rapid strides have been made in acquiring an understanding of the physical universe. This knowledge has been utilized to the benefit of man. But the complex life situation which has resulted has been attended by increasing frequency of mental illness as evidenced by the rise and growth of psychiatry as a profession. Recognizing the inadequacy of scientific knowledge to satisfy the deepest needs of man, psychiatrists are admitting the tremendous effect which religion has upon the individual. The distinctive contribution of Christianity has also in a measure been recognized. But it is necessary to determine the extent to which Christianity contributes to the integration or disintegration of the personality. If it is found that Christianity tends to lead to mental disintegration, then it is to be assumed that the Christian religion is inadequate for life in the present-day world. But, if it is found that Christianity can adequately meet the basic needs of personality which science and psychology have set up, then it is necessary to find out how to make

the best use of the potentialities of this faith.

The value of this investigation, like that of
any theoretical study will lie, in its ability to present
a background which is necessary for effective work with
youth. The study should bring an awareness of the rela-
tionship of Christian faith to adolescent personality de-
velopment which is basic to the Christian education of
youth. Likewise an understanding of the peculiar needs
of the adolescent personality should result in more effec-
tive guidance of youth into the satisfactory solution of
personal problems. Thus the Christian worker, by making
real the potentialities of the Christian faith, is enabled
to have a significant part in the welding of individuals
into happy integrated persons.

C. The Method of Procedure

Basic to this study is an understanding of per-
sonality which is popularly recognized as a term signify-
ing the differentiation of individuals. Because of the
peculiar relationship of this study to youth an analysis
will be made of the adolescent personality. During ado-
lescence the youth is leaving childhood and entering upon
the threshold of adult life. Concepts and attitudes are
being built for later life; influences are shaping and
molding the character of the individual. As the adoles-
cent emerges into this new period he is faced with

innumerable problems of adjustment. A study of the adolescent then should make apparent the most prevalent of his needs.

In order to ascertain the implications of the Christian faith for youth, a study will follow of the faith which is distinctively Christian. The essential elements of the Christian faith will be investigated and their relationship to adolescent personality needs noted.

From the foregoing it is hoped that certain principles of personality development will have become apparent. Since the place of Christianity in developing the personality of youth will have been previously determined, the writer will be enabled to formulate the essentials which must be considered basic to any adequate program of Christian education which attempts to carry out its task of developing adolescent personality.

CHAPTER I

AN ANALYSIS OF ADOLESCENT PERSONALITY

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A. Introduction

The adolescent, standing on the threshold of maturity, suddenly perceives life in its entirety. New vistas of thought and action gradually emerge. Life becomes richer, deeper, exciting. But with this broadening of horizon there follows inevitably a procession of perplexity and confusion. There are problems to be met and new situations to be reckoned with. It is true that life to the adolescent is fascinating, but it is likewise bewildering.

An understanding of the normal adolescent personality is essential to this study. Since understanding can come only through knowledge, it will be necessary to make an examination of personality in its various phases. Thus the study will be in the form of an analysis in order to separate the component parts of the abstract personality. An investigation will then be made to discover the distinctive elements of the adolescent personality.

By means of this analytical process, the essential factors and the basic needs of the adolescent personality will be determined. Thus it is felt that the writer will be in a place to evaluate the adequacy of the Christian faith in meeting adolescent needs. As a result

certain considerations for the religious education of
youth will become apparent.

Authorities in both the fields of the psychology
of personality and the psychology of adolescence have been
widely consulted. Books which have been written from a
highly technical point of view as well as those written
for popular reading have been found of value. However,
the main source of reference for this study has been the
standard works of professional educators. The observa-
tions and analyses of the various writers have been in-
valuable as the basis on which the present investigation
has been made.

B. The Nature of Personality

1. Personality Defined.

Personality is one of the most abstract words
in common usage. In its popular connotation, an indivi-
dual's social appeal and charm are emphasized. In its
more technical use, personality is the composite of indi-
vidual traits. There are many scientific definitions,
some broad in their scope, others greatly narrowed. Thus
no one definition can suffice to the exclusion of others.
In view of this fact, many definitions will be considered.

One of the best known definitions is that of
Prince: "Personality is the sum-total of all the biolo-
gical innate dispositions, impulses, tendencies, appetites,

and instincts of the individual, and the acquired dispositions and tendencies....acquired by experience."[1] Because of its inclusiveness it is termed an omnibus definition.

Another type is that with the personalistic emphasis which states that "the essential meaning of personality is selfhood, self-consciousness, self-control, and the power to know."[2]

A balanced sociological definition gives personality as "the integration of all the traits which determine the role and status of the person in society. Personality might, therefore, be defined as social effectiveness."[3]

A definition in terms of adjustment is: "the integration of those systems of habits that represent an individual's characteristic adjustments to his environment."[4]

Thorpe defines personality as "an elaborate pattern or combination of all of a person's characteristics."[5] Here it is evident that personality does not depend on just a few of the chacteristics, rather upon the interaction

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1. Morton Prince, quoted by Gordon W. Allport in Personality, A Psychological Interpretation, p. 43.
2. Ibid., p. 33.
3. Ibid., p. 39.
4. Ibid., p. 45.
5. Louis P. Thorpe: Personality and Life, p. 5.

of all of the traits of the individual. The intelligence, emotional equipment, attitudes, interests, habits, social adaptability, prejudices, peculiarities, general behavior, methods of work, mental defects and disorders, individuality and special abilities make up the total of personality.[1]

These are but a few of the many definitions of personality found. As representative of the various types they show the wise range of thought on the subject. Each one has been made with a distinct emphasis in view. Some have pointed out the inherent characteristics, whereas others have shown the outworking of these in relation to other characteristics. Though differing widely in phraseology, all are alike in the fundamental conception that personality is simply that which a man really is.

2. The Elemental Traits of Personality.

The whole personality might be likened to a cluster of grapes. It takes many individual grapes to make up the whole cluster. Some of these are ripe and sweet, others are in the process of ripening, whereas some are definitely bad. Just so a personality is made up of many individual factors or traits. Some are useful and beneficial, but others are not desirable. It is, then "a collection of tendencies to act in given ways in certain

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1. Cf., W. H. Burnham: The Normal Mind, p. 52.

situations."[1]

It is quite evident that what a person is in the present is determined by his reactions in the past. The character traits might be termed the residue of past experiences. As an individual faced problems, he made a type of adjustment which through repetition became a habit pattern. Gradually this type of adjustment became so constant that it was typical of the individual. Hence "personality traits of an individual are his persistent habits toward making certain kinds of adjustment rather than other kinds."[2]

These many, unrelated traits can be classified under several large headings: (1) Intelligence, (2) Social development, (3) Temperament, and (4) Self-expression. It is to be remembered, however, that the components of each group overlap in great measure.

A list of fourteen factors which make up the total personality is given by Burnham.[3]

> Attention, a term which represents the response of an individual to a concrete situation, is described by Sherrington as the "Acme of Integration."
> Emotional Tendencies and Reactions: a learned response and one adopted by an individual to satisfy the inherent urges.
> Psychophysical Energy or Will, demonstrated

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1. Thorpe, op. cit., pp. 4-5.
2. Laurance F. Shaffer: The Psychology of Adjustment, p. 132.
3. Cf. W. H. Burnham: The Wholesome Personality, p. 77.

in our purposive activity.

Moral Character: as evidenced by one's respect and obedience to organized and traditional authority.

Conscience: the moral law within.

Ideals and Beliefs: important as a means of influencing action.

Mental Attitudes: in relation to people and things.

Religious Attitudes: in relation to God—reverence, dependence and love.

Intelligence: the practical value of which "depends on its relationship to the emotional reactions of the individual."[1]

Imagination and Memory: habits of recall.

Sense of Humor.

Wisdom: including common sense and judgment.

Ego: the self.

These traits in combination form a pattern of all the responses of the human organism. When properly balanced, they become combined into a network which is an integrated whole.

Every individual has essentially all of these traits. It is the degree of each and the peculiar combination of them which makes each person a distinct individual.

3. Types of Personality.

For the purposes of this study, personality will be classified according to the presence or absence of integration. It will be recognized that this is a valid criterion for classification when the importance

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1. Ibid., p. 77.

of integration has been presented.

The disintegrated or psychopathic personality
is unable to cope with the conflicts of ordinary life.
There is an attempt to satisfy each instinctive urge at
the time of its appearance. For the time, that urge
dominates the personality in such a way that there can be
no coordinated action. Because there is no unity or co-
ordination of the physical and mental abilities, adequate
adjustment to life cannot be made. The person "goes to
pieces" and withdrawal from the world of men is both neces-
sary and desirable.

The integrated personality is one which is able
to adjust to the varying conditions of life. The various
elements of personality have become so harmonious that
they are all directed toward one dominant purpose. There
is a focus of attention toward which every motive, habit
and attitude is directed. Life becomes orderly and achieve-
ment and happiness are possible. Thus integration, "the
essential characteristic of the normal mind," is coming
to be recognized as the _summum bonum_ of the personality.[1]

The source of this integration is found to be
in the possession of a purpose. Ligon states that "the
most universally recognized source of integration....is
in a dominant purpose in life."[2] Men who have done

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1. Burnham: The Normal Mind, p. 56.
2. E. M. Ligon: The Psychology of Christian Personality,
   p. 16.

research in this problem have found that this purpose must have some social interest and value. It must be worth-while to society. Also it must be in keeping with the individual's capacity. A purpose which is impossible because of the limitations of the individual will be disastrous. When a suitable purpose is found which is recognized as significant, integration of the individual personality is then possible.

The advantage of integration has been well expressed by Warren and Carmichael: "the integrated individual is in the best sense of the word 'free'. His behavior is consistent. He does not have to struggle with himself and he can....struggle with objective problems and achieve results."[1] This development of a free individual certainly "represents the highest achievement of which any human being is capable. This ideal is attained only when by personal development, harmony and internal peace have been secured."[2]

4. The Developing Personality.

Personality does not remain static. As a living organism, response is made to the varying influences and stimuli which play upon it. There must be an adaptation to an ever-changing environment. This process, which is

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1. Burnham: The Wholesome Personality, p. 183.
2. Ibid., p. 7.

vital to personality development, is termed adjustment.

There are several steps in the execution of adjustment. There must be a motive, the intensity of which will determine the persistence of the effort to reach the desired goal or aim. When some factor either through personal defect, environment, or another motive makes a thwarting circumstance, adjustment begins. Varied responses are made toward the obstacle. When some type of response is eventually found which is satisfactory, the person is free to continue toward the desired end. The result is an adjustment which is satisfactory.[1]

The type and effectiveness of the adjustments made will determine the outcome of the developing personality. Since there is continuous growth and development throughout the whole of life, it is apparent that with sufficient consideration an effective personality can be carved out. Hence great emphasis is placed upon the acquisition of habits which will lead to the accumulation of many experiences of satisfactory adjustment.

5. The Mature Personality.

It is felt that this discussion of personality would be incomplete without a picture of the mature personality. It will be seen that the factors form a set of

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1. Cf. Shaffer, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

criteria by which the mature personality can be distinguished from all others.

The achievement of a mature personality will be evidenced in the ordinary activities of everyday life. There will be a variety of interests and yet an ability to lose oneself in work, recreation, contemplation, and in interests relating to others. There will be self-objectification or insight whereby abilities and faults alike will be seen accurately and yet humorously. The whole of life will be unified and bound together by a dynamic philosophy of life.[1] There will be a ready sympathy and understanding of others. Self-reliance, confidence and poise will be balanced with humility and unselfishness.[2]

Thus the achievement of such a personality means that "an individual has approached his highest potential development physically, intellectually, and emotionally for any given age level and that his various 'selves' are operating harmoniously to the advantage of the organism as a whole."[3]

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1. Cf. Allport, op. cit., pp. 213-214.
2. Cf. Samuel W. Hamilton: What It Takes To Make Good In College, p. 11.
3. Douglas A. Thom: Normal Youth and Its Everyday Problems, p. 122.

C. The Distinctive Elements of Adolescent Personality

The general tendencies of this period termed "adolescence" have been aptly stated by Dr. Thom.

"Spanning the gulf between childhood and adulthood comes one of the most interesting and important periods in the entire life cycle. During these intervening years the individual stretches back and clings tenaciously to the pleasures and protection of childhood with one arm, while with the other he reaches out to grasp some of the privileges and responsibilities of maturity. Obviously there is no well-defined beginning or ending to such a period of transition: it can only merge imperceptibly with the past and the future and serve the purpose of coordinating the training, experience and education of the former with the actual obligations and demands of the latter."[1]

The word "adolescence" is derived from the Latin word which means "to grow up". At this time the physical features are maturing. The mind is expanding and becoming aware of vast horizons; the emotions are coming into full bloom; the world is being seen with eyes that are beginning to comprehend. Because all of life is fascinating, youth is eager to begin this great experiment.

What is life, after all? What can life give? What is the price for "life in abundance"? These and many other questions fill the mind of youth as he starts on his quest of life. Soon, however, his mind is filled with doubts. He is confused and muddled. He is

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1. Ibid., p. 1.

misunderstood; he cannot even understand his own actions. So youth finds himself desperately in need of someone who understands and is able to help.

The one who would be the friend of youth must be acquainted with that which lies behind the puzzling actions. There must be a sympathetic understanding which can only come through a knowledge of the normal tendencies and the experiences of youth. Hence a study will be made of the different aspects of adolescent personality in order to ascertain the distinguishing features of the period.

1. Adolescent Intellect.

With characteristic credulity a child accepts everything for the truth. Suddenly the child is no more; the adolescent emerges and wants to think things out for himself. All of his powers of intellect have been developing, and they are now at his command. He is a bit wobbly as he first begins to experiment with his new wings of thought. Nevertheless, he must attempt in order to achieve.

No longer is he content to scratch the surface of knowledge. He desires to probe into the deeper regions of truth. Through a keen interest there has come power to concentrate. When especially intrigued, memorization is even easy. The imaginative powers have increased. Philosophical reflection and abstract thinking are not only possible, but may gradually come to the peak. Soon

there is a spontaneous joy in mental activity. It is often not what adults would prescribe, but it is to the youth's liking.

At this period long strides are made in comprehension and reasoning. Thus argument becomes fun, for the youth is beginning to see logical sequence. Relationships become apparent which previously did not exist for him. Along with the resulting organization comes an opening up of whole realms of thought. In all, the mind is reaching maturity as evidenced by these new powers.

The new integration of experience together with "the piling up of experience and knowledge" undoubtedly leads to the relatively rapid intellectual development during adolescence.[1] However, the planning ability and the ability to manage one's self and adjust to other people continues to develop during the early twenties and later.[2]

It is significant for this study that the adolescent in using his new intellectual powers begins to struggle for independence and freedom of thought. He makes a great effort to get through the thoughts of others in order to formulate for himself a practical philosophy of life.[3] It is true, he is not greatly bound by convictions and traditions of the past, but he is earnestly seeking truth.

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1. Cf. Luella Cole: Psychology of Adolescence, p. 187.
2. Cf. Thom, op. cit., p. 74-75.
3. Ibid., p. 144.

2. Adolescent Emotion.

Emotionally, adolescence is "the most unstable age".[1] Yet it is interesting to note that emotion is becoming deep and strong. Feelings are becoming intensified and enriched. Though the emotional experiences of the adolescent are intense and at times profound, they are also deficient in steadiness and consistency.[2]

Thom has characterized the period as one of seeming mild intoxication. The adolescent acts in ways which are utterly unexplainable. He seems to exhibit a manner of self-sufficiency and even self-assertiveness. But his feelings can quickly fluctuate, making him subject to moods and whims.

There is an apparent restlessness and activity which seems to have no purpose. But action from motives is becoming more common than previously. Since "it is an age of intense craving....soft bland foods, gentle forms of muscular exercise, and insipid mental pabulum, are detested. Everything must thrill."[3]

Frequent "crushes" for members of one's own sex, and then later for a member of the opposite sex are noticeable in this period. There is a broader outlook and with it an increasing interest in others. Through the widening

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1. E. M. Ligon: Their Future is Now, p. 266.
2. Frederick Tracy: The Psychology of Adolescence, p. 77.
3. Ibid., p. 35.

interests the emotional life becomes better balanced and assumes a greater range, which is both normal and helpful.

Fear, anger, love, and jealousy, the basic emotions, are all easily stirred up in youth. The response is quick and vigorous, for feelings about life are intense. Even small things seem to matter a great deal. But these emotions are too trying to be indulged in often. At best "they disorganize the individual, thus preventing learning and adjustment to social situations."[1]

3. Adolescent Volition.

There is no doubt that the adolescent is an individualist. He wants to think for himself. He wants to do as he deems best, regardless of the opinion of others. He is not unaware of probable mistakes which will be made, but he is willing to risk them in order that he might freely assert his newly found independence.

More than ever before the actions of the adolescent are becoming truly volitional for there is less imitation and automatic response and more self-direction. Since, however, his course of action is just in the process of being ruled by his intellect, there are many times when action is spasmodic and unreliable. If there is a progressive development of this control both in the

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1. Cole, op. cit., p. 73.

initiation and in the inhibition of action, the personality
will be well on the way toward self-mastery before the
adolescent period is over.

4. Adolescent Morals and Religion.

In large measure the adolescent develops his own
standard of conduct. As in other realms, he wishes to make
his own judgments. Nevertheless, "in the heart of youth
the love of goodness for its own sake may become a deep
passion, capable of moving to noble deeds utterly regard-
less of personal gain or loss."[1]

At this time ideals do not "jell"; rather, they
keep on developing. As experiences multiply, ideals grad-
ually become modified. Thus this period may become a time
when idealism reaches its peak.

In an attempt to make real his idealism, youth
"seeks a religion that can ennoble and enrich life in all
its phases and under all conditions."[2] As never before
religion becomes appealing if it is practical and vital.
He wants religion if it can be adequate to every situation
of life. When, however, youth sees sham and insincerity
in the religious life of others, he expresses his doubts
and displays a flippant attitude toward that which has
become stereotyped and meaningless through a dead

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1. Tracy, op. cit., p. 79.
2. Lawrence W. Averill: Adolescence, p. 418.

traditionalism. It is to be remembered though, that youth
is grasping for a religion that will satisfy the demands
of heart, and soul, and mind.

5. Adolescent Social Development.

"The adolescent years are, pre-eminently, a
period of social development and adjustment. There is no
period of life during which the awareness of other people's
opinions and attitudes is so keen."[1] Because he is so con-
cerned about what others think of him, the adolescent is
utterly miserable unless his conduct, speech and dress
measure up to the accepted social standards.

Characteristic of adolescence is the formation
of a "crowd". Consciously it is formed to insure good
times, but unconsciously it is formed to establish social
relationships with both sexes.

Membership in such a group has very real value.
There is actual experience in the fine art of getting along
with people. Over a period of time some skill is inevita-
bly acquired. There also comes experience in judging
people, which is valuable training for later life. Finally
the experience in lovemaking broadens the emotional range,
and gives a basis for ideals of marriage and homemaking.[2]

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1. Cole, op. cit., p. 101.
2. Ibid., p. 105-107.

6. Adolescent Physical Development.

This consideration of the adolescent personality would not be complete without some reference to the physical aspect of development. Although a comprehensive study is not imperative, it is important to see the effect which the acceleration of physical growth has upon the personality.

Most prominent of adolescent changes is that in respect to the physical and sexual life of the individual. There is rapid growth in the skeleton, the glands, the muscles and all attendant organs. Such quickening of the physical development taxes the supply of energy and leaves the adolescent weak and easily fatigued. Thus many of the contradictions of adolescent mind and emotions can be readily understood. For when the physical mechanism of man is hampered in its ordinary functions, the personality becomes less effective, and is unable to meet the ordinary demands of life.

D. Basic Adolescent Needs in Relation to Personality

The goal for any young person is a normal, healthy personality, in order that he might partake wholeheartedly of life. To attain such a goal certain specific needs must be met in the period of life termed "adolescence". Through a study of that period, especially as related to personality development, these needs have become apparent.

Most important of the needs of the adolescent
personality is an integration of the traits, impulses and
desires. Because the degree of integration determines the
degree of effectiveness in life, this need must be recog-
nized and conscious effort must be made in order to assure
its development. Its source was found to be in the pos-
session of an all-embracing purpose which would challenge
the individual to the highest development.

Necessarily the needs of youth are as multifari-
ous as the individuals from which they originate. But in
a report of the White House Conference on Child Health and
Protection in 1931, it was noted that two essential needs
of children are, "the need for security and the need for
development."[1] These two needs are even more important
for the unstable adolescent.

1. The Need for Security.

Imperative to a well-adjusted personality is a
feeling of security which stands impregnable even in the
midst of the most perplexing circumstances. At the thresh-
old of life youth will face a world which in appearance is
sordid and discordant. It is necessary for him to gain an
assurance of the orderliness of the universe and to come
to the realization that good will eventually triumph. A

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1. Thom, op. cit., p. 132.

philosophy of life which adequately combines the facts of life with the idealism of the heart, will assist the youth in establishing a basic security. Also a home which has been made a sanctuary of love through the sacrifice and devotion of wise parents will indicate in a measure the greater love and wisdom of the Creator and Preserver of the universe. Hence membership in such a home contributes greatly in building attitudes toward the universe and God which will promote security.

2. The Need for Development.

A youth of good heritage, placed in a favorable environment has untold possibilities. The extent of his development, however, will be dependent upon his individual reaction to the opportunities which present themselves. Educators recognizing this have centered their aims for the adolescent period in the individual. They are: (1) Self-revelation, (2) Self-discovery, and (3) Self-assertion.[1]

This is a golden period of personality development. The youth is eager to understand himself, his motives, and his desires. He wants to express himself and his feelings. He is thrilled by discovery whether it is personal or in the world about him.

The opportunity for self-discovery should be the

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1. Cf. Burnham: The Wholesome Personality, p. 43.

adolescent's inalienable right. Sufficient intellectual
and physical tools have been given him. He needs to be-
come efficient in their use through exercise. Experience
will lead to insight which will enable the youth to develop
a satisfactory standard of values. His motives and atti-
tudes will gradually undergo modification. He will come
to realize the damaging effect of intemperate indulgence
in strong emotion, and will develop self-control. He will
learn habits of adjustment in overcoming the obstacles of
life. By personally facing reality, he will learn to solve
conflicts in his own fashion.

The adolescent needs to be allowed to assert his
newly found opinions and knowledge. Opportunities for the
expression of social desires and outlets for emotions must
also be provided. Gradually a self-reliance is built up
which is indicative of a healthy independence of family
and friends.

Throughout the period of adolescence the indivi-
dual's greatest need is for a counselor who is both friend-
ly and wise. Until there is sufficient experience, the un-
obtrusive guidance of a mature person in invaluable. His
task is to arouse high purpose and resolution; to lend
balance and stability; to lead into an appreciation of
the powers and forces as yet untouched by the youth. In
all he must give meaning and direction to the intense,
often purposeless activity of youth.

E. Summary

Human personality is the unique organization of manifold character traits. The peculiar interplay of the various traits brings about a distinctive flavor--individuality. The native disposition and tendencies are played upon by the forces from without, thus necessitating continuous adjustment. The resulting patterns of adjustment can be regulated in some measure with sufficient care and discernment. By the reduction of conflict and the establishment of harmony within the impulses, healthy adjustive habits will ensue. Such integration can be obtained through the possession of a dominant purpose upon which all the separate elements of personality will be focused.

The adolescent period is most advantageous for personality development. The quickening process is permeating all of life. Physical maturity is rapidly being attained. Intellectual power becomes a reality. Emotions, though lacking stability, are greatly enhanced. A sudden awareness of the thoughts and opinions of others leads to an increasing social consciousness. Idealism and high-purpose burn in the heart of youth making religion welcomed if it can aid in accomplishment. Wholeheartedly the adolescent steps into the arena of life and all too soon is engulfed by forces of good and evil. Thus the help of a wise counselor and a sympathetic guide can be of inestimable value.

Because adolescence is a period of plasticity, needs are numerous. Basically, however, the adolescent craves security and the opportunity to develop the rich resources within himself.

CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

IN RELATION TO ADOLESCENT PERSONALITY

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In the preceding chapter basic needs of the adolescent period became apparent. These needs are greatly heightened when the youth is forced to live in a complex world situation. Dr. Thom, an authority in the field of adolescent psycho-therapy, has stated that "Adolescence craves a unifying theory to use as a stepping stone from the safe limits of childhood to a boundless universe, otherwise too strange to be faced."[1] Can Christianity, with a positive statement of truth, become this stepping stone?

In order to answer such a question, it will be necessary to make a study of the Christian Faith. An exhaustive study is neither necessary nor here desirable. Hence those factors alone which are universally recognized as essential to Christianity will be considered. It is Christ himself who makes Christianity distinctive among the religions of the world, and so He will naturally assume a prominent place. Likewise, those elements of the faith which are felt to be pertinent to personality development will be touched upon.

Following this study it is hoped that the

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1. Thom, op. cit., p. 150.

potential effectiveness of the Christian faith will become manifest. If it is found that Christianity has a very real contribution to make as a builder of character, it would seem wise to determine in what way its dormant values can be actively utilized.

The main sources which will be used in this analysis of the Christian faith in relation to adolescent personality are the writings of men who have been and are actively engaged in research, both in the secular and the religious fields. The groundwork, however, will be laid by frequent reference to the account and the doctrines of Christianity as they are found in the Bible.

A. The Christian Faith As Centered In Christ

1. The Person of Jesus Christ.

The essential distinguishing factor of Christianity is Jesus Christ. Without Him, Christianity would be but a body of theory and doctrine. With Him, Christianity pulsates with life. It is not to a cold creed, nor to a worthy cause, but rather to the living Christ that the Christian addresses his love and trust. To Paul this same Christ was the foundation of faith and hope.

The unique place which Christ appears to hold in the hearts and minds of men is explained by his innate uniqueness. There was something different in this one who grew up with the other children of Nazareth. It was

recognized as he passed through the villages of Galilee.
Men wondered at him as he mingled with the religious
leaders in Jerusalem.

Jesus explained this difference when he said,
"I and the Father are one."[1] He claimed thus a relation-
ship with God which, to the Jews, was blasphemy. When on
trial before the Sanhedrin, he acknowledged that he was
the Christ, the Son of God.[2] The circumstances attending
both his birth and his death are consistent with the deity
of Christ. He was "very God of very God"; He was God In-
carnate.[3]

That this same Jesus identified himself with
human beings is inscrutable to the mind of man. And yet
the Gospel writers picture a Jesus who humbled himself and
"took upon him the form of a servant."[4] Together with all
men he became subject to death and to the ordinary limita-
tions of life. He hungered, thirsted, worked, grieved,
and was tempted. Thus, by means of his identification
with man, he became intimately aware of the problems of
life and human needs.

Christ is found to hold a place of "moral su-
premacy".[5] His personal character was not the innocence

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1. John 10:30.
2. Luke 22:67-70.
3. Cf. Charles Hodge: Systematic Theology, Vol. II, pp. 610-
611.
4. Philippians 2:7.
5. John McDowell: Christian Essentials, p. 64.

of childhood which knows no evil, nor yet the guilt of manhood which yields to evil. But it was the goodness of the only Son of God who, knowing temptation, did not yield to it.[1] All other men at the finish of life received the condemnation of God, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"; to him God said, "Thou are my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased."[2] Though he was subjected to all the temptations of man, he retained completely his moral integrity.[3]

Such inner purity manifested itself irresistibly as he lived among men. There was a warmth and graciousness about Jesus which attracted to him young and old, rich and poor, clean and unclean.[4] Hardened publicans and sinners were melted by his winsomeness. His deeds and words were characteristically kind and sympathetic, an evidence of his deep understanding.

Dr. Gray mentions sincerity as another mark of the attractiveness of Jesus' personality. His joy was not dependent upon the plaudits of his hearers. Rather, he fearlessly and wholeheartedly proclaimed the truth which he had come to reveal.

Although Christ is not mentioned as a man of

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1. Cf. Herman H. Horne: The Philosophy of Christian Education, p. 127.
2. Romans 3:23; and Mark 1:11.
3. Cf. Hebrews 4:15.
4. Cf. Henry David Gray: A Theology for Christian Youth, pp. 50-54.

unusual physique, nevertheless, he had amazing powers of endurance. His was a strenuous life. Throughout his ministry he walked on foot through the villages of Galilee and Phoenicia, in the cities across the Jordan and in Judea. After spending the whole day preaching and ministering to the crowds, or teaching his disciples, Jesus would find rest and refreshment through communion with his Father. Many times while his disciples were sleeping, Jesus was earnestly praying. Though he tirelessly gave of himself to the multitudes, he did not allow his effectiveness to be diminished by undue fatigue.

Jesus' "mental disposition was alert, intuitive, concrete, positive, creative, and truth-loving."[1] His wisdom was noticed when as a youth he was found reasoning with the learned doctors of the Temple. Later in his many conversations with religious opponents, there was displayed keen insight and discernment. When confronted with severe temptation, he quickly saw the issues involved. Serenity and poise were his even when he was the recipient of bitterness and hatred. Regardless of outward circumstances there was balance and stability for his mind was stayed on God. Complete submission to the will of God, and perfect confidence in his goodness, made Jesus the possessor of untold inner resources.

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1. Horne; op. cit., p. 18.

Gray states that "the highest ideal for men and
the most perfect revelation of God came together in Christ."[1]
From a study of the person of Christ, he is seen to be the
embodiment of all the noblest characteristics which man
strives to obtain. His total personality was mature and
complete, for his life was centered in one purpose--to do
the will of his Father in heaven and thus to accomplish
his work.[2]

2. The Ministry of Christ.

Christ gave himself unstintingly in behalf of
men, thus indicating the supreme value which he placed
upon the individual. To him men were not "cogs in a
machine, but creatures with souls."[3] Hence he was in-
terested in teaching the essential spiritual laws which
were imperative to spiritual growth and normal personal-
ity development.[4]

In the Beatitudes, Jesus laid down principles
by which one might learn to adjust to life. Ligon states
that they are "eight fundamental emotional attitudes," the
mastery and intelligent use of which will bring true hap-
piness.[5] These are:

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1. Gray, op. cit., p. 24.
2. Cf. John 4:34.
3. Henry C. Link: The Rediscovery of Man, p. 235.
4. Cf. Ligon, The Psychology of Christian Personality,
   pp. 46-47.
5. Cf. Ibid., pp. 27, 37.

Vision - imagination and a desire for future achievement.

Love of Righteousness and Truth - enthusiasm for truth.

Faith in the Friendliness of the Universe - indomitable belief in God's orderly control.

Dominating Purpose - purity of heart leading to purposiveness.

Sensitive to Needs of Others - awareness of and sympathy with the exigencies of fellowmen.

Forgiveness - willingness to excuse others' shortcomings.

Magnanimity - ability to rise above injustices.

Courage - fearlessness for the truth.

From the teaching of Christ, certain specific principles, here considered, have been selected because of their relation to personality development.

Man was exhorted not to have undue concern for material things. "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on."[1] "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."[2] Spiritual values were placed above the ordinary necessities of life.

The basis for man's attitude toward man is found in the Golden Rule, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them."[3] The initiative was placed upon the individual "to make his own desires for himself the measure of his deeds for others."[4] From such an attitude, kindness, patience, and a desire to assist those in need would

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1. Luke 12:22.
2. Luke 12:15.
3. Luke 6:31.
4. Horne, op. cit., p. 96.

naturally result. Paradoxically self-service and sacrifice alone could bring fullness of life. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it."[1] He that "loses his life in service finds it in completion and he that finds it in selfishness loses it in depletion."[2]

The gospel writers record that perfection was the goal toward which Christ pointed man.[3] Thus he taught that life should be characterized by humility, faithfulness, honesty, patience, steadfastness and dependability.

The teachings of Christ called forth action. They were not couched in wearisome "thou shalt nots." Although accepting the Ten Commandments, which have been called the "basic and unchanging laws of personality," he used them as guideposts in the formulation of the two summary precepts:[4] "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and the second "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[5]

The preaching ministry of Christ stirred people to action. His sermons touched every area of life. Men's hearts were quickened. They became ashamed of their manner of life and desired to help others though at the expense

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1. Matthew 16:25.
2. Herman H. Horne: Christ in Man-Making, p. 88.
3. Matthew 5:48.
4. Link, op. cit., pp. 247 and 250.
5. Matthew 22:37,39.

of personal pleasures and comfort.[1] Authority, vitality,
and practicality characterized his preaching among men.

Christ's healing ministry gave evidence of his
great compassion upon the unfortunate and suffering human-
ity. He knew of no hopeless case whether the cause was
lameness, fever, palsy, leprosy, deafness or dumbness.
He was able to release the shackled mind; to cast out the
unclean spirit. His was a healing of mind, and body, and
spirit.

The redemptive ministry of Christ stands para-
mount. Through death Christ accomplished that which was
impossible through even his life. "Christianity is not
merely a system of ethics; it is the history of redemption
through Jesus Christ."[2]

Preeminent in the teaching of Christ is self-
sacrifice. Preeminent in the ministry of Christ is the
sacrifice of his own matchless life. He alone could effect
"redemption through his blood."[3] For as it was "impossible
that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin,"[4]
so the blood of man was inadequate for the purposes of
salvation. The Incarnation of the eternal Son of God was
essential to the acquisition of redemption.

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1. Cf. Link, op. cit., p. 109.
2. William Evans: The Great Doctrines of the Bible, p. 69.
3. Ephesians 1:7.
4. Hebrews 10:4.

Universal rebellion and transgression required
a universal salvation.[1] Enmity against God had severed
fellowship and had made an impassable chasm. When Jesus
redeemed man from all iniquity he became the bridge that
united God and Man. Thus, through belief in Christ, man
was given free access into the very presence of God.[2]

God manifested his eternal love by providing a
means of atonement. Christ showed his all-embracing love
when he willingly laid aside his glory in heaven and be-
came the sin-bearer. Man cannot but possess a love for
the Saviour when he becomes the recipient of "so great
salvation."

3. The Resurrection and Ascension of Christ.

It was by means of the Resurrection of Jesus that
God set his seal upon his ministry. He had lived a sinless
life, and yet he suffered an ignominious death. In apparent
defeat he was led to the Cross. In overwhelming victory
he arose from the grave, triumphant over sin and death.

That the resurrection is the essential fact of
Christianity is acknowledged by both believers and unbe-
lievers. Mecan, an assailant of Christianity, in the
Hibbert Journal says, "If the resurrection really took
place, then Christianity must be admitted to be what it

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1. Cf. Isaiah 53:6.
2. Cf. Hebrews 4:14-16.

claims to be, a direct revelation of God."[1] Even Strauss
declared that "the historical importance of the resurrec-
tion is such that without a belief in it a Christian com-
munity would hardly have come together."[2] To Paul it was
the one fact upon which the Gospel rested, for "If Christ
hath not been raised then is our preaching in vain."[3]
Thus "the resurrection of Christ is the rock on which rests
the central column that sustains the structure of historic
Christianity."[4]

To suppose that Christ did not arise from the
dead is incongruous with the nature of the Christ, of the
Bible, and of the eyewitnesses. Upon surety of the fact
the early Christians were willing to launch forth upon a
life which brought ridicule, persecution, material poverty
and eventual martyrdom.

After establishing the fact of the resurrection,
by means of several appearances, Christ ascended to the
Father. Thus the Christian is assured of future resurrec-
tion, of the intercession of Christ in his behalf, and of
a home for eternity in the mansions which Christ has gone
to prepare.

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1. Mecon, quoted by McDowell, op. cit., pp. 51-52.
2. Strauss, quoted by Ibid., p. 52.
3. I Corinthians 15:14.
4. McDowell, op. cit., p. 51.

4. The Immanence of Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Matthew reports that before Christ ascended into heaven he gave to the disciples a promise of his continual presence, "Lo I am with you always."[1] Previously he had asserted the possibility of such spiritual unity with his disciples.[2]

The members of the early Church recognized that "to be a Christian is to be Christ possessed."[3] Paul, recognizing the indwelling presence of Christ in his own life said, "Christ liveth in me."[4] As a result of this, his life gave evidence of power and victory.

The promise of Christ's indwelling is to all those who will believe him. For he said, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you."[5] The Scriptures thus teach that the believer in Christ has a real source of power because Christ dwells within him. Without such provision, the very perfection of his life would lead the disciples into despair of ever attaining such heights of character. Thus Christ himself provides the dynamic for life, with a promise of victory and joy.

5. The Source of Christian Faith in Revelation.

In the above it has been stated that the source of Christian faith is in Christ. It is the "Christ of

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1. Matthew 20:28.
2. Cf. John 14:20; 17:21-23.
3. Horne, The Philosophy of Christian Education, p. 72.
4. Galatians 2:20.
5. Acts 1:8.

reality, rather than the Christ of vagary and fancy."
The Bible alone contains authentic knowledge of his life
and teachings.[1] Its message is built around the record
of Christ with the evident purpose of producing belief
and understanding in order that men might come to know,
love, and follow him.

The Bible as the word of God claims to be God's
revelation of himself. As such it finds its consummation
in Christ who declares himself the revealer of the Father.[2]
Thus the Bible is not merely an unusual book among books;
it is the Book of Books.

The nature of the Bible attests to its divine
origin. It is recognized that the sixty-six books of the
Bible were composed by about forty different authors of
varying degrees of culture, who wrote over a period of
fifteen hundred to two thousand years. And yet their works
"manifest a unity of purpose, a harmony of teaching and
statement, an elevation of moral and spiritual teaching
superior to all other systems" which is unaccountable apart
from the guidance of God's Spirit.[3] The Scriptures claim
inspiration for "men spake from God, being moved by the
Holy Spirit."[4] Nevertheless the Bible has been subjec-
ted to the severest criticism. It has been ruthlessly

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1. Cf. McDowell, op. cit., pp. 20-22.
2. Cf. Matthew 11:27.
3. Cf. W. C. Clark: The Christian Faith, p. 24.
4. Hodge, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 169-170.

analyzed by friend and foe, by the philologist, the historian, the archaeologist and the modern scholar.

The evidences of the life, teachings, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ are found to be authentic when judged according to the principles of the common court of law.[1] The rule of municipal law concerning the genuineness of ancient writings is stated by Greenleaf, a recognized judicial authority, thus:

> Every document apparently ancient, coming from the proper repository or custody, and bearing on its face no marks of forgery, the law presumes to be genuine, and casts upon the opposite party the burden of proving it to be otherwise; and it may be read in evidence unless the opposing party is able successfully to impeach it."[2]

Through the centuries the Bible has been in the custody of the organized Church, and by its very nature presupposes honesty, for its writers were not poets or philosophers given to speculation and syllogism, but were presenting the facts of personal experience.[3]

Thus it is possible to conclude that "the word of God, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only infallible rule of faith and practice."[4]

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1. Cf. McDowell, op. cit., p. 13.
2. Greenleaf, Evidence, Sections 34, 142, 570, as quoted by McDowell, op. cit., p. 14.
3. Cf. McDowell, op. cit., p. 21.
4. Hodge, op. cit., p. 151.

B. Implications of The Christian Faith
to Adolescent Personality Development.

An active Christian leader whose personality had
been integrated expressed the secret of his faith in the
words, "To me to live is Christ."[1] For Paul the Christian
faith comprehended the totality of life. Such a vital,
all-embracing faith influences, from all appearances, the
developing personality of the adolescent. Thus consideration will be given to those aspects of the Christian faith
which relate to the development of the adolescent personality.

1. A Christian Philosophy of Life.

Christ set a goal when he said, "Be ye perfect,"
and in this context gave a philosophy of life by which this
could be reached.[2] The Christian philosophy of life takes
on peculiar meaning during the period of adolescence. Due
to the maturing of the mind, philosophical reflection is
made possible. The youth eagerly attempts to think through
the problems of life, and desires to become intelligently
orientated to meet them effectively. Thus for this period,
"the chief aim ought to be the formation of a dynamic,
forceful, Christian philosophy of life."[3]

"The dynamics of character are deep-lying attitudes" which determine whether one's outlook on life will

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1. Philippians 1:21.
2. Cf. Ligon: Their Future is Now, p. 1.
3. Ibid., p. 296.

be courageous or morbid.[1] The resultant motives become
the effective philosophy for overt action. Since wrong
motives lead to conflict and frustration, and thus to dis-
sipation of the inherited sources of power, the formulation
of a harmonious philosophy of life is imperative.

Dr. Horne includes the following elements in his
discussion of Christ's philosophy of life: (1) The World
of Persons, (2) The Natural Order, (3) Time and Space,
(4) Life, and (5) Truth.[2] An adequate philosophy of life
requires that each of these be recognized and incorporated.
These basic differentiating elements of a Christian philo-
sophy will be considered in relation to adolescent person-
ality development.

a. The World of Persons. From the foregoing
study of the Christian faith it is evident that a materi-
alistic philosophy of life is incompatible with the Christian
philosophy. Christ spoke of God as a person who ruled su-
preme over a world of persons. "The essence of Christianity
is its insistence on the supreme value of the individual in
a scheme of things where love, faith, and moral law tran-
scend all man's intellectual schemes and mechanical con-
cepts."[3] Embedded within the New Testament is the concept
of the "potentiality of personality."[4] The provision of a

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 14.
2. Cf. Horne: Philosophy of Christian Education, pp. 30-48.
3. Link, op. cit., p. 235.
4. Ibid., p. 235.

means of salvation from sin through Jesus Christ would
seem to indicate Divine concern for man's highest develop-
ment.

To many an understanding of the universe is in-
comprehensible apart from a theistic concept of God. A
consideration of man in the light of God's eternal and im-
mutable purposes should result in an appreciation of his
lost dignity which will in large measure affect the social
relationships of man to man. An awareness of the true role
of man in the economy of God following conversion leads the
individual to desire his highest achievement. Such a view
comprehends God's relationship to his universe, man's re-
lationship to man, and the individual's relationship to
God, the universe and humanity.

Man is not left to drift into a philosophy of
life, but in the Bible is given an objective authority on
which to base his concept of the world, and man's place
in that world.

b. The Natural Order. Christ recognized that
the visible and observable universe held a subordinate
place to the supernatural order. Therefore he taught that
God and the spirit of man transcend the physical universe.
The reliability and invariability of the laws of the natural
order seem to presuppose a like regularity in the spiritual
realm. Thus the natural, which the finite mind can compre-
hend, in measure manifests the infinite truths of the

spiritual realm which cannot be understood by the human mind.

c. Time and Space. Christ's frequent mention of that which is eternal indicates his recognition of time and space as limitations of the natural order. However, he explicitly taught the significance of human action in determining eternal destiny. These finite restrictions would be superseded with the coming of his kingdom. Within this truth lies all the doctrine of the Master Teacher.

d. Life. Life was considered by Christ to be a precious possession entrusted by God to every man. As such it was to be pursued seriously and thoughtfully. Were a psychologist to form a system of ethics for such a life, he might classify as wrong the forms of behavior which lead to mental failure, and those forms of behavior as right which lead to strong healthy personality.[1] Jesus lived life perfectly, and thus became a perfect example for those who would live life according to its highest standard. One writer has said that the use made of life "involves the greatest moral issue, even the saving or the losing of the human soul."[2] Hence it seems that life does not consist in that which is of value alone in the natural order, but in that which has abiding value.

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1. Cf. Ligon: The Psychology of Christian Personality, p. 14.
2. Horne, op. cit., p. 46.

e. Truth. To Christ truth was regarded to be right relationship with God more than the correctness of abstract propositions.[1] Thus he proclaimed, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."[2] He, as the only means of access to the Father, leads the believer into a life which is harmonious with universal truth.[3] Christianity leads thus to a

> "philosophy which is idealistic in its content and practical in its quality. It challenges all competing world views, such as agnosticism, skepticism, materialism, naturalism, and humanism. And it bids not only for man's intellectual acceptance in its personalistic construction of the universe but also for man's practical allegiance as the dynamic of his life."[4]

2. A Supreme Loyalty.

It was seen above that relationship with Christ perceptibly changed people. For the disciples an intimate experience with him resulted in an abiding loyalty. At no other time is the individual so capable of intense devotion to great personality as during adolescence.[5] Christ therefore may be seen as one worthy of the adolescent's worship and love. Christ gave in his life the noblest expression to the basic traits of human nature; by his death he made the supreme sacrifice. The mind of youth responds to

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 47-48.
2. John 14:6.
3. Cf. John 14:6b.
4. Horne, op. cit., p. 51.
5. Cf. Tracy, op. cit., p. 79.

such nobleness of life and unselfish sacrifice with ardent devotion.

Christ stressed the fact that a person cannot serve two masters. Psychologists point out that "conflicts have more to do with weak personality than any other single factor."[1] A mind besieged with conflicting loyalties results in weak and indecisive personality. Strength of personality, then, would seem to be in direct ratio to the resolving of conflicts. This is made possible by means of unswerving loyalty, particularly if the object of devotion is characterized by worthiness.

3. A Dominant Purpose.

Intent purposefulness seems to be the natural consequence of a sincere loyalty. Characteristically youth strives to emulate that which is the embodiment of his ideals. Hence a loyalty to Christ which is encompassed with love, will lead to receptivity to his teachings in order to ascertain the secret of his admirable personality and the source of his strength.

Mindful of his own uniqueness, Christ gave the key to the explanation when he said to his followers that he had come to do the will of his Father in Heaven.[2] He enjoined men likewise to seek the Kingdom of Heaven,

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1. Cf. Ligon: Their Future Is Now, p. 10.
2. Cf. John 6:38.

pointing out that all other elements of life would invariably fall into proper relationship.

The Apostle Paul, whose life showed a radical transformation following his initial experience with Christ, gave expression of this dominant purpose: "This one thing I do . . I press toward . . the high calling of God which is in Christ Jesus."[1] When Paul perceived Christ, a new vision of life apparently unfolded before him; thereafter Christ received his whole-hearted allegiance. All of the natural impulses, the motives, and habits and attitudes of his personality, became directly focused upon the sole purpose of working with God toward the goal of righteousness. Henceforth every action, every desire, and every thought was brought into subjection to that purpose. His life became completely integrated around the tremendous purpose which Christ had planted within him.

In the preceding chapter which concerned adolescent needs, integration was found to be the necessary prerequisite for the achievement of a healthy personality. Its presence more than any other one factor was found to contribute toward an integral harmony which resulted in effectiveness.[2] Thus it would seem imperative to make advantageous use of the plasticity of the adolescent personality by uniting the energies around one central purpose.

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1. Philippians 3:13-14.
2. Cf. Ante, p. 11.

It was likewise noted that in order to be conducive to a
beneficial outcome, the purpose must utilize the natural
capabilities of the individual without making necessary
those which he does not possess. The purpose should in-
volve a task of sufficient significance to challenge his
best effort and to command his interest and respect, thus
providing the necessary impetus toward successful achieve-
ment. Man's gregarious nature requires that the purpose
be of significance in the service of mankind.

The relationship of the Christian Faith in the
provision of such a purpose becomes clear. Christ did not
appeal to a segment of life. Rather he called the entire
individual to a way of life. Although its pursuance in-
volves personal salvation, it has definite social impli-
cations. For predominate in the teachings of Christ was
a sacrifical concept of life. True life and happiness
were to be found in a denial of selfish desires and ambi-
tions, and in the active promotion of good toward others.
Christ responded to the question "Who is my neighbor" with
the parable of the Good Samaritan. He taught "dying to
live" which perhaps sums up the essence of the Christian
life better than any other phrase.[1] And he charged his
disciples to love their neighbors as secondary only to their
love of God. The magnitude of the task was incomprehensible

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1. Cf. William Brown: Science and Personality, p. 232.

for it dealt with eternal verities. Although the call of
Christ is unvarying to every human being, it is not with-
out cognizance of the peculiar abilities of every indivi-
dual. The symbols which are given to represent the group
of believers, such as a building, and a body, show a re-
cognition of this fact. Each individual who makes up the
church of Christ is termed a "living stone" which is neces-
sary for the continuance of that building.[1] In the symbol
of the body, Christ was the head, and upon each believer
as an integral part of the body depended the life and well-
being of the organism.[2]

Thus Christ calls every individual into a life
of personal commitment. He asks to be received as the per-
sonal Saviour from sin and then sends out the regenerated
believer, a witness to others of the good-news of salvation.
And so the human becomes a co-worker with God in effecting
the ultimate triumph of righteousness by planting the seed
of the Word in the hearts of men. The vastness of the
task would be overwhelming were it not for the promise of
supernatural strength and power.

It appears, then, that Christ can give to an
adolescent such a dominating purpose that every thought,
every action, and every desire will be brought into sub-
jection in order to accomplish its achievement.

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1. I Peter 2:5-10.
2. Romans 12:4 and I Corinthians 12:27-30.

4. Balance and Perspective.

The possession of a thoroughly intriguing and challenging purpose leads to steadfastness in life. Brooks has pointed out that adherence to a guiding line of conduct throughout life gives best evidence of a rational balance.[1]

It was noted in the study of adolescent personality above that when there is an attempt to satisfy each inherent urge at the time of its appearance, chaos results. So it would seem vital to mental health to establish a balance between the various elements of personality in order to effect an emotional stability. Perspective is also necessary for the achievement of a healthy personality. Just as a traveler in the forest loses the picture of the whole in the immensity of the trees which surround him, so a traveler through life often fails to recognize the place of the future because of the overwhelming sense of present details.

Christ's reiteration of eternal values gives a certain perspective and stability to life. When men were floundering and failing in their own strength, Jesus taught them that through faith and prayer they could "reach into the beyond and bring that beyond into their daily experience and thought."[2] He helped them to see human issues in their

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1. Fowler D. Brooks: Psychology of Adolescence, p. 350.
2. Gray, op. cit., p. 102.

proper relationship. The material was always to give place to the spiritual in value. He exhorted the use of prayer as a means of solving life's most perplexing difficulties. He himself gave example of a perfect faith in the justice and mercy of an almighty God even when earthly circumstances seemed shifting and unreliable.

A criterion on which to build a sense of values is found for the Christian in the Bible. A psychologist has pointed out that the Bible comes closer than any other book to codifying the a-b-c's of personality.[1] Not only does it forbid the "most seriously disintegrating mental attitudes", but it points out a way for the integration of the mental powers.[2] It is a treasury of literature on the human nature and contains the "key to the real problems of real men."[3]

5. A Motivation to Service.

Dr. Link has aptly stated that "religion, in many instances, has become too much an exercise of the higher thought centers at the expense of energy-consuming action with and for other people."[4] But as exemplified by Christ, a proper relationship with God apparently leads to vigorous action.

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1. Cf. Link, op. cit., p. 89.
2. Burnham; The Normal Mind, p. 42-43.
3. Cf. Sven Norberg: Varieties of Christian Experience, p. 140.
4. Link, op. cit., p. 109.

A person who has experienced the tremendous release afforded by forgiveness from sin, experiences a freedom of spirit which impels to joyous service for other men.[1] No longer is he obsessed with fears and absorbed with unhealthy thoughts of his own shortcomings. Rather he possesses a faith which impells to action and achievement.

On one occasion, in talking about the last judgment, Christ identified himself with the poor and needy, and indicated that service to one's fellowmen was service to Christ: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."[2] Hence a real gratitude to Christ for his supreme sacrifice and love will express itself in energetic service.

6. Social Attitudes.

The implications of the Christian faith have necessarily touched upon the social emphasis of Christianity. It was seen that a person cannot live unto himself; rather that he is an important link in an endless chain of souls. Therefore his relationships to those about him are significant.

Since the recognition by Adolph Meyer of the shut-in personality as a potential dementia praecox case, important consideration has been given to the social aspect of man's life.[3] Christianity emphasizes an active and

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1. Cf. Norberg, op. cit., p. 240.
2. Matthew 25:40.
3. Ligon; Psychology of Christian Personality, p. 17.

aggressive life in behalf of others. Thus the individual becomes absorbed in other than his own interests and hence should not be given to morbid introspection. Therefore the Christian life, when actively lived, leads to a balance which is neither characterized by extreme introversion nor yet a radical extroversion.

7. A Dynamic for Life.

Christianity is both a way of life and a means which makes it possible. For "in Christian communion with God there is power which can lift us above all cares, sorrows, problems, failures, and defeats, and yet leave us tingling with exhilaration. That power is there because God, the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sustainer, breathes into our souls the breath of renewed life. God is the creative power undergirding the Christian life."[1]

Christ promised to his disciples that following his departure, the Holy Spirit would make real to them this power.[2] The evidence of power at the coming of the Spirit is noticed in the person of Peter at the time of his public address at Pentecost. Forty days previously Peter was too cowardly to acknowledge even an acquaintance with Christ when questioned by a simple maid. After the Holy Spirit came upon him he spoke before the skeptical,

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1. Gray, op. cit., p. 102.
2. Cf. Acts 1:8.

inextricably bound. An intimate association with him and
his words leads to an adequate philosophy of life which
contains the elements essential to a harmonious relation-
ship with the universe. Thus the Christian life has a
challenge for youth which satisfies the craving for action,
adventure, achievement, and happiness.

CHAPTER III

ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS

IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENT PERSONALITY

THROUGH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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THROUGH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A. Introduction

The needs of the adolescent together with the contribution of the Christian faith in meeting these needs have been presented in the preceding chapters. In general, then, it would seem that Christian education's area of greatest helpfulness lies in guiding the adolescent into an effective use of the elements of personality development which were found to be inherent in the Christian faith.

The church as the recognized institution for the interpretation of the meaning of life, is concerned in leading youth into the life abundant which Christ promised to his followers. Thus it is the province of this chapter to determine those factors in the church's educational program which seem to relate to the accomplishment of the ultimate goal of Christian education, namely, the perfecting of men "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Certain elements here discussed have become apparent in the course of the foregoing study. These have

been verified and supplemented by recourse to the studies
of secular and religious educators, psychologists, psychi-
atrists, medical doctors, and ministers.

B. The Importance of the Individual

Individual differences call for individual guid-
ance and treatment. It is an undeviating practice of the
medical profession to deal with individuals. A particular
case is diagnosed and prescribed for. If such importance
is placed upon personal treatment in the physical realm,
of how much more importance for spiritual welfare is the
recognition of individual needs.

Christ's ministry on earth as recorded by the
Gospel writers consisted, in great measure, of conversa-
tions with individuals in all walks of life. His approach
to the problems of each was fresh and vital due to his keen
insight into personality. The significance which he gave
to the individual personality has already been recognized.
He taught that the soul of man outweighs the profit of
the whole material world. Society as made up of individual
persons was the object of his divine sacrifical love.[1] Be-
cause he did not look upon the outward appearance, but
rather pierced into the inner soul of man, he saw him as
a creature of infinite possibilities.

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1. Cf. Horne, Christ in Man-Making, p. 87.

Christian education also must recognize that every person is separate and distinct from all other persons and that there resides within the individual possibilities of worth. It is to be remembered that "character traits have no meaning except in terms of the personality possessing them."[1] Heredity and environment provide different capacities and opportunities for every individual, which affects the conscious choices in such manner as to give rise to a peculiar set of problems for each individual. Thus it is imperative for effective work in personality development to have accurate knowledge of the individual's environment, attitudes, capabilities, interests, and aspirations.

C. The Necessity of a Personal Christian Experience

That a personal faith is important in maintaining a fundamentally healthy life is frankly admitted by outstanding men in the field of personality-analysis and psychiatry such as Sir Henry B. Brackenbury, M. D., LL. D., vice-president of the British Medical Association; William Brown, M. D., D. Sc., Wilde Reader in Mental Philosophy at Oxford University; and John Rathbone Oliver, M. D., Ph. D., of Johns Hopkins University.[2] As Norberg states, "Modern

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1. Ligon: Their Future Is Now, p. viii.
2. Cf. Leslie D. Weatherhead: Psychology and Life, pp. ix-xiv; and John Rathbone Oliver: Psychiatry and Mental Health, pp. 285, 297.

psychiatry regards personal faith as a blessing and a necessity in human life keeping it healthy and helping to maintain that balance which we call harmony and peace."[1] Such a living personal faith is impossible apart from a living experience with Christ, for a prosaic acceptance of a system of belief is easily cast aside in times of crisis, whereas a person believing in Christ holds and is held.

It may be asked, "What is a living Christian experience?" Essentially, it is seen to be the transformation of an individual which results from a first-hand experience with Christ. The whole of life in its chaos and sin is brought face to face with the holiness and purity of God as revealed in Christ. This precipitates a "self-saving or self-humiliation before God's challenge."[2] The Christian imperative is then, "Repent ye and believe in the gospel."[3] Sincere repentance and a wholehearted decision to accept Christ as the personal bearer of sin leads not only to eternal life but also to a relationship with Christ which transcends all the insecurities of life.

It is the responsibility of Christian education to lead the adolescent into a place of decision for Christ. Such a decision becomes the foundation for the building of

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1. Norberg, op. cit., p. 256.
2. Ibid., p. 202.
3. Mark 1:15.

Christian character. For conversion is "but the beginning
of a process of spiritual development that moves steadily
forward to its culmination in a Christian character vic-
torious over all the ills of life."[1] Antecedent to such
growth is a recognition of the spiritual laws. Education
for the spiritual life in its many ramifications, as has
been noted, should be of vastly more importance than edu-
cation in the laws of physical life.

Prominent among the spiritual laws is that of
prayer. An incorrect understanding of prayer leads to
its wrong use which may result in the loss of faith. Where-
as a proper understanding of the law of prayer, its nature
and intended use, results in a vital faith. Likewise,
worship for the adolescent, when properly conceived, be-
comes a source of strength and inspiration. An intelligent
obedience to the spiritual laws is dependent upon a clear
conception of their nature and use. This important task
is the unique privilege of the church in its educative
ministry.

D. Individual Guidance and Counseling

It was found that one of the greatest needs of
youth is a wise and friendly person whose counsel is avail-
able when most needed. Ideally the parents should be the

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1. John S. Bonnell: Pastoral Psychiatry, p. 179.

counselors of their young people, but the complexity of the modern situation renders most parents unfit for such a task. Increasingly it is becoming necessary for the church to meet this need, as well as to establish friendly and cooperative relations between the parent and his child.

A psychologist has pointed out that "Guidance is probably even more important in the formation of personality, than is opportunity."[1] Although opportunity for development is imperative to personality, it would seem that even more important is the stabilization which is gained by the unstable youth after a frank discussion of problems with a mature person. May has said that "personal counseling is any deep understanding between persons which results in the changing of personality."[2] Thus counseling is to be recognized as an effective tool in personality development if skillfully and properly administered.

There are three levels of counseling.[3] One is curative and is designed to help a person who is in difficulty. Another is preventive and aids, through guidance, in the maintenance of normal life relations. The third level is concerned with the development of a richer life for the individual. In the religious education of young people, work on the latter level will be most prominent.

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1. Shaffer, op. cit., pp. 361-362.
2. Rollo May: The Art of Counseling, p. 120.
3. Roy Burkhart: Guiding Individual Growth, pp. 32-34

Most of the problems of youth are general rather than deep-seated and specific, thus guidance toward a general appreciation of life becomes valuable.

From a study of personality May has formulated principles which are guides for counseling. It is the function of the counselor:

> (1) "to lead the counselee to an acceptance of responsibility for the conduct and outcome of his life."[1]
> (2) "to assist the counselee to find his real self, and then to help him to have courage to be this self."[2]
> (3) "to assist the counselee to a cheerful acceptance of his social responsibility, to give him courage which will release him from the compulsion of his inferiority feeling, and help him to direct his striving toward socially constructive ends."[3]
> (4) "while aiding the counselee to free himself from morbid guilt feeling, to assist him courageously to accept and affirm the religious tension inherent in his nature."[4]

Basic to a program of counseling is an earnest desire to help others make the most fruitful adjustment in all areas of life. Such a genuine interest will be characterized by empathy which is simply a "state of identification of personalities in which one person so feels himself into the other as temporarily to lose his own identity."[5] A successful counselor is sensitive to the hopes, fears, and tensions of the person with whom he is working; he has

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1. May, op. cit., p. 53.
2. Ibid., p. 61.
3. Ibid., p. 67.
4. Ibid., p. 74.
5. Ibid., p. 75.

an objective attitude toward the person and the problem;
he is unshockable and is the possessor of kindness and
patience. An effective spiritual counselor cannot rely
upon a second-hand experience of Christ, but must himself
possess a dynamic contemporary Christian experience.[1]

The worker with youth will find abundant oppor-
tunity to counsel through informal association, formal in-
terview, group conferences, and correspondence. His guid-
ance will be "delicately passive rather than forcefully
active".[2] Although he cannot prevent the dangerous pit-
falls which are attendant upon freedom, he can stand ready
to reduce the harmful effects to a minimum.[3]

Because vocational choices are often perplexing
to young people, it is necessary to recognize vocational
guidance as a definite part of the church's program for
youth.

> "Helping young people to choose a vocation with
> a high idealistic vision of its importance to
> mankind and a faith that it is the will of God
> in their lives, is one of the greatest contribu-
> tions the church can make to adolescence."[4]

The responsibility of vocational guidance may be
summarized as follows:

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1. Cf. Bonnell, op. cit., p. 70; and Cf. John Rathbone
   Oliver: Psychiatry and Mental Health, p. 297.
2. D. A. Thom, op. cit., p. 13.
3. Cf. Ibid., ad loc.
4. Ligon, Their Future Is Now, p. 74.

"1. To assist individuals in choosing, pre-
paring for, entering upon, and making progress
in occupations.

2. To help individuals acquire knowledge of
the common occupations and of the problems of the
occupational world so that they may be prepared
for vocational as well as political citizenship.

3. To help the worker understand his relations
to other workers in his own and other occupations
and to society as a whole.

4. To help each person find a spiritual pur-
pose in life which will become the source of his
supreme devotion and the goal of all his work."[1]

The extent to which it will be necessary for the

church to give vocational guidance will be determined by

the extent to which the need is met by other agencies which

influence youth.

E. Provision of Program Opportunities Conducive

To Development of Christian Character

From the previous study it is evident that healthy

personality is not an endowment but rather an attainment

which comes in experience. Thus the adolescent personality

should be guided into assuming definite responsibilities.[2]

Qualities of genuine leadership which are beginning to ap-

pear need extensive training.[3] Hence it is essential, if

Christian education would build personality, to provide

abundant opportunity for the adolescent to develop through

participation. The church as an organization which is

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1. Burkhart, op. cit., p. 84.
2. Cf. Shaffer, op. cit., p. 487.
3. Cf. Ligon, Their Future Is Now, p. 291.

social by nature is uniquely able to provide such oppor-
tunities for youth.

The place of environment in providing opportuni-
ties should not be minimized for "in order to bring out
the full potentialities of any organism a favorable en-
vironment is necessary."[1] Because the character of the
environment helps to determine the character of the living
organism, it is important that the adolescent have access
to an environment which is conducive to the best develop-
ment. Such an environment should be found in the church
for at least nominally every member has recognized the call
of life on a higher plane and gives evidence of trying to
attain that by his presence in the house of God.

In order to be adequate, provision must be made
in the program of Christian education for youth for de-
velopment in every area of life. Each has a contribution
to make to the development of the total personality.

1. Worship.

Worship is the natural outgrowth of a personal
conversion experience, for essentially "worship is any ex-
pression of fellowship with God."[2] Following the decision

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1. E. W. MacBride: Article on "Eugenics," Encyclopoedia
   Britannica, 12th Ed., Vol. 31, as quoted by Horne, op.
   cit., p. 47.
2. C. A. Miller: Leading Youth to Abundant Life, p. 114.

for Christ, Christian education should encourage the new believer in (1) private worship by guidance in the use of the daily devotional period, and (2) in group worship by providing a worshipful atmosphere and a significant service of worship. An understanding of the meaning and experience of worship should be accompanied by training in building and participating actively in services of worship.

Worship is the distinctive activity of the program of Christian education. If the church fails in this area, the need will not be met. Thus it is important for the church to realize the importance of instilling within its youth the proper appreciation of worship, of private worship as the means whereby the individual may gain insight into the will of God and strength for personal victory, and of group worship as the means of attaining a unity of purpose through the experience of common worship.

2. Instruction.

In order to be an effective "rule of faith and practice," the Bible must become alive with interest to adolescents. It is the indispensable textbook for the spiritual life, and also a guide to practical living. To the Church has been entrusted the responsibility of teaching the Word of God.

Teachers recognize that pupils carry away very little book learning, that the mental attitudes which are

developed are in reality most vitally important.[1] Teach‑
ing with the evident purpose of covering a lesson does not
meet the pressing needs of the adolescent, and may result
in attitudes or negative concomitant learnings which are
disastrous to the whole endeavor of Christian education.

> "The problem of the Christian teacher‑‑is not so
> much to convince the intellect of the truth of
> certain abstract propositions about Christ, as to
> hold up before the pupil the exquisite personality
> of Christ, as worthy of the highest devotion and
> the most complete service that can be rendered."[2]

A love for Christ should result in a deep love for and ap‑
preciation of the Bible which will lead to earnest and
sincere study of it. When the Bible is thus purposefully
read it will become meaningful in the life of the adoles‑
cent.

It has been said that the best argument for
Christianity is a Christian. The Christian teacher is
able to convey more Christian truth by his life than by
his lips. Tracy has stated that

> "education in its highest sense requires the con‑
> tact of personality with personality . . it is
> more important for boys and girls to come into
> daily contact with men and women of high charac‑
> ter than to live in the most affluent homes, or
> to attend the most splendidly equipped schools,
> or even to be educated according to the most
> scientifically constructed curricula."[3]

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1. Cf. Burnham, The Normal Mind, p. 14.
2. Tracy, op. cit., p. 232.
3. Ibid., p. 213.

In order to be most effective in his teaching
the teacher must know the members of the class. He must
be aware of the special abilities and aptitudes of each
adolescent. He must have knowledge of their philosophies
of life in order to ascertain wherein revision and devel-
opment are needed. With such a background the teacher is
able to determine precisely what should be accomplished in
the life of each member of the class and thus be able to
adapt the lesson material to achieve that purpose.[1]

The instructive ministry of the church should
be vital as the basis of character training and personality
development. Teaching which is related to life will in-
evitably result in the development of character and per-
sonality.

3. Service.

Emphasis on the activities program of Christian
education is simply a reiteration of the acknowledged fact
that one learns by doing. When the boundless energy of
youth is harnassed into worthwhile projects, tremendous
value can accrue. For "one's personality develops as his
own individuality expands and grows; as his potential tal-
ents and powers find expression and develop; as he makes
effort to find constructive and creative outlets."[2] Thus

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1. Cf. Ligon, Their Future Is Now, p. 11.
2. E. O. Harbin: Recreation and Youth, p. 13.

activities of helpfulness not only benefit the recipient
but also those who participate in them. Through intimate
association with the ever present needs of individuals,
the adolescent comes to realize his place of service and
makes his Christian faith practical in its outworkings
to others.

Such activities should require the superior
abilities of the different individuals. The group thus
becomes integrated in the accomplishment of significant
tasks.

4. Recreation.

The extent of the recreational program of the
church will be dependent necessarily upon the adequacy of
the other community agencies in this respect. Neverthe-
less a certain amount of recreation should be included in
the program of Christian education for youth, not only for
the zest and joy which it brings but also because of its
contribution to the development of a wholesome personality.
Recreation also has in it the possibilities of developing
healthy attitudes, interests and habits. When that which
has been learned theoretically in the other aspects of the
educational program has been put into use during play, it
is fairly certain to be used in the serious game of life.
Recreation is valuable as a means of relieving the tensions
of life and as a satisfier of normal human desire. Thus
recreation has a very real part in a program designed to

build well-rounded normal personality.

Recreation is a term which includes all of the activities which youth participates in with joy and freedom from routine. Thus recreation may be commercial amusements, sports, social parties, and creative hobbies. Although all have their place, to a large extent the use of creative expression which has many untapped resources for the building of character has not been fully utilized in Christian education. Horne suggests that an individual needs creative self-expression.[1] Also objective happiness comes from creative work. Such a program leads to the utilization of natural abilities and develops useful skills with resultant benefits.

Such a recreational program develops character, and enriches the life through association with others and through establishing a wide variety of interests. "The Church's program of recreation for youth, then, deserves to be planned with as much care as its programs of worship and study."[2]

F. Summary

Christian education is a term which is applied to all of the activities of the Church which have a part

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1. Cf. Horne, op. cit., p. 80.
2. Nevin C. Harner: Youth Work in the Church, p. 156.

in restoring men and women, boys and girls into communion with God and in leading them into life's richest development according to the will of God. Basic to a specific program of Christian education for young people are the following considerations which have become evident as a result of the foregoing study.

Recognition of the supreme importance of the individual is imperative to effective work in adolescent personality development. Such recognition leads to a program fashioned to meet the specific needs of individuals, rather than a program characterized by generalities.

The foundation for a wholesome character lies in a regenerative experience with Christ as one's Saviour and Lord. This leads to a recognition of the laws of the spiritual life which are effective also in the natural realm and thus are pertinent in personality development.

Individual differences make necessary individual counseling in order that every person achieve the highest type of personality of which he is capable. The provision of qualified counselors in the Christian education program should assist individuals in following the path which is most enriching to the individual personality and to others.

A program which makes possible opportunities conducive to the development of Christian character is one of Christian education's greatest contributions to youth. A four-fold program which includes worship,

instruction, service, and recreation touches all of the significant areas of life. Thus opportunity is given to build a personality which is well-rounded and complete.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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It has been the purpose of this thesis to dis-
cover the contribution of the Christian faith toward the
development of adolescent personality, and to determine
the principles basic to a program of Christian education
which would make real to youth the inherent values of the
Christian faith. In order to ascertain the needs of the
adolescent personality an investigation was made in the
general field of personality and in the specific field of
adolescent personality. The essential factors and basic
needs of youth then became apparent. Following this, a
study of the fundamental aspects of the Christian faith
disclosed that Christianity has within it elements which
are necessary contributing factors in the building of a
wholesome personality. As a result of the foregoing study,
a consideration was made in the final chapter, of principles
which had become apparent as basic to a vital program of
Christian education striving to lead individuals to per-
sonality perfection in Christ.

Continuous adjustment to life's changing circum-
stances was found to be imperative to a healthy personal-
ity. Satisfactory adjustive habits obtained by the inte-
gration of the separate elements of personality around a
dominant purpose bring about the resolving of conflicts

which cause emotional tension detrimental to personality.
But consequential to the rapid growth and the widening
horizons there result manifold problems which though com-
mon to every youth are peculiar in their individual con-
figuration. The adolescent must be freed from the devas-
tating effect of fear by the establishment of a foundation
of security. Upon that foundation it is then safe to
build the personality by development of the rich inner
resources. Withal, the assistance of a wise and sympathetic
counselor to guide youth through a period of perplexity and
turmoil is most desirable.

Following this survey, a study was made of the
Christian faith in which significant facts to adolescent
personality development were noted. The Christian faith
was found to be centered in Christ whose person and work
make Christianity distinctive among world religions. As
a result of Christ's past and present ministry mankind was
seen to be, potentially, the recipient of a supernatural
power which enables the living of life in accordance with
his standards. When Christ is allowed to permeate the
whole of life it is found that Christianity becomes the
integrator of all the drives of the human personality.
Acceptance of him as Saviour and Lord leads to a purpose
in life which dominates the instincts and desires of the
total personality. Such an inclusive faith is influential
in the formulation of a philosophy of life which is consistent

not only with the spiritual world as revealed in the Bible
and in the experience of man, but also with the material
world as encountered in daily living. An adequate and har-
monious Christian philosophy of life helps the adolescent
to become the possessor of an intangible secureness which
results in emotional balance and stability effective even
in the crises of life. Likewise the believer is impelled
to serve his fellow-men because of his loyalty to Christ and
his new appreciation of man's place in God's economy.

As a result of these findings an effort was made
to determine the principles basic to a program of Christian
education effective in guiding youth to an attainment of
a healthy personality. The task of Christian education
is found to be impossible apart from a recognition of the
importance of the individual. Thus it was found impera-
tive to build a program of Christian education which would
be adequate in meeting the needs peculiar to each indi-
vidual. Following an intimate experience with Christ,
the youth should be given abundant opportunity for self-
development through a program of Christian education which
would include worship, instruction, service, and recrea-
tion, thus touching the significant areas of adolescent
life. Furthermore the assistance of an efficient, trained
leader as a counselor would supplement the four-fold
Christian education program thus enhancing its contribu-
tion to the development of a well-balanced Christian

adolescent personality.

The results of this study lead to several conclusions which are pertinent in regard to the development of adolescent personality.

First, the possibility of personality development becomes evident when it is recognized that personality adaptation or adjustment is continually being made to the shifting circumstances of life by the peculiar interaction of the impulses, tendencies, appetites, instincts, and systems of habits of the individual. Most adequate adjustment is made when the numerous traits of the personality are inextricably focused upon one dominating purpose which is of such strength as to command the coordination of all of the natural energies. The period of adolescence is particularly advantageous to development of personality, for the adolescent is undergoing a quickening process as evidenced by the rapid physical growth, the expanding mental activity and ability, the increasing depth of emotion, the sudden awareness of and importance attached to social standards, the idealistic yearning for the highest and noblest in life, and the emphatic desire for independence and self-expression. But a recognition of the supreme opportunity for personality development at this period involves a recognition of the tremendous instability and bewilderment caused by rapid development which makes even more imperative for youth an integration which will bring

harmony and reduction of conflict.

An appreciation of the life and work of Jesus Christ leads to the conclusion that he can become the most effective means of integrating the adolescent personality. By his supreme sacrifice which made possible the restoration of mankind into fellowship with God, Christ became the object of man's love and devotion, thus becoming the focal point upon which all of the desires, instincts, and thoughts of the regenerated person converge. Such a devotion and wholehearted allegiance to Christ and his words inevitably leads to a singleness of purpose evident in a desire to serve Christ. Christ, recognizing the peculiar abilities of each individual, nevertheless calls every believer to a task of eternal as well as social significance, that of proclaiming the message of salvation. Likewise he challenges his followers to live life on the very highest plane and gives them power by which to attain this life. His followers are sent forth to service not with a sense of haunting fear if disobedient, but rather motivated by an abundant and profound love--a love which is recognized as the only intense emotion that can be a source of strength to the personality. Thus Christ can be to youth the source of integration and can give him a dominant purpose which utilizes the natural capabilities, is of service to mankind, is recognized as supremely significant, and results in happiness, efficiency, and mental health.

As a result of an intimate experience with Christ
the adolescent is able to formulate a philosophy of life
which is adequate for practical living. Also perspective
and stability are gained which enable the youth to stand
the stress and strain of life's most disheartening and
perplexing circumstances, for his faith is grounded in the
righteousness and justice of an omnipotent and loving God.
His realistic faith in God becomes a bulwark which stands
impregnable against the insidious onslaughts of doubt and
discouragement. Accepting the divine promises in Christ
he becomes the recipient of a dynamic for life which makes
possible the abundant life.

The recognition of the adequacy of the Christian
faith leads to the conclusion that it is the distinctive
task of Christian education to bring the youth to an un-
derstanding of this faith, and to a personal commitment
to Christ which will integrate the total personality about
a living Person. The aim of Christian education, to bring
individuals to maturity in Christ, can be accomplished
only by utilizing the forces which are operating in youth
in such a way as to make possible the acquisition of the
inherent values of the Christian faith. The factors basic
to the realization of such an aim are: the importance of
the individual, the necessity of a personal experience with
Christ, individual guidance and counseling, and provision
of opportunities for Christian personality development in

the significant areas of life. A program of Christian
education based upon such principles would, if efficiently
conducted, meet the most essential needs of youth by lay-
ing a foundation of inner security, by making possible op-
portunities for development, and by providing understand-
ing counselors of youth.

Finally, as a result of this study it has been
found that a vital experience with Christ leads to an in-
tegration of the total personality. As Christ stands su-
preme among men, so his way of life as presented in the
Christian faith stands preeminent as a means for the de-
velopment of the individual into his highest personality
achievement. Thus it is possible to conclude that the
contribution of the Christian faith to the personality
development of adolescents is supremely significant for,
as stated by an eminent psychologist, "the basic truths
of Christianity will survive so long as man and human
nature survive, because these truths are the foundations
of personality and character."[1]

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1. Link, op. cit., p. 238.

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