# A STUDY OF EVANGELISM
# IN PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

## A. Statement of the Problem

In religious education, by which in the present study is meant Protestant Christian religious education, there is faced continually the difficulty of keeping a balance of emphasis. Outstanding religious educators, for example, are concerned about "keeping religious education religious".[1] At the same time, many curriculum helps are being prepared and textbooks written with the character-conduct emphasis. It seems timely, therefore, to determine the importance placed upon evangelism, or, considered theologically, the place of Christ, in present-day religious education.

The first two objectives in the seven adopted by the International Council of Religious Education concern the pupil's relation to God and to Christ, the Savior, Friend, Companion and Lord. May it be assumed by their position in this list that these objectives are considered primary and, therefore, that this present study may prove helpful in presenting the extent of the evangelistic emphasis? It is not the purpose of this study to emphasize evangelism at the expense of character-conduct or any other desired end since

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1. Athearn, W. S., "Protestantism's Contribution to Character Building in a Democracy", International Journal of Religious Education, June, 1926, p. 28. Cf. also Vieth, P. H., The Development of a Curriculum, p. 22.

all are necessary, but rather to determine the place given

to evangelism in religious education today.

It is observed that the two objectives cited

above are little mentioned and generally passed over in

textbooks.[1] This may well make the student in the field

of religious education question as to whether religious

education has more to offer than the character education

of the secular school.[2]

A survey of the writings of prominent present-day

religious educators to determine the place of evangelism in

religious education reveals a wide difference of opinion.

The present study is made to analyze these diverging points

of view and thus determine, not only the place given to

evangelism, but also the nature of the evangelism conceived.

This foundational study appears necessary in order to clar-

ify present-day thinking on a subject important to the

Christian religion.

The term "evangelism", determined by the present

writer, may be understood to mean the presentation of the

Christian message, or Gospel, in such a way as to make

Christ a personal factor as Savior and Lord in the life of

the individual by his own conscious choice of Christ and

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Coe, G. A., What is Christian Education, p. 205, and
   also Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education,
   pp. 131 and 139.
2. Cf. Athearn, W. S., The Minister and the Teacher, p. 37,
   and also Shaver, E. L., The Project Principle in Religious
   Education, p. 40.

his commitment to the Christian life.

Christian ethics and a Christian philosophy may be found generally acceptable because they are considered practical and net the largest immediate returns. This study is not concerned with either of these, but rather with the motivation of both, the dynamic as personified in Christ, who makes both ethics and a Christian view of life possible in the experience of the individual.

This study should discover if evangelism is only a by-product, as considered by some,[1] or if it is a definite and necessary part of religious education. Furthermore, it will be helpful in determining the methods by which evangelism is being effected.

B. Limitation of the Field

In order to make for thoroughness of investigation, the writer has limited herself to a study of the writings of eight prominent religious educators. The writer has carefully surveyed and analyzed the articles in The International Journal of Religious Education and Religious Education, as well as the books written in the last ten years by these leaders. Books and articles written before 1924 which relate definitely to the subject of evangelism or which especially contribute the basic points of view

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1. Cf. Shaver, E. L., Present-Day Trends in Religious Education, p. 101, and also Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education, p. 121

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also have been included.

To determine the leaders of religious education to be so studied, there was prepared a list of seventeen religious educators best known in the field, which was submitted to three professors and two directors of religious education with a request that they select those whom they considered to be the ten most outstanding leaders, numbering them from one to ten in the order of their importance. By this means the following eight were selected: Walter Scott Athearn, George Herbert Betts, William Clayton Bower, George Albert Coe, Hugh Hartshorne, Erwin L. Shaver, Paul H. Vieth, and Luther Allen Weigle.

## C. Method of Procedure

This study will be divided into two parts. It will include a study of the theory of evangelism as presented by the religious educators whose works have been studied over against the actual practice of evangelism as it has been found effective in the lives of later adolescents.

In Part One of this study an analysis is presented of the writings of the above authorities to determine their points of view with regard to evangelism, their comparative emphases, and their methods. As a result of this analysis, a wide divergence of points of view and a lack of agreement were discovered as to the use of the term, evan-

gelism. Chapter I of the present study will present this investigation, revealing that inherent in definition is the question of purpose, or the objectives of religious education as conceived by these authors.

Related to purpose and definition is method, and the analysis of the sources revealed a divergence of opinion regarding methods of evangelism, some of these methods only being discovered by implication. Chapter II of the present study will organize the results of this analysis, revealing the methods and principles of evangelism for present-day religious education according to the eight leaders studied.

Chapter III will summarize these analyses and present the place of evangelism in present-day religious education, its meaning, and the methods and influences conducive to evangelism.

In Part Two of this study will be presented a questionnaire investigation of adolescent experience of evangelism. One hundred thirty people, the majority of whom are later adolescents, who are recognized to be Christian leaders, have been circularized to determine what methods of evangelism have been effective in their experience, and how extensive has been the influence of religious education upon this experience. This study will be evaluated in the light of the conclusions of Chapter III.

Finally will appear the general summary, and

conclusion of the study of evangelism in present-day re-
ligious education as it is discussed by leaders in the
field, and also as it has proven to be effective in the
experience of later adolescent students preparing for
Christian service and representing many denominations,
cultures, and environments.

PART I

# CHAPTER I

## THE DEFINITION AND OBJECTIVES OF EVANGELISM IN
## PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PART I

CHAPTER I

## THE DEFINITION AND OBJECTIVES OF EVANGELISM IN PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### A. Introduction

In this chapter the various meanings attached to evangelism by the eight men whose writings have been studied on this subject will be presented. In some cases it will be discovered that the term has a very limited meaning; in others the word itself has not been found defined in any of the writings; and still in others the meaning is very much the same as that proposed in the Introduction.[1]

Intrinsic in evangelism, as such, are the first two objectives of religious education as stated by the International Council of Religious Education, which are as follows:

1. To foster in growing persons a consciousness of God as a reality in human experience, and a sense of personal relationship to Him.

2. To develop in growing persons such an understanding and appreciation of the personality, life, and teachings of Jesus as will lead to discovery of him as Savior and Lord, loyalty to him and his cause, and manifest itself in daily life and conduct.[2]

. . . . . .

1. Introduction, p. 2: The presentation of the Christian message, or Gospel, in such a way as to make Christ a personal factor as Savior and Lord in the life of the individual by his own conscious choice of Christ and his commitment to the Christian life.
2. International Council of Religious Education, The Weekday Church School, Bulletin No. 601, 1930, p. 8.

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Therefore, along with each man's definition of evangelism
will be discussed that which he has to say regarding the
evangelistic objectives of religious education.

Furthermore, it will be found that several of
these men have indicated such a close relationship between
evangelism and religious education, that they almost con-
fuse, it may be said intentionally confuse, the terms. On
the other hand, in defining evangelism they seem to feel
compelled to show exactly what its relationship is to reli-
gious education. Any such discussion will be presented
with the various shades of definition.

### B. The Definition and Objectives of Evangelism According to Walter Scott Athearn.

Dr. Athearn does not actually define evangelism;
but when he uses it, he assumes that the reader understands
his meaning of the term. It is plain that he does not mean
"revivalism" by the statement: "There may be such a thing
as evangelism that is not educational, but there can be no
such thing as a Christian education that is not evangelical."[1]
His meaning of evangelism is evident as it is used in the
following statement:

> Evangelism had and has for its objectives the
> bringing of the individual souls into a conscious,
> personal relationship with God, and securing the
> individual's glad acceptance of Jesus Christ as

↕ . . . . .

1. Athearn, W. S., The Minister and the Teacher, pp. 16-17.

his personal Savior.[1]

To make a definition out of this statement, substitute
is for the words had and has for its objectives. This is
permissible since he goes on to say that the above is the
objective of Christian education[2] and then later says that
"Evangelism, in its most sacred sense, is the objective and
supreme end of religious education."[3]

To amplify Athearn's position on the meaning of
evangelism by his statement on the objectives of religious
education, he positively states that the whole purpose of
Christian education is the unity of the life of the child
with that of Christ and the Father. He further says that
this objective should determine all the methods of the reli-
gious educator in order to give the child a Christian view
of all life.[4] In another place, in discussing the natural
conversion of adolescents to something, he says that the
adolescent "may seek to find the life abundant by accept-
ing Christ as the Pilot of his life."[5] He condemns the
church as having failed at the most critical point if it
"fails to present the Christian life in such vivid imagery
that it begets a joyous response in young lives."[6]

Athearn's position on the relation of evangelism
to religious education, thus, is already indicated. He

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1. Athearn, W. S., Character Building in a Democracy, p. 119.
2. Cf. Ibid, p. 119.
3. Ibid, p. 139.
4. Cf. Athearn, W. S., The Minister and the Teacher, p. 17.
5. Athearn, W. S., The Church School, p. 188.
6. Ibid, p. 188.

deems it "unfortunate" that religious education ever is
considered as a substitute for theology, missions or evan-
gelism, because he claims that religious education is mere-
ly a new method of accomplishing the desired objective of
the Christian enterprise.[1] He adds that evangelism is es-
sential to religious education, and that

> no religious education that understands itself will
> deny the necessity of the direct appeal to individ-
> ual persons, or of the need of a definite seeking to
> be saved from sin, or of the clear expression of loy-
> alties to Christ and His ideals of life.[2]

This is really another definition of evangelism according
to Athearn. When he says that the function of the church
is to give a spiritual view of life and to teach Jesus
Christ as the standard by which to evaluate the spiritual
life,[3] he also is advocating an evangelistic emphasis in
the church program.

Thus, Athearn is found to mean by evangelism the
direct presentation of Jesus Christ for personal and indi-
vidual acceptance. He believes that religious education
only justifies its existence to the extent that it is evan-
gelical.[4] He insists that all methods of religious educa-
tion should be selected with the objective of evangelism
in mind.

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Athearn, W. S., Character Building in a Democracy,
   p. 118.
2. Ibid, p. 125.
3. Cf. Athearn, W. S., The Organization and Administration
   of the Church School, pp. 263-264.
4. Cf. Athearn, W. S., The Minister and the Teacher, p. 17.

C. The Definition and Objectives of Evangelism
According to George Herbert Betts

Dr. Betts considers the method of the educational point of view to be in direct contrast with that of the evangelistic point of view which he asserts is characterized by those who hold this view, as follows:

> What the child needs . . . is just what any person needs, to be "soundly converted." He needs to "accept Christ" and become a Christian. What we ought to desire for the church . . . is not more "religious education" but more evangelism in order to bring men (and children!) to a sense of their sin, to repentance, to divine acceptance and to regeneration.[1]

In his mind evangelism is concerned with the day of conversion[2] and the cataclysmic act of conversion[3] in which is a feeling of "emotional stress, a sense of guilt, repentance, submission, and acceptance by Christ."[4] In other words, "revivalism", "conversion", and "evangelism" are synonymous terms to Betts. Evangelism is "reclamatory", a salvaging process", "the last resort",[5] and "overt decision in the strict psychological sense".[6] Betts' position is that this type of evangelism is plainly opposed to gradual growth, or "habituation",[7] which he advocates.

While Betts is opposed to the aim of the Sunday

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1. Betts, G. H., New Program of Religious Education, p. 26.
2. Cf. Ibid, p. 28.
3. Cf. Ibid, p. 29.
4. Ibid, p. 29.
5. Ibid, pp. 30 and 31.
6. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Method in Teaching Religion, p. 101.
7. Ibid, p. 101.

school being that of preparation of the child "for the
day when he will become 'converted' and 'accept Christ'",[1]
yet he further defines his position as follows:

> This does not mean that these growing Christians
> did not at times make public affirmation and private
> consecration of their relationship to God and their
> allegiance to Christ. As a matter of fact, this is
> both natural and inevitable for most persons, and
> entirely desirable as one factor in the religious-
> growth process. The point is that "decision," or,
> rather, the arriving at the status which decision
> is supposed to insure, was accomplished by the grad-
> ual process of habituation, springing from a multi-
> tude of acts and experiences, and did not depend
> upon one cataclysmic moment for its accomplishment.[2]

and

> Religious education seeks to save the need for a
> reclamatory conversion, and in its stead substitute
> a gradual and natural spiritual growth in the course
> of which, at the proper age, the child will make a
> personal decision and acceptance of the Christian
> way in which he has from the beginning been led.[3]

These two statements show that Betts is not opposed to a
personal decision for Christ, but that he wants to be sure
that the method of coming to this decision is by a process
of growth rather than any unusual and sudden experience.

In contrast to what Betts conceives as evangel-
ism, he holds that the great aim of religious education is
to so nurture the child that the bond between the child and
his heavenly Father will never be broken.[4] He particularly

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1. Betts, G. H., New Program of Religious Education, p. 28.
2. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Method in Teaching
   Religion, p. 102.
3. Betts, G. H., New Program of Religious Education, p. 40.
4. Cf. Betts, G. H., New Program of Religious Education,
   p. 40.

stresses the social implications of acceptance of Christ, saying that

> To be a Christian one must "accept Christ," but he
> must know what this acceptance means in terms of
> relationships and obligations to other people . . .
> It is not enough that one announce his acceptance of
> and his loyalty to Christianity; he must come to
> know  what the Christian system means, and what are
> its implications for living each day's life on the
> part of the individual and society.[1]

He says that a worthy objective is to produce Christians loyal to Christ, his manner of life, the church and its enterprises, and the best welfare of their fellow men.[2] He considers it fundamental that religious instruction "develop a consciousness of God as a living, present reality immanent in the world and active in the lives of men . . . qualifying the whole of life,"[3] and that it should show forth the "living personality of Christ . . . as the pattern of the perfect man, the goal of our striving for personal excellence . . . and as revealing the essential nature of God.[4]

Thus Betts' definition of evangelism is seen to be that of revivalism of the emotional type and cataclysmic conversion. But his evangelistic aims are that the child should grow up a Christian with incidental decisions as parts of the process, and that these decisions are only

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1. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Method in Teaching
   Religion, p. 102.
2. Cf. Ibid, p. 84.
3. Ibid, p. 87.
4. Cf. Ibid, p. 87.

verified as they motivate his social relationships. In
other words, being a Christian is a habit and involves
very little of the element of choice. In fact, he states
in summarizing a chapter on objectives that "We seek as
the ultimate goal a way of living--the way of living de-
fined by Jesus."[1]


### D. The Definition and Objectives of Evangelism According to William Clayton Bower

Professor Bower, in his book, "A Survey of Reli-
gious Education in the Local Church", which was published
in 1919, suggests questions for making a survey of evan-
gelism which to some extent indicate what he considers to
be a part of evangelism. He points out that the school
should have a real sense of its responsibility of bringing
the pupils to a definite personal decision to live the
Christian life. Its atmosphere should be conducive to such
decision, and its pupils should be taught the meaning of
the Christian life. These decisions should be stimulated
at the proper periods of personal growth, and if a "deci-
sion day" is used, it should not be something quite apart
from the remainder of the year's experience, but rather a
part of it.[2] Since Bower is largely an advocate of the

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1. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Method in Teaching
   Religion, p. 88.
2. Cf. Bower, W. C., A Survey of Religious Education in the
   Local Church, p. 143, and also The Educational Task of
   the Local Church, p. 67.

social theory of religious education, the following from

his pen is significant:

> For Christian education, the objective for the indi-
> vidual, of course, means that the person shall be
> brought into a vital and personal relation to Jesus
> and into an experience of his ideals and purposes
> as the determinants of the Christian way of life.
> The emphasis upon the achievement of Christian per-
> sonality and the relating of religion to the whole
> range of normal, day-by-day experience in no way
> lessens the emphasis of religious education upon
> evangelism. Instead, it greatly expands and deepens
> it. It extends the evangelistic process of Chris-
> tianity beyond the intense and often narrow exper-
> ience of decision at a given time to accept Christ
> and to unite with the church, to the progressive and
> cumulative Christianization of every motive, every
> attitude, and every habit of the whole self in every
> relation and responsibility of life.[1]

The "of course" in the above statement may indicate that

this evangelism is only an incidental feature of Bower's

position.

In a closer study of his objectives of religious

education it is evident that evangelism as defined above is

only a secondary consideration. This is brought out fur-

ther by his conclusion that

> The primary function of religious education is to
> build a new world-order symbolized by the phrase that
> was central in the message of Jesus--"the kingdom of
> God", in which he had in mind a regenerated social
> order composed of spiritualized men and women living
> and working together in spiritual relations dominated
> by Christian ideals.[2]

In another place he states the primary objective to be "as-

. . . . . .

1. Bower, W. C., Religious Education in the Modern Church,
   p. 42.
2. Bower, W. C., The Educational Task of the Local Church,
   pp. 133-134.

sisting growing persons to achieve . . . a religious personality functioning in and through social groups."[1] He insists on the inseparable relationship of the personal objective with the progressive spiritual reconstruction of society.[2] The individual is important only to the extent to which he functions in society and transforms it.[3] Therefore, it is desirable that religious education should build up characters which can be counted upon to "react consistently and dependably in the characteristic situations involved in human living."[4]

So when Bower speaks of evangelism he does not mean so much a personal acceptance of Christ as he does a process of growth, with relationship with Jesus coming at the appropriate time in that growth. But even this individual aspect is a negligible factor as is evidenced in his latest book, "Religion and the Good Life". Jesus Christ, the person, is hardly mentioned. The following statement is significant of his viewpoint:

> The good life is a becoming, characterized by growing insights into the moral issues of living, by broadening comprehension of the moral significance of human experience, by increasing effectiveness in putting of one's moral values to work in the socializing and humanizing of one's relations and responsibilities. Growth is itself one of the criteria of the good life.[5]

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1. Bower, W. C., "The Nature, Content, and Form of the Curriculum", in Lotz, P. H., and Crawford, L. W., Studies in Religious Education, p. 178.
2. Cf. Ibid, p. 178.
3. Cf. Bower, W. C. Curriculum of Religious Education, p. 142.
4. Bower, W. C., "The Project Principle from the Standpoint of the Curriculum" in Religious Education, October 1926, p. 470.
5. Bower, W. C., Religion and the Good Life, p. 35.

E. The Definition and Objectives of Evangelism
According to George Albert Coe

Professor Coe in most of his writings uses the
word "evangelicalism"[1] for evangelism, and when he uses
evangelism he defines it as "mass evangelism".[2] In either
case, he is referring to the revival type of evangelism, as
he indicates in explaining the term as being used in the

> restricted sense of promoting personal religion con-
> ceived as experience of one's reconciliation with God
> . . . requiring of us only surrender of self-will and
> acceptance of the will of God . . . understood in
> large circles as meaning "having a conversion exper-
> ience."[3]

In opposition to this meaning of evangelism, Coe
proposes "socialized evangelicalism",[4] by which he means
"the teaching of the good news that is for all the world,
the pressing home to the individual pupil of the insistent
love of God."[5] He interprets this to mean that the indi-
vidual is to ally himself with God's purpose of reconcil-
ing the world, to take active part in righting the wrongs
of the world.[6] To justify this meaning of evangelism which
he proposes, he says,

> This social experience of God in his world--God in
> all love, and in all that wins us to the love way--
>
> . . . . . .

1. Coe, G. A., A Social Theory of Religious Education, pp.
   324 and 325, and also What is Christian Education? p. 205.
2. Coe, G. A., What is Christian Education? pp. 14 and 102.
3. Ibid, p. 324.
4. Coe, G. A., A Social Theory of Religious Education, p. 329.
5. Ibid, p. 334.
6. Cf. Ibid, p. 328.

makes the love of the Father and the love of the
neighbor one experience. This is a religion of the
heart. It will tax all the emotional resources of
evangelicalism. It will still single out each in-
dividual, and it will go on utilizing the values of
mass suggestion. But it will not separate emotion
from study or from action.[1]

In stating the objectives of religious education,
Coe continues to amplify his social theory of evangelism. He
considers the saving of individuals to make up a saved so-
ciety a futile external process because of the inter-relat-
edness of the sin of society.[2] Consequently, the aim is
"growth of the young toward and into mature and efficient
devotion to the democracy of God."[3] The only way to escape
the inconsistencies of profession and practice is

> to teach the young that to know God we must be so-
> cially intelligent, that to make his will our own
> is a matter of social practice, and that entire con-
> secration is a strictly vocational concept.[4]

It is significant of his view that he considers leading
pupils to Christ as being the same as leading them into
Christlike social living.[5]

It is evident, then, that Coe has two different
meanings for the term, evangelism. One evangelism is the
kind which, as he says, uses "high pressure methods",[6] and
the other is the winning of the pupil to a commitment of
himself to the bringing in of the kingdom of God.[7]

. . . . . .

1. Ibid, p. 328.
2. Cf. Ibid, p. 6.
3. Ibid, p. 55.
4. Ibid, p. 72.
5. Cf. Ibid, p. 311.
6. Ibid, p. 333.
7. Cf. Coe, G. A., "Personal Religion in the Control of Con-
   duct" in Betts, G. H., Eiselen, F. C., and Coe, G. A.,
   Religion and Conduct, p. 66.

### F. The Definition and Objectives of Evangelism
### According to Hugh Hartshorne

The findings on the subject of evangelism from
Dr. Hartshorne's writings are negligible because he has very
little to say even on objectives of religious education and
absolutely nothing on evangelism itself excepting by impli-
cation. He states that the aim of the church school is
"the development of Christian character with all that this
implies both of communion with God and of service of men."[1]
He gives as the definition of Christian character,

> One that is organized consciously around the will of
> the Christian God. In fellowship with the Father,
> the Christian finds the renewal, the reenforcement,
> the forgiveness, the leadership, the permanence; in
> a word, the ideal companionship that is essential
> for the achievement of the social ideals of Jesus
> Christ.[2]

He considers the aim for the individual to be "the complete-
ly socialized will, expressed in a life which is sharing in-
creasingly in the knowledge and work of an eternal society,
and in the joy of human and divine companionship--in a word,
world-citizenship."[3] If Christian influences are brought to
bear on the child during his growth, Hartshorne says he will
some day wake up to "find himself a Christian".[4] He thinks
the acknowledgment of Jesus' leadership as Master of life
will come during the hero-worship stage of growth.[5] These

. . . . . .

1. Hartshorne, Hugh, Manual for Training in Worship, p. 3.
2. Ibid, p. 2.
3. Hartshorne, Hugh, Childhood and Character, p. 6.
4. Ibid, p. 6.
5. Cf. Ibid, p. 17.

objectives are brought out further in his worship programs
in the prayers of consecration to follow Christ[1] and in the
challenges to the Christlike life[2] and a joyous abandon to
the service of Christ.[3]

The evangelistic objective of religious educa-
tion, then, according to Hartshorne is that the child may
grow in the Christian life and develop Christian character,
and at some stage in his growth acknowledge Christ to be
his Master and Companion in the service of mankind.


G. The Definition and Objectives of Evangelism
According to Erwin L. Shaver

Dr. Shaver uses the term, evangelism, in such a
way that it is easily possible to gather his meaning of it.
He insists that "we must not rule out an emphasis upon evan-
gelism and church loyalty as essential processes of Christian
education and as goals of all its methods and materials."[4]
In developing this in the same paragraph he uses instead of
evangelism the expressions "loyalty to Jesus", "understanding
Jesus as the leader of the Christian church", and "occasions
. . . afforded for a pledge of allegiance to Jesus and the
privilege of joining the church."[5]

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Ibid, p. 42.
2. Cf. Ibid, p. 64.
3. Cf. Hartshorne, Hugh, Manual for Training in Worship,
   p. 116.
4. Shaver, E. L., How to Teach Seniors, p. 95.
5. Ibid, p. 68.

The position of Shaver is enhanced by his discussion on objectives of Christian education which, summarily speaking, is "abundant life for the individual and society."[1] This is brought out when he says:

> The course of experience through which the Senior is led should at one and the same time stress the social aspect of religion and be intensely personal. Allegiance to the cause of Jesus, obedience to the voice of God, joining the Church--such decisions should be vitally associated with, and develop as accompaniments of the activities provided.[2]

Since Shaver is an outstanding exponent of the use of the project method in Christian education, his definition of a project curriculum will explain his conception of evangelism in the educational process:

> It is a series of integrally related units of experience; each centered upon with a definite Christian purpose; each resulting in a clearer understanding of the meaning of the Christian life, a deeper feeling of fellowship with, appreciation for, and loyalty to, the person and cause of Jesus, and at least the beginnings of definite habits of Christian life and service; each representing a socially serviceable objective as well as a subjective outcome.[3]

Shaver believes that the supreme aim of religious education is to bring the pupil to follow Christ and give his body, mind, and heart to his cause.[4]

Shaver defines the term evangelism as a development of the pupil's loyalty to Christ and a "personal, vital,

. . . . . .

1. Ibid, p. 35.
2. Shaver, E. L., How to Teach Seniors, p. 95.
3. Shaver, E. L., A Project Curriculum for Young People, p. 4.
4. Cf. Shaver, E. L., Programs for Worker's Conferences, Series A, p. 17.

meaningful, driving sense of his companionship"[1] through
service to Christ and to his fellow men.

### H. The Definition and Objectives of Evangelism According to Paul H. Vieth

Dr. Vieth defines evangelism as "the regenerating work of God's spirit in the soul of man."[2] In speaking of the evangelistic appeal, he says,

> No religious education which understands itself
> will seek to accomplish its work without direct
> appeal to individual persons, without leading them
> into the experience of being saved from sin, with-
> out bringing them into clear expressions of loyalty
> to Christ and his ideals of life. Such personal
> decision for Christ is a necessary part of Christian
> living and must therefore have a place in Christian
> teaching.[3]

Although Vieth's use of evangelism is very clear, his position on its importance is even clearer when a study is made of his objectives of religious education. He says religious education must be "Christ-centered" if it is to be true to its aim.[4] He says in addition that religious education would not be true to its Master's mission if it did not recognize sin and the power of Jesus to save both the individual and the world.[5] There is no doubt as to Vieth's attitude when he says,

At the very center of the test of the effectiveness

. . . . . .

1. Shaver, E. L., Shall Laymen Teach Religion? p. 188.
2. Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education, p. 164.
3. Ibid, pp. 161-162.
4. Cf. Ibid, p. 124.
5. Cf. Ibid, pp. 140-141.

of the church school should stand the extent to which
that school is leading pupils into definite acceptance
of the Christian way of life. If religious education
means anything it must build constantly toward the
acceptance of Jesus Christ and His way of life. While
the definite fruition in personal commitment may not
come until toward the end of the junior or in the in-
termediate department, such decisions in moral and
spiritual problems as younger children can make should
not be over-looked at any stage of the child's develop-
ment.[1]

In the above statement, his use of the terms "build" and

"development" should be noted because he means that a vital

contact with Jesus and Christlike character should be a con-

tinuous reality in the process of growth in the person's

maturing experience.[2]

Briefly stated, Vieth's meaning of evangelism is

that the pupil must be brought into a real, personal exper-

ience with Jesus as his Savior from sin, and is to accept

the Christian way of life as the result of growth in the Way.

I. The Definition and Objectives of Evangelism
According to Luther A. Weigle

There is no ambiguity in what Dr. Weigle means by

evangelism. He defines his use of the word as follows:

The words "evangelism," "evangelical" and "evangel-
istic" refer to the content of the evangel, the gos-
pel, the good tidings which Jesus Christ came to the
world to bring--the good tidings of the redeeming,
forgiving love and empowering grace of God. They
do not refer to any special methods of the revival-

. . . . . .

1. Vieth, P. H., "Why a Standard for the Church School?" in
International Journal of Religious Education, May 1927,
p. 11.
2. Cf. Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education, pp.
123 and 125.

ists of our day. Any method that succeeds in bringing the gospel of Christ to bear in redeeming power upon human lives is entitled to the name evangelistic.[1]

In reference to the evangelistic motive which he considers to be essential in religious education, he explains it to be "to secure a commitment of the life to God through Jesus Christ, to provide opportunities for Christian service and to promote growth in Christian character."[2] He conceives evangelism socially as a

> constant educative effort on the part of the church . . . enfolding its children from infancy in the atmosphere of the gospel and enlisting their interest and activity, at every stage of their growth, in those ways of living and serving which show forth the spirit of Jesus.[3]

This statement involves methods which will be considered in the next chapter, but it shows the end in view in Dr. Weigle's mind.

This leads to a study of the objectives of religious education, according to Weigle, which involve the evangelistic emphasis. He says that religious education should so present Christ to the pupils that He

> Will command their admiration and respect, and enlist their loyalty and their devotion. . . and . . . make effective in the lives of children that revelation of the character of God which is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."[4]

. . . . . .

1. Weigle, L. A., "Jesus Christ, Educator" in International Journal of Religious Education, September 1925, p. 10.
2. Weigle, L. A., The Teacher, p. 160.
3. Weigle, L. A. The Training of Children in the Christian Family, p. 220.
4. Weigle, L. A., "What is Religious Education" in International Journal of Religious Education, June 1926, p. 25.

The church should foster moral and spiritual growth by
providing fellowship with God through Christ.[1] In a dis-
cussion of the Intermediate department of the Sunday school,
he says,

> We shall bend all our energies first to secure a con-
> secration of heart and will to God through Christ,
> then to help the pupil carry out his decision in
> actual living and doing.[2]

As a principle of religious education he would lead the
pupil to conscious discipleship to Jesus Christ which, he
says, is a "necessary stage in religious growth."[3]

The importance which Weigle attaches to evangel-
ism is partially indicated above. He insists that there is
no real antithesis between evangelism and education as some
claim. On this he says:

> Not evangelism or education, then, is the alterna-
> tive before the Church; its work is that of evangel-
> ism through education. The relation is organic; these
> terms express different aspects merely of the one
> great purpose and work for which the Church exists.
> We may speak with equal propriety of educational evan-
> gelism or of evangelistic education.[4]

According to Weigle, there can be no Christian religious
education without evangelism because only when God is pre-
sented as "seeking, striving, ready to forgive and redeem,
to inspire and strengthen" is religious education true to

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Weigle, L. A., "The Educational Function of the
   Church" in Committee on the War and the Religious Out-
   look, The Teaching Work of the Church, p. 39.
2. Weigle, L. A., The Pupil, p. 79.
3. Weigle, L. A., "Religious Education at the Jerusalem
   Conference" in International Journal of Religious Edu-
   cation, June 1928, p. 46.
4. Weigle, L. A., "The Educational Function of the Church"
   in Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, The
   Teaching Work of the Church, pp. 40-41.

the Gospel.[1]

Finally, Dean Weigle would not hesitate to use
evangelism and religious education interchangeably.[2] In
either case he means that the child is to be brought into
vital relationship with God through Christ who redeems him,
and he is to consciously decide to be His disciple and thus
grow morally and spiritually into the abundant life.[3]

### J. Summary and Comparison

It has been found that Betts and Coe mean by
evangelism that which is known as revivalism with its cata-
clysmic conversion experience. Vieth, Weigle and Athearn
use the term as meaning the acceptance of Christ as Savior;
Vieth places emphasis on salvation from sin; Athearn on a
distinct social life; and Weigle primarily emphasizing
growth in Christian character. Between these two groups
are Shaver and Hartshorne, Shaver having a slightly more
personal and individual emphasis than Hartshorne, but both
tending noticeably to a stress of the social implications
of this acceptance. Bower allows the meaning of evangelism
to be the acceptance of Jesus' ideals and His way of life,

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Weigle, L. A., "Why Leadership Training?" in Inter-
national Journal of Religious Education, July 1931, p. 8.
2. Cf. Ibid, p. 8.
3. Cf. Weigle, L. A., "The Educational Function of the
Church" in Committee on the War and the Religious Out-
look, The Teaching Work of the Church, p. 39.

but in practice he means permeating society with high moral
standards and religious ideals.  Betts, Bower, Coe, and
Hartshorne do not stress Christ as Savior, but rather in-
dicate that the function of religious education is to direct
the individual into the Christian life and service to so-
ciety.  Coe, especially, underestimates entirely the value
of the individual in relation to society as a whole.  It
should be said that all eight men agree, that whatever the
nature of the decision is, it is to be brought about as a
natural part of the process of growth.

# CHAPTER II

# THE METHODS OF PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WHICH
# PROPOSE TO PROMOTE THE EVANGELISTIC OBJECTIVE

# CHAPTER II

## THE METHODS OF PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WHICH PROPOSE TO PROMOTE THE EVANGELISTIC OBJECTIVE

### A. Introduction

It is the purpose of this chapter to present the various methods which the eight religious educators suggest by which evangelism is to be accomplished. Since there is so little material on direct methods of evangelism, the study of the specific suggestion regarding decision days and other suggestions regarding methods of religious education which propose to further the evangelistic objective will be presented.

### B. Methods Which Propose to Promote the Evangelistic Objective According to Walter Scott Athearn

The most explicit statement by Dr. Athearn on the method of realizing the objective of evangelism is as follows:

> The children should be led into a careful study of the life of Christ, the greatest man in history, in whom all the virtues center. There has been something wrong with the teaching . . . if this biography does not lead to the personal acceptance of the Christ as the _way_ of life.[1]

The desirable kind of teaching is to be challenging and compellingly winsome.[2] Along with instruction about Christ

. . . . . .

1. Athearn, W. S., The Church School, p. 89.
2. Cf. Ibid, p. 188.

there is to be an invitation to become a Christian.[1]
Athearn makes an issue between methodology, which he says
is secondary, and content, or the "Gospel message without
which there can be no Christian education."[2] It is his
opinion that the project method is inadequate for the "en-
larged concept of Christian education", and that "much bet-
ter results will be secured by reviving the type-recitation
plans and securing the unity of method or the integrating
principle of educational control."[3]

Dr. Athearn admits that in many programs of reli-
gious education there is a lack of warmth and vitality and
religious feeling which are characteristic of evangelistic
meetings. But he proposes creation of situations and at-
mosphere which encourage religious feeling and train in
Christian habits.[4] The whole self--feeling, will and in-
tellect--should be involved in the religious experience.[5]
For meeting the need of emotional nourishment he urges the
experience of worship which should have "beauty, sublimity
and grandeur all heading up in the uplift and joy of the
sense of the presence of God in the soul."[6]

The basic principle of Athearn's educational

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Athearn, W. S., The City Institute for Religious
   Teachers, p. 24.
2. Athearn, W. S., The Minister and the Teacher, p. 26.
3. Ibid, p. 176.
4. Cf. Athearn, W. S., Character Building in a Democracy,
   pp. 125 and 126.
5. Cf. Ibid, p. 125.
6. Athearn, W. S., The Church School, p. 259.

method is growth. The child is to be nurtured in such a
way that he always will be a Christian, thus unfolding his
natural tendency to good as a child of God.[1] This is ac-
complished by directing the "developing personality into
fullness of life" and by "formation rather than reforma-
tion."[2] Athearn upholds the educational method of evangel-
ism, saying,

> In no sense does it claim to offer a substitute for
> the direct and immediate saving and transforming
> power of God in the heart; it is rather the surest
> and most natural means of leading the individual
> into a full realization of this divine power.[3]

Another factor in method according to Athearn is more time.
He urges the need for more than a half an hour once a week
as may be seen in the following vivid statement:

> The church seeks for more time for its program for
> religious and moral education because it needs more
> time for _mental sewerage_; more time for _moral anti-_
> _dotes_; more time for constructive spiritual and char-
> acter training in order that the rising generation
> may come up out of the present-day deluge of filth--
> clean in body, mind and spirit.[4]

It has been found, then, that Dr. Athearn would
make evangelism an inherent part of the entire educational
program of the church, dependent on the natural growth of
the child in Christlikeness as his developing personality
is directed in Christian ideals and habits. It is his theory
that the pupil should never lose consciousness that he is a

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Ibid, p. [viii]
2. Athearn, W. S., Character Building in a Democracy, p. 137.
3. Ibid, p. 137.
4. Athearn, W. S., The Minister and the Teacher, p. 77.

child of God; and in order to keep him untrammeled by the
influences of the world, he considers it imperative that
the church have more time for religious education. The
growing child is to come under the warm influence of wor-
ship, a study of the life of Christ, coming in contact with
His person through a vital presentation of Him by an appre-
ciative teacher; and he is at some time in his growth to be
personally invited to express his allegiance to Christ.

### C. Methods Which Propose to Promote the Evangelistic Objective According to George Herbert Betts

In a consideration of methods according to Betts,
it should be kept in mind that he defines evangelism as "re-
clamatory conversion" which he emphatically opposes except
as a "last resort", and for which he substitutes "habitua-
tion and growth."[1] In fact, he considers the emphasis on
salvation by the atonement of Christ detrimental to the moti-
vation of religious education which he conceives to be lead-
ing the individual to live the Christlike life.[2] He main-
tains that the educational method is the "broader, deeper,
richer salvation that comes through the gradual development
of allegiance to a person and long continued practice of an
ideal in terms of conduct and character."[3]

. . . . . .

1. Betts, G. H., The New Program of Religious Education,
   pp. 30 and 31.
2. Cf. Betts, G. H., "Perennial Tasks of Religious Educa-
   tion" in Religious Education, September 1928, p. 699.
3. Ibid, p. 700.

In the event that a decision of consecration to
God and allegiance to Christ is made, Dr. Betts is espe-
cially anxious that it be brought about "by the gradual
process of habituation, springing from a multitude of acts
and experiences, and . . . not . . . one cataclysmic mo-
ment."[1] He is apprehensive of the emotional element in
decision days and especially in conversion. For, he says,

> The person who has a well-grounded set of religious
> concepts that have grown up with him from childhood,
> who has a well-defined set of religious habits ex-
> pressing themselves normally in such acts as prayer,
> worship, and service, who is religiously intelligent,
> is secure against the accidents of temporary emotion-
> al changes.[2]

Any decision that is made to accept the will of God is sim-
ply the passing

> from the unconscious and passivity of dawning life
> to the distinct consciousness and volitional atti-
> tude of mature life . . . only a conscious affirma-
> tion and ratification of what had already been uncon-
> sciously done.[3]

It is evident that the method of evangelism pro-
posed by Betts is the use of "the slow and steady processes
of growth."[4] He explains this process as follows:

> By stimulus, nurture, and guidance the individual can
> be led into the way of life set forth by the Nazarene.
> By the processes of education in religion the new gen-
> eration can have their interest intrigued for the enter-
> prises of the church, their loyalty grounded for jus-

. . . . . .

1. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Op. cit., p. 102.
2. Betts, G. H., The New Program of Religious Education, p. 62.
3. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Op. cit., p. 31
   (Statement by Borden P. Bowne in his The Christian Life,
   with which Betts agrees)
4. Betts, G. H., The New Program of Religious Education, p.25.

tice and righteousness among men, their own ideals
qualified and their characters integrated and stabi-
lized in accordance with the highest standards attained
by the human race.[1]

It is the function of a carefully planned program of educa-

tion to check all tendencies to wrong doing and allow and

encourage the good tendencies in natural avenues of expres-

sion and thus eventuate in character.[2] He believes that if

the habits are Christianized, a person is a Christian.[3]

Although the public schools may have identical

aims for character that the church school has, Betts says

that the latter has the one thing lacking in the former,

namely, "the motivation that comes from a sense of relation-

ship to a divine Being."[4] The chief method of producing

the consciousness of God's presence is worship.

> Training in worship should establish the individual
> in such vital and personal relationship with God that
> he may be made increasingly conscious of the respon-
> sibilities which that relationship entails, and be
> made increasingly able to discharge it. Worship
> should bring to the individual inner harmony, correct
> perspective, and ideal companionship. It is that
> phase of religious experience in which the individual
> comes to know God, comes to know himself and seeks to
> become identified with the plan of God not only for
> his own life, but for the world as well.[5]

The hymns to be used in worship should be expressive of the

youth's ideals for himself and for the world; they should

. . . . . .

1. Ibid, p. 25.
2. Cf. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Op. cit., p. 25.
3. Cf. Ibid, p. 96.
4. Betts, G. H., "Character Education an Objective in the
   Public School" in International Journal of Religious
   Education, November 1928, p. 36.
5. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Op. cit., pp. 451-
   452.

portray the attractiveness of Jesus; and they should stimu-
late to constant fellowship and cooperation with Him.[1]  By
means of prayer the child

> is progressively enabled . . . to share a vital and
> functioning communion with God as Father, Protector,
> Creator and Sustainer, with Jesus as Companion, Help-
> er, Saviour and Guide.[2]

In summary, the method of evangelism according to
Betts is constant stimulation and guidance of the child
through his plastic years in Christian habits and ideals
and service to others.  At a natural place in this develop-
ment, the child is to become conscious that he is, and al-
ways has been, a member of the family of God.[3]  There is no
suggestion as to how this realization is to become articu-
late in the pupil's life, unless it is done through hymns
and prayer during worship.  The child is to be so surround-
ed with religious influences that he is continually con-
scious of God as the Controller in his life.

D. Methods Which Propose to Promote the Evangelistic
Objective According to William Clayton Bower

The method advanced by Dr. Bower for all religious
education is to stimulate the pupil as he engages in "real
life-situations calculated to evoke Christian responses of
thought, feeling, motive, and conduct."[4]  The children in

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Betts, G. H., and Hawthorne, M. O., Op. cit., p. 456.
2. Ibid, p. 461.
3. Ibid, p. 47.
4. Bower, W. C., The Educational Task of the Local Church,
p. 64.

religious education will learn by becoming involved in
social activities which the teacher will help them to evalu-
ate according to Christian rules of conduct which they for-
mulate during the process.[1] In this kind of procedure, the
teacher is of utmost importance.[2] Bower feels this very
strongly, as is evidenced when he says,

> Religion is an experience calling for enlightenment,
> stimulation, and direction. No one can evoke this
> experience in others who does not himself possess it.
> No amount of professional skill can make up for this
> lack. The religious devotion of the teacher must
> suffuse organization, materials, and method. Other-
> wise, the teacher will be teaching about religion,
> but will not be communicating a real religious life.[3]

In the everyday activities of the child, he is becoming
able to control his behavior according to the highest ideals
which he learns by living and working with more mature
Christians.[4]

> Most significant of all, however, it is within the
> warm and stimulating medium of the community of Chris-
> tian persons that the growing person can be brought
> into normal and vital relation with God as the Supreme
> Person--the Supreme Member of the group. Where such a
> community springs up among even two or three such per-
> sons Jesus said he would be in their midst. Here reli-
> gious dogma and institutionalism yield in the presence
> of vital personal relations wherein creative experience
> is under way. Here prayer, the soul of religion, rises
> above the level of petition and becomes associated

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Bower, W. C., Religious Education in the Modern
   Church, p. 146, and also "Present Tendencies in Curricu-
   lum Making" in International Journal of Religious Educa-
   tion, September 1925, p. 21.
2. Cf. Bower, W. C., Religious Education in the Modern
   Church, p. 87.
3. Bower, W. C., The Educational Task of the Local Church,
   p. 48.
4. Cf. Bower, W. C., Religious Education in the Modern
   Church, p. 161.

desire and effort involved in the creation and reali-
zation of the values with which God as well as the
group is concerned.[1]

As a result of the Christian influences of home,
church and church school, the child will make public his
will to live his life according to the ideals of Christ, and
thus he "unequivocally identifies himself with the movement
of the kingdom of God." Such an action has a determining
influence on all his attitudes toward the rest of his life.[2]
Bower suggests a method by which he has been able to se-
cure a personal acceptance of Christ by practically every
member of the group which he was supervising. The students
were led in a study of the life of Christ by using an out-
line by Herbert Wright Gates, and each one wrote his own
story of the life of Jesus after studying the suggested
sources. This group was composed of children ten to twelve
years of age, and they became so interested in this activity
that there were virtually no discipline problems.[3] Prayer
is the means of securing the most personal relationship with
God which results in personal adjustment to Him.[4] The
final word on method which Bower gives is this:

> Whatever may be said regarding the patterns of at-
> titude and behavior that are commonly held in the
> minds of those who share in the religious community,

. . . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 165.
2. Cf. Bower, W. C., The Curriculum of Religious Education,
   p. 67.
3. Cf. Bower, W. C., The Educational Task of the Local
   Church, pp. 78-79.
4. Cf. Bower, W. C., Religion and the Good Life, p. 142.

their effectiveness in influencing the attitudes and
behavior of its members lies chiefly in the fact that
they are not presented as abstract ideals or virtues,
but are embodied concretely in a living Person. This
ideal Person becomes an inspiring and releasing model
for all of those who are concerned not so much with
the abstract ideal of attaining the good life as with
the desire to become like him. After all, the crite--
rion which is actually operative in most sincere fol-
lowers of Christ in every situation in which they
strive to reproduce his way of life is this: What
would Jesus do if he were in my place?[1]

To recapitulate Bower's theory of method:
Bring the child into vital association with mature Chris-
tians in order that he may learn through their example,
their guidance and fellowship with them how to establish
Christian controls in his life. By means of group prayer
stimulated by mutual striving and by means of a closer
study of the life of Jesus, bring the child into a real ex-
perience with God and Christ. Let his conduct be motivated
by the desire to act as Jesus would in any given situation.

### E. Methods Which Propose to Promote the Evangelistic Objective According to George Albert Coe

It is interesting to note that in two books writ-
ten twenty years apart, Dr. Coe holds fundamentally the
same attitude toward decision day,[2] which to him functions
as a focus or climax in the religious development of the
pupil, whereby he is brought to a deliberate acknowledgement

. . . . . .

1. Ibid., p. 174.
2. Cf. Coe, G. A., Education in Religion and Morals, 1904,
   p. 304, and A Social Theory of Religious Education, 1924,
   pp. 331 and 332.

of his allegiance to Christ and the church. He considers

such a day useful if the following conditions are met:

(1) . . . It should mark the focus of a constant
    attitude.
(2) It should not be detached from the work of steady
    development. . . The pupil should be prepared for
    the day by special instruction as to its signifi-
    cance and the privilege for which it stands.
(3) Decision-day methods are unadapted to pupils be-
    low ten, and they are unsafe with pupils under
    eleven or twelve. Yet the younger pupils may be
    taught to look forward to a day when they, too,
    shall be ready for public commitment.
(4) Parents, teachers, and pastor should all co-op-
    erate . . .
(5) The day should be followed by specefic instruc-
    tion as to the nature and duties of discipleship
    and of membership in the church.[1]

He adds that in reality each day should be marked by deci-

sions which are within the capacity of the pupil.[2] This

should result from the fact that the child is to be reared

with the supposition that he belongs to Christ and is a

Christian.[3] "Life must be made to mean to him Christian

life."[4] This is possible only when he has "cooperation

from those who have this spirit of Christ. That is, the

child must have social education upon the Christian plane."[5]

As one member of a group of Christians working with Christ,

. . . . . .

1. Coe, G. A., Education in Religion and Morals, p. 308.
   See also A Social Theory of Religious Education, p. 78.
2. Cf. Coe, G. A., A Social Theory of Religious Education,
   p. 332.
3. Cf. Coe, G. A., Religion of a Mature Mind, pp. 311 and
   325.
4. Ibid, p. 324.
5. Coe, G. A., A Social Theory of Religious Education,
   p. 146.

the child "will drink in the standards and methods of it"[1]
and "should breathe in religion as the atmosphere of the
home."[2] He gives as the method of introducing children to
Christ to have them "share in Christly enterprises" and
let them discover that they are fellowshipping with Jesus.[3]
He advises presenting the historic Christ to the child
rather than the mystic Christ who is not so readily within
the child's understanding and appreciation.[4]

Thus is seen Coe's conception of the child's re-
lation to Christ, in which is implicit his social emphasis
on method which will now be presented more fully. The in-
dividual and society are "strictly reciprocal", and "each
develops normally in the development of the other, and only
so."[5] He says that man becomes convicted of sin and is
challenged to accept Christ as he sees the pitiful state
the world is in and sets out to help bring in the kingdom
of God as it should be on earth.[6] Coe frequently emphasiz-
es the Christian religion as one of love. He brings out the
idea
.that the child can recognize the divine that he sees in the
love between people whom he observes. The response of the

. . . . . .

1. Coe, G. A., "Personal Religion in the Control of Conduct"
   in Betts, G. A., Eiselen, F. C., and Coe, G. A., Reli-.
   gion and Conduct, p. 69.
2. Coe, G. A., Religion and the Mature Mind, p. 311.
3. Cf. Coe, G. A., A Social Theory of Religious Education,
   p. 223.
4. Cf. Coe, G. A., Education in Religion and Morals, p. 404.
5. Coe, G. A., The Religion of a Mature Mind, p. 288.
6. Cf. Ibid, p. 295.

child to love is his personal experience, and it will manifest itself in his social relations.[1] His participation in social acts will result in Christian social habits, an intelligent Christian faith, and attainment of the "heights and the depths of Christian belief."[2]

Coe gives his own summary of his theory of method in the following three ideals of progressive religious education:

(a) The activity-principle, or pupil-growth through pupil-activity.
(b) The social principle, or growth through social activity into mature and lifelong adjustment to the conditions of a humane and progressive society.
(c) The divine-fellowship principle, or growth in the appreciations and inner realizations that are designated broadly as worship.[3]

Further factors in method which he suggests are the use of decision days provided they are an integral part of the whole program and have been properly prepared for, and development of the child's consciousness of Christ through participation in Christian activities with Christians.

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Coe, G. A., A Social Theory of Religious Education, p. 334, and also "The Problem of Standards in Christian Education" in International Journal of Religious Education, December 1928, p. 12.
2. Coe, G. A., A Social Theory of Religious Education, p. 311.
3. Coe, G. A., "Let Us Rethink the Purpose of Religious Education," in Religious Education, December 1928, p. 977.

### F. Methods Which Propose to Promote the Evangelistic Objective According to Hugh Hartshorne

Dr. Hartshorne maintains that worship, which he defines as "the experience of God" and "communion with God",[1] is essential to Christian character.[2] The unique contribution of the church is worship; it is the "central, vital experience in which ideals are formed and tested, old ways are renounced, and new purposes are generated."[3] It serves to motivate and interpret the factors included in complete social living,[4] and is an aid to "the ordering of life's values."[5] In his suggested worship programs, he includes actual statements of purpose and consecration to Christ, as the following prayer exemplifies:

> And now we would once more acknowledge Thy leadership, and consecrate ourselves to Thy will. If we have made in our hearts any worthy resolves, help us to keep them faithfully; and may our supreme resolution be to follow our Master, Jesus Christ, every day of our lives.[6]

In an Easter worship program the conclusion contained a challenge to accept the Christlike life and follow the

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1. Hartshorne, Hugh, "Necessary Changes in Religious Education: Changes in Religious Education Made Possible by New Knowledge" in Religious Education, April 1928, p. 331.
2. Cf. Hartshorne, Hugh, Manual for Training in Worship, p. 2.
3. Hartshorne, Hugh, "Rethinking the Function of Worship" in Religious Education, December 1928, pp. 967 and 973.
4. Cf. Ibid, p. 971.
5. Hartshorne, Hugh, "Necessary Changes in Religious Education: Changes in Religious Education Made Possible by New Knowledge" in Religious Education, April 1928, p. 331.
6. Hartshorne, Hugh, Manual for Training in Worship, p. 64.
7. Cf. Ibid, p. 100.

Master.[1] In a service on loyalty he suggests that the
child may be invited to join the church by the leader say-
ing,

> With all its mistakes, the church has at heart, as
> its sole purpose, to carry on the work Jesus began.
> And so people who want to make their efforts count
> for most usually join forces with his organization
> and work in co-operation with the thousands and thou-
> sands of others all over the world who are working
> for the same ends.
>
> And so the Church of Christ is waiting for you. When-
> ever, as time goes on, you come to feel that you
> would like to stand up and say to all the world that
> you want to be on the side of Jesus Christ, to be
> loyal to him, and to help carry on the work of his
> Kingdom, the church stands ready to receive you into
> full membership.[2]

The other element which Hartshorne stresses is
social participation, in which the child in the midst of a
religious fellowship grows up to an abundant life.[3] It is
his suggestion that the child engage in service enterpris-
es for the sake of the good he can do, rather than for any
selfish merit.[4] He says that "the blind generosity of
children is being transformed gradually into a wise Chris-
tian purpose."[5] As he engages in these activities and
reaches the early adolescent age his enthusiastic devotion
will be enlisted for the wonderful personality of Jesus
and he will acknowledge him as Master of his life.[6]

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Ibid, p. 106.
2. Hartshorne, Hugh, Manual for Training in Worship, p. 112.
3. Cf. Hartshorne, Hugh, "Religion and Education" in Inter-
   national Journal of Religious Education, January 1932,
   p. [9].
4. Cf. Hartshorne, Hugh, Childhood and Character, p. 185.
5. Ibid, p. 33.
6. Cf. Ibid, p. 42.

The methods implied in Hartshorne's writings regarding evangelism are: Lead the child into vital worship experiences in which he has fellowship with God, in which he is challenged to accept Christ and serve him, and in which he visualizes his ideals. Provide for the child opportunities of service and social activities in which he also may exercise his ideals, sense the fellowship of Christ, and grow in the Christian life.

### G. Methods Which Propose to Promote the Evangelistic Objective According to Erwin L. Shaver

If the method of Dr. Shaver were to be characterized by one word it would be "project". His reason for emphasizing the project method is to avoid the exclusively emotional emphasis of revival evangelism on the one hand and the exclusively intellectual emphasis on the other. It is his aim by the project method to obtain the most effective and permanent results by uniting physical activity, intellectual activity and emotional activity and thus provide a unitary experience for the whole individual.[1] His definition of a project shows how he aims to include the evangelistic emphasis:

> A Christian education project may be defined as a unitary experience extending over a varied length of time and involving in most cases a number of dependent projects, (a) which the learner enters upon with

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Shaver, E. L., How to Teach Seniors, p. 14.

spontaneous interest and with a distinctly Christian
motive, (b) which enlists as far as practicable the
activity of his entire being--body, mind and heart,
(c) in which he makes a distinct, lifelike contribu-
tion to the Christian world order, (d) the value of
which is increased by cooperating with others, and
which results in the experiencer's acquiring (1) some
clear and definite information as to the meaning of
the Christian life, (2) a genuine feeling of fellow-
ship with, appreciation for, and loyalty to Jesus, and
(3) at least the beginnings of definite habits of
Christian life and service.[1]

He particularly emphasizes the necessity of the distinctive-
ly Christian element in religious education.[2] He brings out the idea
that a service activity should be more than an "enterprise
of helpfulness just because it enlists their eager physical
powers"; it should contribute definitely to Christian liv-
ing.[3] As an important part of the project, Dr. Shaver be-
lieves that the young people will naturally worship in order
to have the spirit and companionship of Jesus in Kingdom-
building.[4] He makes note of the fact that worship is not
the only religious experience, but that it is a part of the
whole life experience. He cites a senior girl who defined
worship as "facing life from God's point of view."[5] In-
volved in the project is participation in life experiences
which results in skill in the Christian way of life.[6] He
maintains that fellowship with Christian people in the Chris-
tian enterprise will "develop true Christian character."[7]

. . . . . .

1. Ibid, p. 18.
2. Cf. Shaver, E. L., Shall Laymen Teach Religion? pp. 92,
   95, 97, and 100.
3. Cf. Shaver, E. L., How to Teach Seniors, p. 29.
4. Cf. Shaver, E. L., Christianizing our Community, p. 34.
5. Shaver, E. L., How to Teach Seniors, p. 81.
6. Cf. Shaver, E. L., The Project Principle, p. 14.
7. Shaver, E. L., Present-Day Trends in Religious Education,
   p. 101.

Although the project method is the main feature in Shaver's development of method, there are a few more explicit suggestions which he makes in regard to it. He asserts that the teacher must have a deep and real experience of the Christian way of life in order to lead others into it.[1] The teacher must know how to lead the pupils according to their interests, and he should live "as a worthy example of the Christ in their midst."[2] The Bible is to be used as a source of Christian ideals.[3] Instead of mere instruction, he explains how the pupil is to be stimulated to think keenly and with an open mind. He says,

> We must replace mere indoctrination of pupils by a process of group thinking. Together pupils and teachers must talk over problems and together they must seek solutions. The test of mental growth is not found in the pupil's swallowing the teacher's ideas. It is within the pupil's ability to think through for himself the great truths based upon Jesus' principles and to have the joy of religious experience which is his very own.[4]

The spiritual environment should be so shaped that the pupil receives encouragement and joy and stimulus to Christian attitudes and actions and so that he learns to love and follow Christ.[5] As another suggestion, he says,

> But after a number of experiences with various problems, with various definite and systematic excursions into the storehouse of knowledge of the past, and after

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1. Cf. Ibid, p. 141.
2. Shaver, E. L., Present-Day Trends in Religious Education, p. 8.
3. Cf. Shaver, E. L., Shall Laymen Teach Religion? p. 63, and Present-Day Trends in Religious Education, p. 97.
4. Shaver, E. L., Shall Laymen Teach Religion? p. 49.
5. Cf. Ibid, p. 59.

certain experimental courses, there is need for the formation of a creed or statement of purpose which gathers up the various conclusions into a code for the Christian life. The inclusion of one unit of this character as the final course in each department before promotion into the next is suggested as appropriate.[1]

Shaver believes that aside from the decision to join the church there should be other decisions, "forward steps", which should be encouraged. He suggests that the church school should focus the attention of the pupils on such pledges of allegiance during the season preceding Easter. Teachers, officers, and pastor should all cooperate in such a program. This should culminate in a Forward-Step or Decision Sunday in which as many as possible take part, both in preparation of pledges, posters, and the program and in actual participation.[2]

The method of evangelism implied in Shaver's project method is: Have the child engage in Christian enterprises under guidance of Christian teachers with other Christians. Have him study the source book of Christian principles, and have him go to Christ in worship in order to successfully carry out these principles in his life. By so doing the child becomes a Christian and chooses to follow Christ. This choice may well be prepared for by a planned program at promotion season or Easter season.

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1. Shaver, E. L., A Project Curriculum for Young People, p. 23.
2. Cf. Shaver, E. L., Programs for Workers' Conferences, Series A,, pp. 18-21.

## H. Methods Which Propose to Promote the Evangelistic Objective According to Paul H. Vieth

Upon the following foundation Vieth bases his methods which are to further the evangelistic objective:

In accepting the principle of growth, religious education declares its faith in the possibility for continuous enlargement and expansion of the religious experience. It recognizes that even the youngest child is a personality, living, growing, maturing, with laws of life and development through which growth may be enhanced or arrested. It does not demand a mature Christlike character in the young child, but it counts itself as having failed except as it has caused his spiritual nature to unfold and grow toward the Christ ideal.[1]

The character and personality of the child will grow in Christlikeness as his personal experiences are guided and enriched in religious education.[2] All the various aspects of his life experiences should be permeated with Christian attitudes and interpretations so that he will grow in character and be able to control his actions according to Christian principles.[3] Vieth says that the association of children with more mature Christians in the achievement of Christian purposes is of extreme educative value.[4]

Method then consists in bringing about those conditions under which enrichment and control of experience can best take place. It is but another name for arranging opportunities for learning.[5]

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1. Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education, p. 155.
2. Cf. Vieth, P. H., in cooperation with other members of the International Council Staff, The Development of Curriculum of Religious Education, p. 25.
3. Cf. Vieth, P. H., Teaching for Christian Living, p. 20.
4. Cf. Vieth, P. H., in cooperation with other members of the International Council Staff, The Development of Curriculum of Religious Education, p. 25.
5. Vieth, P. H., Teaching for Christian Living, p. 96.

Throughout the growth of the child there must be decisions--"not one, but many decision for Christ as the countless situations of life unfold before the growing child." These decisions will be progressive, advancing in significance as the child develops in the Christian life.[1] The ultimate decision which religious education should lead to is an acceptance of Jesus Christ and His way of life.[2] He says that Easter may be used as the day when the culmination of a decision for personal dedication to the Master may be brought about. He adds,

> This is right, provided we safeguard two points: (1) avoid giving the impression that such dedication once a year is enough, so that the rest of the year may be lived without this need for close fellowship with the Master: (2) avoid making the appeal so abstract as to be devoid of all tangible results outside an emotional upheaval. Dedication should have some definite setting in personal life and conduct. The call to life service may well be made the keynote of our work throughout the weeks preceding Easter.[3]

He believes that there should be direct appeal for personal decision, opportunities for a definite expression of this, and that the experience should involve a realization of salvation from sin.[4] To this end the child must be brought to understand that sin has direct relation to inner motives of

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1. Cf. Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education, p. 164.
2. Cf. Vieth, P. H., "Why a Standard for the Church School" in International Journal of Religious Education, May 1927, p. 11.
3. Vieth, P. H., "Special Days and Seasons" in International Journal of Religious Education, November 1929, p. 18, and also Improving Your Sunday School, pp. 146-147.
4. Cf. Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education, pp. 161-162.

conduct and that sin is doing anything less than a person

ought to do.[1] And also, in order to make the pupil's de-

cision intelligent,

> We must seek to expose the pupil to the matchless
> character of Jesus as we do to highest values in all
> realms, and let appreciation grow according to the
> laws of his own being. Only by such method may we
> attain to a glad and spontaneous acceptance of Jesus
> on the pupil's part.[2]

Vieth says that the method necessary in evangel-

ism is more than indoctrination,[3] more than a series of life

situations,[4] and more than good pedagogy.[5] It must also in-

clude as a very important factor a teacher who has had a

real experience with God through Christ, which experience

is imparted through the influence of his personality and

life.[6] A necessary experience which should be central in

the program of religious education is worship.

> Religious education should seek to develop within
> growing persons the ability to experience for them-
> selves the satisfaction and dynamic which grows out
> of communion with God, and the disposition to seek
> the worship experience as a regular part of the activ-
> ities of life.[7]

A genuine experience of worship is absolutely necessary for

a personal relationship with God and a right relationship

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1. Cf. Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education,
   p. 158.
2. Ibid, p. 135.
3. Cf. Ibid, p. 127.
4. Cf. Vieth, P. H., Teaching for Christian Living, p. 73.
5. Cf. Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education,
   p. 112.
6. Cf. Ibid, pp. 112, and 124.
7. Ibid, p. 114.

to society.[1] "Let us seek to recreate in them the lofty concepts of Jesus through a vital contact with the Master's experience of God."[2]

The methods of evangelism deduced from Vieth's methods of religious education are:  Guide and enrich the pupil's experience as he grows so that he will develop Christian habits and ideals and will have a real experience of worship.  So expose his life to Jesus and the Christian way of life that he will make a definite decision to accept Christ and live the Christian life.  So teach him that he becomes aware of the power of sin in his life and conscious of Christ as his Savior.

### I. Methods Which Propose to Promote the Evangelistic Objective According to Luther A. Weigle

Dean Weigle considers the greatest influence in Christian education to be "the experience of unselfish living in a Christian atmosphere as a member of a Christian social group."[3] As a member of such a fellowship the child will grow in all the Christian attributes of life.[4] He describes the stages of growth according to age divisions. Childhood is a time of widening experience and information;

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1. Cf. Vieth, P. H., "Pupil Participation in the Program of Worship" in Religious Education, October 1925, p. 375.
2. Vieth, P. H., Objectives in Religious Education, p. 138.
3. Weigle, L. A. "The Educational Function of the Church" in Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, The Teaching Work of the Church, p. 43.
4. Cf. Ibid, p. 42.

adolescence is the time when the individual takes the religion in which he has been nurtured in previous years as his own conscious possession; and when he is an adult he uses his religion in his experience.[1] To a certain extent this gives the impression that childhood and youth are merely periods of preparation for adulthood, but he says,

> The Church school should be not so much a place where children may learn something or other about right and love and religion, as a place where they may experience religion and grow in character. It should be a fellowship of children associated in Christian living, under the leadership of the Church, and consequently acquiring Christian habits, motives, ideals, and beliefs.[2]

He makes note of these natural stages in growth in order that the situations into which the child is brought may be chosen and ordered so as to contribute most adequately to his natural religious development. The experiences of the child should include, besides instruction, worship, fellowship, giving, co-operation, and service.[3]

Throughout this growth of the pupil, he should become thoroughly acquainted with Jesus and have a growing sense of his relationship to Him. "Self-surrender and entrance upon a life of discipleship are a necessary stage in

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1. Cf. Weigle, L. A., Talks to Sunday-School Teachers, p. 94.
2. Weigle, L. A. "What the Church Is Doing for Character Education, and What It Is Not Doing" in Religious Education, June 1927, p. 578.
3. Cf. Weigle, L. A. "The Present Status of the Work of the International Lesson Committee" in Religious Education, June 1925, p. 232.

religious growth."[1] Christ should be presented in such a
way that He commands the admiration and loyalty of the pupil
and the pupil understands that beneath him and about him
are the loving purpose and power of God.[2] The success of
all these suggestions is dependent on the teacher:

> Let it be granted that no teacher can beget religion
> within a pupil unless he possess religion himself. He
> cannot teach what he does not know; he cannot give what
> he does not have. A personal religious life is the
> primary qualification of a Sunday school teacher, just
> as a knowledge of subject-matter is the primary quali-
> fication of any other teacher.[3]

and

> We must be able to wake them to needs which they would
> not otherwise feel. We must have knowledge and skill
> to guide them into the truth. We shall fail if we do
> not ourselves understand the great eternal principles
> of right and mercy and truth which God has taught the
> world through His life among men and in men, and most
> of all through His revelation of Himself in Christ
> Jesus.[4]

When the pupil naturally comes to desire to make public his

confession of Christ as his Lord and Master and desires to

take upon himself the responsibility of church membership,

such an expression of desire should be accepted by the

church as fulfilling the requirements of membership. There

is no need of "intense sporadic revival efforts or mass-en-

listing 'decision days'" because the decision really comes

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1. Weigle, L. A., "Religious Education at the Jerusalem
   Conference" in International Journal of Religious Edu-
   cation, June 1928, p. 46.
2. Cf. Weigle, L. A., "What is Religious Education" in In-
   ternational Journal of Religious Education, June 1926,
   p. 25.
3. Weigle, L. A., The Teacher, p. 103.
4. Weigle, L. A., The Teacher, pp. 108-109.

as a natural result of his Christian nurture during the years.[1]

A brief summary of the methods of evangelism as they are revealed in the writings of Weigle follows: Let the pupil in fellowship with a Christian group learn the implications of the Christian life. Lead the pupil into an understanding of Christ and the Christian interpretation of the universe so that he will decide at a normal time in his growth to take Christ as the Master of his life. The pupil should be under the influence of teachers who themselves have a vital relationship with God through Christ in order that their teaching may be effective.

J. Summary and Comparison

This study of the methods of evangelism as actually stated or as implied in the methods of religious education according to the eight religious educators reveals a striking unanimity of opinion. All advocate that the child is to grow in the Christian life and at the appropriate time in his development acknowledge Christ. They all include worship as an important method whereby the child is brought into personal contact with God. They all advocate participation in Christian activities with other Christians as important in establishing Christian habits and ideals in the lives of the children. Four of them, Bower, Shaver, Vieth,

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1. Cf. Weigle, L. A., The Training of Children in the Christian Family, p. 220.

and Weigle, especially emphasize the influence of the
teacher who has had a real experience with Christ as fun-
damental in making Christianity a real and vital factor
in the experience of the pupil.

There are a few suggestions concerning methods
of evangelism which are brought out by certain ones of the
writers which are worthy of notation. Athearn is anxious
that the content of the Christian message be presented to
the pupil because he believes this is to be the basis upon
which he becomes a Christian. Betts suggests that hymns
should be chosen which give expression to Christian aspira-
tion, resolution, and ideals of youth, and which attractive-
ly present Christ. Although others imply that the life of
Christ should be studied or mention it in passing, Bower
definitely suggests a type of study whereby the child writes
his own life of Christ, and as a result of this continued
and personal contact is brought to personally accept Christ
in his own life. Similar to this suggestion, Shaver pre-
sents the value of each child making his own creed at various
stages in his growth, perhaps at promotion time. While the
others allow for the pupil making a decision to follow Christ,
Coe, Betts, Shaver, and Vieth allow for a definite day to
be used as a culminating decision day in the growth process.
They are careful to caution that it be in strict accord
with the laws of growth and that it be an intrinsic part of
the program of the year. Vieth expressly urges that Christ

be presented as Savior, and that this be done as a consequence of explaining the meaning of sin. Weigle is in agreement with this. They are concerned with the individual who in turn is a part of society, while Bower and Coe primarily have in mind social salvation.

CHAPTER III


SUMMARY AND SYNTHESIS OF FOREGOING ANALYSES

# CHAPTER III

## SUMMARY AND SYNTHESIS OF FOREGOING ANALYSES

### A. Introduction

It is for this chapter to bring together all the results of the foregoing study, which has presented the suggestions on evangelism of the individual religious educators and compared them as to meaning, emphasis, and methods. This chapter will present the totality of evangelism when all the contributions are combined, organizing the implications as to the importance of evangelism, its meaning, and methods.

### B. The Importance of Evangelism in Present-day Religious Education

If religious education is to be Christian some kind of evangelism is necessary. That which is advocated today is educational evangelism. The education of the public schools is aiming at the desired character traits of children which the Christian church wishes to develop, but it is the function of the church to provide the power and incentive in fellowship with Christ which are necessary to make these possible. The influences outside the Christian group are so far from being elevating that the child needs to be brought as frequently as possible under the influence of Christ and His followers so that he will choose the way of life which will bring him abundant life and give him a

Christian purpose for living. It is desirable for the child always to be a Christian, yet this is not possible, says another writer, unless he accepts Christ in his life as the Savior who has the power over his sins. Evangelism is important in present-day religious education because the individual needs to deliberately choose the Christian way of life while he is young and to practice it, so that the direction of his life will be established before he has to assume the responsibilities of adult life.

### C. The Composite Implications in the Meaning of Evangelism in Present-day Religious Education

The task of evangelism is no small responsibility as is seen when the various possibilities of its meaning are combined. It has a twofold responsibility--to the individual and to society.

### 1. Evangelism and the Individual

Evangelism is the presentation of Christ as the Savior, as the Master of life, as the Ideal Companion, as the Standard of life. It is bringing the individual into vital fellowship with God through Christ who exemplifies the loving purpose of God for His universe and His people. It is providing opportunities for worship and service in which a sense of the individuals relationship to God is felt and desired. It is proclaiming the good news of the insistent love of God, of His redeeming, forgiving love,

and of His empowering grace. It is Christianizing the
habits, ideals, motives, attitudes, and responses of the
individual. It is making him Christian in all his reac-
tions to life about him, it is Christianizing his charac-
ter.

Evangelism is bringing the individual to person-
ally decide to accept Christ as his Savior, to consciously
choose the Christian way of life, to consecrate his life to
discipleship to Christ. It is helping the individual to
become Christian, to realize this is possible, and to formal-
ly and publicly witness to his choice of being loyal to the
person and the cause of Christ by joining the church or by
taking a pledge of allegiance or by some other means of
identifying his life with the Christian enterprise.

## 2. Evangelism and Society

Evangelism is also the bringing into the mind of
the person the meaning of the Christian life for the social
order in which he participates. It is giving him a Chris-
tian view of all life, it is kindling the desire within him
to help forward the coming of the kingdom of God. It is in-
spiring him to consecrate his life to such a program with
Christ and other Christians; it is cooperation with others
in the service of mankind; it is the Christianization of all
the relationships of mankind; and it is the progressive
spiritual reconstruction of society according to the plan

of God. It is the bringing of Christ and His ideals into all of life, that of the individual, that of the individual in society, and that of society.

### D. The Combined Suggestions on Methods Proposed to Promote Evangelism in Present-day Religious Education

A definite acceptance of Christ and the Christian way of life can be brought about by focusing effort to precipitate a decision during the Easter season, by means of a decision day, at promotion time, in joining the church, or in taking some pledge of allegiance which indicates a forward step in the Christian life and purpose. It is suggested regarding the method of causing such decisions and making them articulate that the pupil write his own creed or code of the Christian life, that he study the life of Christ and write his own story of the life of Christ, that he make an expression of his aspirations by means of hymns and prayer in worship. It is necessary to make the child conscious of sin and its meaning and power and thus bring him to an acceptance of the One who can keep him at his best. Lead him to seek to be like Jesus and to do what Jesus would do in every situation which he meets.

There are various influences which might contribute toward developing the Christian character of the child. It is eminently important that the teacher be a vital and dynamic Christian who communicates the Christian life by

example and by the influence of an exuberant Christian personality. The teacher is to be able to stimulate and guide the child to meet his life experiences with Christian attitudes and to evaluate them according to Christian principles. The child grows in the Christian life by living in a Christian atmosphere and having fellowship with more mature Christian friends. He becomes a Christian by joining in Christian projects of service, worship, study and recreation with a group all motivated by Christian ideals and purposes. This is social education on the Christian plane.

PART II

CHAPTER IV


A QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY OF EVANGELISM AS PRACTICED

IN PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PART II

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A QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY OF EVANGELISM AS PRACTICED
IN PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A. Reason for Questionnaire Study

In a study such as this, the theoretical side of
evangelism can be better understood when it is considered
in the light of actual experience. Since it is generally
agreed that adolescence is the time for conversion,[1] and
since the people just past or in the later adolescent per-
iod are the ones who have been influenced by present-day
religious education, this group would lend itself to such
an investigation. Although there have been studies made
by Coe, Starbuck, and others on adolescent conversion,[2]
such studies were made from the psychological approach,
rather than to ascertain the contribution of religious edu-
cation to the evangelism of youth. Consequently this inves-
tigation is deemed valuable and necessary in relation to
the foregoing analysis of sources.

B. Preparation of the Questionnaire

After reading generally on the subject of evangel-
ism, the questionnaire was prepared. The purpose of the

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1. Cf. Athearn, W. S., The Church School, p. 188.
2. Cf. Starbuck, E. D., The Psychology of Religion, Chap-
ters XVI to XXI, inclusive.

-65-

questions is to find out how widely the church, and particularly its program of religious education, figured in producing the religious experience which enables the individual to call himself Christian. In order to understand the significance of the answers to the questions seeking this information, it is necessary to secure data on the age, denomination, and basic concepts which produced this experience. Allowance is made for progressive steps in the experience of the individual and for his evaluation of his experience. The questionnaire follows:

## The Questionnaire

Your age ____.                    Your denomination _____.

I. Have you had a religious experience, the result of which has enabled you to say that you are a Christian, ____.

II. What was the nature of this experience with reference to the following:
    A. Was it sudden, i.e., climactic? ____.
    B. Was it gradual? ____.
    C. How old were you? ____.

III. What part, or parts of the Church's program do you feel was most helpful in leading to this experience? (Indicate by X)
    A. Bible study ____.
    B. Sunday school class study and discussion ____.
    C. Church worship ____.
    D. Young people's informal meetings ____.
    E. Young people's society meetings ____.
    F. Personal contacts with:
        1. Sunday school teacher ____.
        2. Minister ____.
        3. Any other _____.
    G. Prayer meeting ____.
    H. Special church meetings:
        1. Missionary speaker ____.
        2. Evangelist ____.
        3. Lecturer ____.
        4. Any other _____.
    I. Any other _____.

IV. Where did you make your decision?
    A. Young people's society ___.
    B. Sunday school department worship ___.
        1. Easter ___.
        2. Decision day ___.
        3. Special speaker ___.
        4. Etc. _____.
    C. Sunday school class ___.
        1. Class discussion ___.
        2. Personal talk with teacher ___.
        3. Etc. _____.
    D. Evangelistic revival meeting ___.
    E. Some other occasion _____.

V. How did you witness to your experience?
    A. Joined church ___.
    B. Testified at a public meeting ___.
       Nature of meeting _____.
    C. Or _____.

VI. What effect did this experience have:
    A. On sin in your life?

    B. On consecration of your life?

    C. On change of habits?

    D. On friendships?

VII. In what sense do <u>you</u> consider Christ to be your personal Savior?

VIII. If you have had more than the one religious experience, describe such and indicate their significance.

IX. Do you wish <u>now</u> that your religious experience had been different? ___.
    A. Why?

    B. If so, how?

X. If you have any additional remarks you would like to make on the subject of your religious experience, please do so on the attached sheet. (This is omitted here)

C. Distribution of the Questionnaires and Returns

As has already been mentioned, the questionnaire
was presented to later adolescents and a few older people. Such
a group within easy access was the student body and faculty
of the Biblical Seminary in New York. One hundred thirty
questionnaires were presented to all the resident students,
some of the non-resident students, and only a few of the
faculty. This group is especially desirable for such an
investigation because it is inter-denominational, inter-
environmental, and representative. Another advantage in
choosing this group is that they are able to analyze their
experience and would appreciate the value of the study and
so respond more readily and carefully. Of this group there
were one hundred two replies. Two of these were found to
be inadequate to the purpose suggested and are not included
in the analysis.

D. Remarks on the Nature of the Returns

Of the one hundred respondents, ten qualified
their answer to the first question as to whether they had a
religious experience which enabled them to say that they are
Christians, five of them calling it a process, four of them
saying it was not definite or a single event, and one say-
ing, "I think so." But since these ten went on to answer the
questionnaire as did all the others who replied "yes", it
can be assumed that they all consider themselves to be Chris-
tians.

Because of the subjective nature of evangelism, and because of the possibility of variety and individuality of the answers, and because all of the questions on each questionnaire were not answered, it is difficult to classify very closely the replies to some of the questions.

The analysis of the investigation will be presented topically in the order of the questions. Some of the topics will be combined when this seems advisable.

E. Analysis of the Questionnaires

1. Age of Respondents

There were ninety-two definite statements of age. The average of all the ages is 27.7 years. These ages range from nineteen to seventy. Fifty of them are between 19 and 25, twenty are between 26 and 30, twelve are between 31 and 35, five are between 36 and 40, and five above 40. This indicates that at least half of the group actually are later adolescents, seventy-two percent are 30 or under, and eighty-two percent are 35 or under, leaving eighteen percent over 40, or ages unknown. Therefore, eighty-two percent of the group, at least, have been influenced by the newer educational methods which have been inaugurated in the present century and which have influenced religious education.

2. Denominations in Relation to the Nature of the Experience, and the Age at the Time of the Experience

There were twenty-three denominations represented

in the questionnaires turned in. In recording whether the experience was gradual, climactic or a combination of both, the denominations will be grouped as follows: Under Presbyterian will be included the Northern Presbyterians of whom there are nineteen, the Southern Presbyterians of whom there are thirteen, the United Presbyterians of whom there are nine, and the one from the Reformed Church in America; under Methodist will be included the Northern Methodists of whom there are fifteen, the Southern Methodists of whom there are four, the Free Methodists of whom there are six, and the one from the Primitive Methodist church; under Miscellaneous will be included the eleven denominations which only have one representative each. The table following will indicate the various denominations and the types of experiences in each.

Table 1.

Denominations and Types of Experience

| Denomination | Gradual | Climactic | Both | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Presbyterian | 30 | 5 | 7 | 42 |
| Methodist | 10 | 12 | 4 | 26 |
| Baptist | 5 | 2 | 2 | 9 |
| Lutheran | 5 | 1 | | 6 |
| Evangelical | | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Congregational | 2 | | | 2 |
| Miscellaneous | 6 | 3 | 2 | 11 |
| TOTAL | 58 | 26 | 16 | 100 |

There were seventy-eight who reported their age at which this experience took place or began to become real to them. Several people gave two or more ages at which the

experiences took place. In these instances, the present writer arbitrarily used the earliest age given, which probably is the age at which the person joined the church. The average age of those having a gradual experience was found to be approximately thirteen and three-sevenths, that of those having a climactic experience was found to be approximately sixteen and one-seventh, and that of those having a combination of gradual and climactic was found to be about thirteen and three-fourths.

These figures indicate that the gradual experience is the most common, and that the average age for this type of experience is earlier than than for the climactic or combination type of experience.

### 3. Parts of the Church's Program Found to Be Most Helpful in Leading to the Experience

The returns on the part of the church's program in producing the religious experience which enabled these people to call themselves Christian reveal several interesting things. First, the extreme importance of the home was manifested in that although this was not included in the questionnaire as a possible answer, yet it was added by more than half of those who responded. Another influence which is being found to be effective is the young people's conferences. This was another feature which played so important a part that it was added by several of the group. It is also noteworthy that the minister and evangelists have been indicated as having more influence than Sunday school

teachers and young people's leaders and groups. The influences which were enumerated as having been most significant in the experience of these individuals will be presented in the following table in the order of their numerical importance.

Table 2.

The Parts of the Church's Program Most Significant
in the Individual's Experience

| Influences | Times cited |
|---|---|
| Home and parents | 52 |
| Minister | 46 |
| Church worship | 37 |
| Evangelist | 36 |
| Bible study | 33 |
| Sunday school teacher | 29 |
| Sunday school class study and discussion | 28 |
| Young People's society meetings | 19 |
| Missionary speaker | 17 |
| Prayer meeting | 15 |
| Young people's conferences | 14 |
| Young people's informal meetings | 10 |
| Bible professor and classes | 8 |
| Friends | 8 |
| Catechetical class | 5 |
| Entire church's program | 4 |
| Testimony of converts | 4 |
| College prayer group | 3 |
| Young people's leader | 3 |
| Oxford group | 3 |
| E. Stanley Jones | 2 |
| Lecturer | 2 |
| Others mentioned once: Christian workers, Revival meeting, Board secretary, Older people, Church secretary, Gospel team. | |

These figures indicate that the home should be considered to be a part of the church's program, and that its cooperation should be definitely solicited in evangelizing the youth. It also shows that, in order, the minister,

church worship, and evangelists are doing more to evangel-
ize the youth than the part of the program of religious
education which deals primarily with youth which should be
producing these results.

4. Place Where Decision to be a Christian Was Made, and
How It Was Made Public

Aside from evangelistic revival meetings and
private decisions, there has been found to be a great va-
riety of places where the decision to be a Christian was
made. The results of this analysis are tabulated as fol-
lows:

Table 3.

Places Where Decision to Become a
Christian Was Made

| Place | Number |
|-------|--------|
| Revival meeting | 33 |
| Alone in room | 20 |
| Personal talk with: Friends, minister, Bible teacher, conference leader, parents, college teacher, college president | 15 |
| Entirely gradual, no particular place | 8 |
| Church service (Easter - 2) | 7 |
| Decision day | 4 |
| Young people's conference | 4 |
| Sunday school (Easter - 1) | 3 |
| Others mentioned once: Class discussion, college prayer meeting, mission, reading Pilgrim's Progress and the Bible, at work, in a grocery store, at missionary conference, Dr. Jones' meeting, Catechetical class, Thanksgiving service, prayer meeting, summer camp meeting. | 13 |

This investigation is significant to religious education. It shows that decision days have, as yet, not been very effective. It also indicates that personal counseling has not been as successful in influencing decisions as revival meetings, and that practically as many decisions have been made alone, without any particular urging and in regular church services, as at revival meetings. The pitifully small number of instances where any part of the program of religious education has been effective is cause for concern as to the efficacy of present-day religious education methods of evangelism of youth.

Thirty-five of the individuals witness to their decision to be a Christian by joining the church, twenty-four by testimony at public meetings, and twenty-three by both joining the church and public testimony. Eight indicated that their decision was evidenced in a fuller consecration of their lives, another attended more than the regular Sunday church services, four others made their decision known to friends and family, and five did not indicate any attempt to make their decision known. Several who stated that they had witnessed at a public meeting added that they already were church members.

The fact that the decisions were in most cases witnessed to in some way leads to the conclusion that this is desirable in order to give concreteness and definiteness to the decision to be a Christian.

5. The Practical Effects of Becoming a Christian

     a. The Effect on Sin

        The answers to this question are indicative of the fact that in a large number of cases, regardless of the type of experience, it had a definite and direct relation to sin in the life of the individual. Thirty-three respondents state that they had release from present sins and forgiveness of past sins. Along with this sense of forgiveness many felt a new sense of power through Jesus Christ to overcome sin and temptation. There were three who stated that their experience did not, to their knowledge, have any connection with forgiveness. Twenty-nine others were made more conscious of sin and came to abhor it. Two more said that it was not an immediate result of their earlier experience, but it was somewhat later that they became conscious of sin. Ten of the answers were to the effect that the individuals made an active attempt to get rid of all sin in their lives after the time of the experience. Three others became more spiritually sensitive and more interested in spiritual things, so that as a result sin diminished from the life.

        These figures signify that at least seventy-two of the one hundred respondents consider that sin is inconsistent with the Christian life, and that its guilt and actual presence should be removed. They show that consciousness of sin is one of the factors in becoming a Christian which must be taken into consideration.

b. The Effect on Consecration of Life

This group of respondents who are definitely in Christian work or preparing for it may have a somewhat different experience in regard to the question of consecration than the average lay Christian group. There are forty-three who said that their religious experience had led to full time consecration of their lives to Christian work; eight said that consecration to life service came somewhat later; eighteen said that they made a deeper consecration and that they were more diligent in their devotional habits; six said that their consecration had been gradual and ever growing; and seven said that their experience had given them a goal and a purpose in life. Several remarks in connection with this question indicated that the real and significant religious experience came when they were willing to fully consecrate their lives to Christ.

Whatever the nature of this group, their experience which led to consecration would indicate that there is some connection between the Christian experience and full and deeper consecration of life.

c. Effect on Habits

There were only fifty-four answers to the question on habits, and there was considerable overlapping in the answers which makes them difficult to classify. The main changes made by half of the group were gradually for the better, while a fourth of them said there was a very

noticeable change, some of them mentioning certain habits which were immediately dropped because they were hinderances to the Christian life and were not in keeping with its spirit. Eight of the group did not recall any change or need of change because they had grown up with Christian habits. Probably several who did not record anything on this question had the same answer in mind as this last one. A considerable number mentioned that their habits of prayer and Bible reading had become more regular and precious after becoming a Christian.

These answers indicate that if a person is a Christian he wants his habits to conform with the ideal for the Christian life. Since some of the persons who did not feel it necessary to change their habits and yet had an experience of becoming definitely Christian found this necessary, it may indicate that being a Christian is not always a corollary of having Christian habits.

d. The Effect on Friendships

The experience of becoming a Christian caused twenty-two to choose their friends among Christians, six to definitely change their friendships to an entirely different group, eleven to have a much higher ideal of friendship and to appreciate real spiritual friends much more, and two to have more and finer friends. With the ten who reported no change in friendships because they had always had Christian friends, this makes fifty-four who reported on

this question. Some of the qualifying statements regarding the attitude toward friends were that they wanted all their friends to be Christian, that they were much more careful whom they chose as intimate friends, that they were capable of much deeper friendships, and that their more "worldly" friends gradually dropped them if they too were not brought into this relationship with Christ.

These statements show that there must be some value in Christian friendships aside from the fact that they are socially desirable, namely, that this fellowship challenges and helps one to keep to the Way which he has chosen to follow.

6. The Concept of Christ as a Personal Savior

Since it is an objective of religious education "to develop in growing persons such an understanding and appreciation of the personality, life, and teachings of Jesus as will lead to discovery of him as Savior . . ."[1], the questionnaire sought to ascertain the meaning of the concept of Christ as Savior in the experience of the individuals.[2] It was found that fifty-four respondents definitely mentioned that Christ is their Savior from sin, and nineteen others mentioned that He is their salvation, making seventy-three who presumably connect Christ in their

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1. The International Council of Religious Education, The Weekday Church School, Bulletin No. 601, p. 8.
2. See Questionnaire, question number VII.

experience with redemption from sin. Eight others who did
not actually include any reference to sin or salvation im-
plied such when they called Christ the Power and Motivating
Force in their lives. Other single ideas will be included
in the composite definition which follows.

When all the thoughts on the Saviorhood of Jesus
are brought together, it is seen that nearly all the as-
pects of His personality have been mentioned. The respon-
dents consider Christ to be their personal Savior in that
He is their Redeemer, Savior, Master, Protector, Friend,
Comrade, Companion, and Guide. He cleansed and justified
them from all sin by His death on the cross; He purchased
God's forgiveness; He is the propitiation for their sins;
He lived and died for the salvation of all men; He is their
Deliverer as far as possible from the consequences of past
sin; He is their hope of eternal life; He saves from daily
sin; He frees from sin's power; and He is the Way of recon-
ciliation with God. They also consider Him as a personal
Savior because He gives power to overcome temptation and
meet suffering; He enables one to live a victorious life;
He is the source of real life and strength in this world;
He is a personal spiritual force in one's life; He is the
giver of abundant life; He brings one into personal rela-
tionship with God; He makes one a child of God; He helps
in daily tasks and problems; He reveals life with peace,
joy, and purpose; He gives a new outlook to life and new

vision; He teaches the only way of life; He wins and ener-
gizes one's life by His constraining love; He is One whose
love never faileth; and He provided and provides for every
need.

In these answers Christ is brought out as being
Savior in His relation to the pardon of man's sins, in His
enabling to overcome present sin, in His revelation of the
personality of God, in His making access for man to God,
and in His guiding presence with man.

7. Other Experiences Considered Significant

This question as to whether the individual had had
more than one significant experience was so stated that the
respondent did not need to feel obliged to answer it. Con-
sequently there were twenty-two who did not answer, probably
feeling that there was nothing especially significant or
outstanding to tell. Twenty-four said that their experience
was constant and continual, ever growing; and twenty-two
others said they had too many to recount, perhaps enumerat-
ing one or two which were especially important. Eighteen
respondents definitely mentioned one other experience, seven
told of two later experiences, and five explicitly related
three experiences. Most of these experiences occurred after
the individual had joined the church, while some of them
were after an early emotional experience which had not had
real significance at the time.

In order to describe these experiences, four of

them indicated that it has been an ever deepening exper-
ience and eleven of them said that it is a continual growth.
There were thirty-two who mentioned that their later ex-
perience was one of consecration of their entire life for
the ministry, for missionary service, or for full-time ser-
vice. Ten others said that they had made one or more re-
consecrations of their lives at various times. Some of
these and others too, making thirteen all together, said
that accompanying this experience of consecration or at an-
other time they had definitely felt the infilling of the
Holy Spirit. Twelve said that at this time or another they
had come to realize the full meaning of Christ as Savior.
Five of the respondents described how they had drifted away
from the spiritual life and in a later experience had re-
turned.

These statements regarding other experiences in
the life of the individual indicate that there may be sev-
eral vitally significant religious experiences, the most
frequent being a fuller consecration for service to God.
They indicate that these may be daily experiences in as much
as the individual maintains a vital personal fellowship with
God and makes daily consecration of his life. They show
that it is not enough to bring the child to the place where
he becomes a church member, because there may be other ex-
ceedingly meaningful experiences later on; and even his orig-
inal experience may acquire a fuller significance as he be-
comes more mature in the Christian life. They reveal that

the religious life and its concepts are progressive in sig-
nificance to the individual; and that his new problems
which he has to face as he has larger responsibilities and
wider experience may call forth deeper and more heart-search-
ing experiences with God. In other words, the work of evan-
gelism is never safely considered finished even in the case
of one individual.

8. The Attitude of the Respondents toward Their Own Exper-
   ience

Of the fifty-eight respondents who said their ex-
perience was gradual, thirty-one said that they did not wish
it were different because the process is worthwhile, it made
the relation to God stable, it enables the individual to
understand others' doubts, it allowed time for thinking and
for necessary training, it abides, it is specific enough;
and one said he was glad that a radical change was not neces-
sary. A few others who said that they did not wish their
experience had been different qualified their answers by
saying they wished that they had had more faith and courage,
that they had understood earlier that it is possible to have
such an experience in faith without entirely understanding
everything in it; and another wished that it had been more
continual. Twenty-three said that they wished the exper-
ience had been different. Four of these wished it had been
earlier because they regretted the delay and that they had
not been more useful earlier in life. Eleven wished the

experience had been more definite and concrete, more force-
ful and real, a more outstanding and vivid event because
the earlier experience was not significant enough, because
one would be able to point to the time when he had been
saved, and because he would be better able to understand
the meaning of being a Christian. Others wished their ex-
perience had been deeper and more complete, that it had
been more progressive and with less slumps, that the moral
issues had been emphasized more, that there had been more
Christian fellowship and nurture, and that there had been
more counsel which would have avoided morbid introspection
and doubt.

Of the twenty-six individuals whose experience was
climactic, eleven were satisfied with their experience be-
cause, one said, "Such an experience gave impetus and a new
motivating force, grounded me in the knowledge of the power
of Christ to save and to guard from sin." Another felt that
such an experience was necessary to shake him out of his com-
placency. A third, although satisfied with the experience,
wished it had been sooner. Six others wished the experience
had been earlier in life because it would have saved wasted
years in high school, because certain sins in one person's
case and a year of skepticism in another's might have been
avoided, and because it is desirable to be led into a fuller
knowledge and richer fellowship earlier. Seven who wished
the experience had been different explained that it was

their part of the bargain with which they were dissatis-
fied, one wishing he had not drifted away after conversion,
one that he had been more surrendered and done more for
Christ and prayed more, one that the glory of the experi-
ence of receiving the Holy Spirit had been maintained, one
that he had been more faithful and aggressive, one that he
had been more consecrated, one that he could have the abil-
ity to appropriate all the promises, and another that he
had not made some mistakes.

Of the sixteen whose experience was a combination
of both the gradual and climactic, there were five who did
not wish it had been different. Another qualified his an-
swer saying that it was necessary that way, but that he wished
that he might have been more earnest from the beginning.
Five wished their experiences had been different in order to
have saved wasted time and defects and to have been more con-
secrated, and in order to better understand the "Christian
experience." Another of this group wished that he had be-
come a Christian at the age of eleven when he joined the
church instead of six years later, another that he had not
broken his closer fellowship with the Savior at times, and
another that his experience had been a more definite turn-
ing from sin.

Of those having a gradual experience, almost half
were satisfied with their experience and about two-fifths
wished that it had been earlier or more definite. Of those

having a climactic experience, about two-fifths of them
were satisfied, while half of them would have preferred to
have had it earlier or that they had been more faithful.
Of those having a combination of gradual and climactic ex-
perience, a third of them were satisfied and a third would
have preferred it had been different, giving reasons simi-
lar to the others.

The implications from these replies are that any
kind of an experience may be entirely satisfactory to the
individual, depending on his type of personality and his
background; that a gradual experience is more common than
a climactic experience; that whatever the nature of the ex-
perience, care should be taken to make it significant to
the individual; and that it is desirable to definitely be-
come a Christian in the earlier period of adolescence in
order to save possible years of usefulness.

9. Interesting Additional Remarks by the Respondents

The majority of the additional remarks have been
incorporated in the previous treatment where they applied.
But some of the remarks which make significant suggestions
for evangelism will be included here. In speaking of influ-
ences, one person said that he could not remember a time
when he did not know Christ and want to please Him; another
said that he felt that a growing process in a vitally Chris-
tian home is the best means of conversion; and a third adds
that Christian influences make one sensitive for actual

decision time. Although some felt that adverse influences had caused them to drift away from their original experience, three of them said that it wasn't until they had to grapple with unbelievers who challenged their faith that they themselves really came to a vital experience with Christ. One person stated that joining the church was not an inner experience of much consequence, but that it served to keep him within the sphere of Christian influences which was valuable. Another gives warning of a danger when he says, "I have considered myself a Christian since I was twelve, but discovered recently that I was accepting something handed down which was not my own."

Three were particular to mention the importance of Bible study which revealed the Master and gave an incentive to change a sinful life, which led to an experience of receiving the Holy Spirit and which has brought many of the greatest experiences through obedience. There were two who remarked that the important thing was to know one was saved, and that the means does not matter. Others believe that there is too great a lack of personal workers, and that there is too much of a tendency to take the experience of a child reared among Christian influences for granted. One person said on this subject, "The personal interest of an understanding and vital Christian could have saved much wasted time by committing me to a greater degree of consecration and discipline." Another individual said that he does
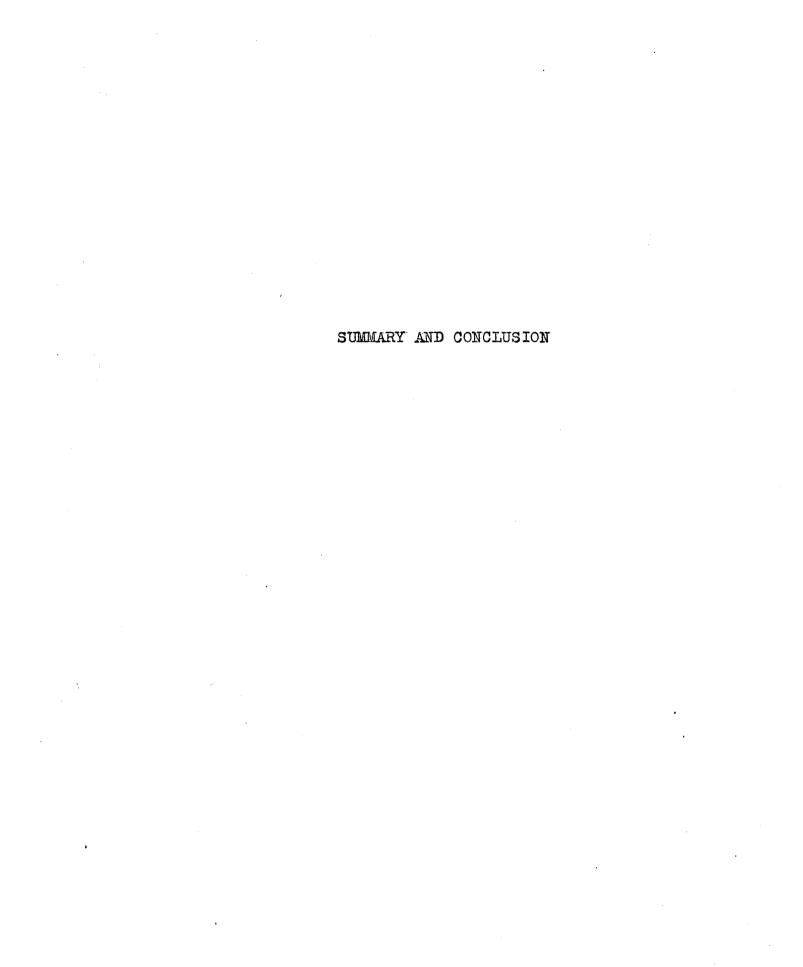
not approve of any kind of coercion such as signing pledges and resolutions and similar devices, because they set up a conflict in the life of a person who finds that he is unable to keep them. Instead of these, he would suggest inspiration with suggestion, humility, a sacrificial spirit, tender love, and sympathy which correct one and stimulate him to his best.

These additions suggest that a Christian envir-ronment may make a valuable contribution to the life of the individual, that a person needs a faith which cannot be shaken by adverse influences, that Bible study can bring a person to a real experience with Christ, that personal counseling is often quite necessary, and that as far as possible such methods as will lead to conflict within the personality of the individual should be avoided.

## F. Summary

This questionnaire investigation reveals that evangelism is effective in adolescent experience; that a gradual process of becoming a Christian is most common, although a considerable number have had either a climactic experience or a combination of the two; that the most influential factor in bringing people to decide to be Christian is the home; that methods of evangelism in religious education have not been sufficiently effective in actually bringing about a decision to become a Christian, but that

this has been left to the church, the minister, or an evangelist; that the decision should be evidenced by some outward expression; that sin has had to be dealt with in most cases by accepting Christ as Savior; that a fuller consecration of life is involved in the Christian experience; that habits and friendships may be effected when one becomes a Christian; that there are apt to be more experiences than one, these later ones being more significant sometimes than the first; that the two greatest reasons for any dissatisfaction with the religious experience were because it had not been significant enough or else that it had not been early enough; and that the environment, the Bible, and personal counseling may be instrumental in leading to a decision.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

## A. Restatement of Purpose and Procedure

It was the purpose of this study to determine the importance of evangelism in present-day religious education, its place in religious education, its meaning, how it is to be accomplished, and how effective the methods now in use have been.

The study was conducted in two parts. First, the writings of eight prominent religious educators were studied and their views compared and synthesized. Second, a questionnaire was presented to a group of later adolescents, and their experiences in regard to evangelism in present-day religious education studied. The implications of this two-fold study with respect to present-day evangelism and religious education will be presented now.

## B. Implications with Respect to Evangelism in Present-day Religious Education

As a result of this study there have been found certain implications regarding evangelism which are important to present-day religious education. These are divided in accordance with the two methods of investigation--the foundational study of sources and the questionnaire investigation.

1. Implications Resulting from the Analysis of the Writings
   of Present-day Religious Educators

(1) Evangelism is not a separate function of religious
education, but rather it is involved in all the methods of
religious education as their ultimate objective.

(2) Evangelism is a tremendous task conceived as aim-
ing to Christianize the individual and society. It is the
whole process of education in the Christian life and the
consummation of this process in a definite committal of the
individual's life to Christ who saves from sin and to His
way of life reaching out into the wider relationships be-
tween individuals and groups.

(3) The methods of evangelism have not been treated
sufficiently or fully in religious education. Method has
largely been left for the individual religious educator to
work out for himself by trial and error. He has been expect-
ed to transmit his own experience by some mysterious pro-
cess.

(4) Evangelism should be accomplished without the neces-
sity of an emotional, cataclysmic conversion experience.
This is considered possible because the child is to be reared
among Christian influences and is never to know himself to
be anything else but a Christian. This is termed education-
al evangelism.

(5) There is a wide difference in opinion as to the
place of an experience of the atoning work of Christ in the
life of the individual. Coe does not believe it is necessary;

he considers it to be detrimental to development of Christian character by educational methods. Vieth, Weigle, and Athearn believe the redemption through Christ's death is essental to the experience of becoming a Christian. Bower, Betts, Coe, and Hartshorne make no reference to the work of salvation, except by implication when they definitely oppose a climactic conversion experience, and these four tend distincly toward a social gospel. Hartshorne intimates that the thought processes during worship may include a mild realization of atonement as it affects his actions.

(6) The principle method of evangelism is that of growth in Christian habits and ideals by participation in Christian social enterprises. Christian habits and Christian living are considered by some as indications of the fact that the individual is a Christian.

(7) There is general agreement that worship is an important method of bringing the individual into personal contact with God. It is expeeted to be a means of bringing the child to realize that he is cooperating with God and Christ in any of his undertakings, and to have a sense of fellowship with Him.

(8) There should be a personal decision to acknowledge Christ as one's Ideal, Companion, Master, and Lord, and a definite pledge of one's life to the Christianizing of all social relations. The trend is toward a humanistic striving to accomplish the ideal in individual habits and the

social order.

(9) These decisions may be secured by the focusing of efforts leading to a decision day, perhaps at Easter time. Other methods leading to decision are Bible study, making a creed, or other projects, and response to an invitation. The major emphasis is on the influences preparing for a decision, such as cooperative activity, singing of hymns, contact with mature Christians, and being influenced by the personality of a vitally Christian teacher. There is very little said in regard to how the decision is actually to be clinched.

(10) The idea of growth in Christian character and habits involves certain elements of choice, which become progressively significant with the advancing years of the pupil. It is believed that the choices are conditioned by habitual activity which has been developed through nurture under Christian influences.

2. Implications Resulting from the Questionnaire Investigation

(1) The home is the most influential element in making the individual a Christian. Young people's conferences and Bible study also have made an important contribution.

(2) Individuals other than youth leaders are, for the most part, bringing the pupils to the place where they definitely decide to become Christian. This seems to indicate that Sunday school teachers and young people's directors

have not considered the actual securing of decisions as their duty; or else they have not felt sufficiently prepared for the task.

(3) Sin and salvation have been considered as factors which had to be dealt with in the experience of becoming a Christian. The experience made many of them conscious of sin. In relation to this sin consciousness, the individual came to know and accept Christ as his Savior.

(4) Habits did not always need to be changed, unless they were unchristian. But those who had what they considered Christian habits, did not consider themselves Christian necessarily.

(5) Christian friends help one in his Christian life in leading to decision and in helping keep one true to his decision. Real spiritual friendships become better appreciated when one definitely chooses to be a Christian.

(6) There are many experiences which are significant in the Christian life, and these are apt to be progressive in their importance. Two of the most common of these are the receiving of the Holy Spirit and a fuller consecration of the life to Christian work.

(7) Whenever a decision is made in relation to the Christian life, the outward expression, such as joining the church, should have a real inner significance to the individual.

## C. Critical Estimate

A concept of evangelism which involves both the individual and society is acceptable. But the present writer does not feel that the individual can adequately help to Christianize society without first having received the power and incentive to do so in his own life. Besides, apart from God's regenerative power, there is a danger of exalting the ability of the individual, and he is apt to be trying to lift himself "by his own boot-straps."

It is possible for the individual to receive Christ without over-emphasis on emotion, although some emotion is in accord with life itself and makes the experience deep seated when it involves the heart. The use of worship and service have been suggested as providing opportunities for emotional outlet, but these are not enough without the realization of the meaning of Christ in securing one's salvation. It is not true to the Biblical conception of personality to say that there is no need for the atoning work of Christ; since all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.(Romans 3:21). As Vieth says, there is a sense in which sin and willfulness are in everyone's life regardless of all the Christian influences surrounding him.
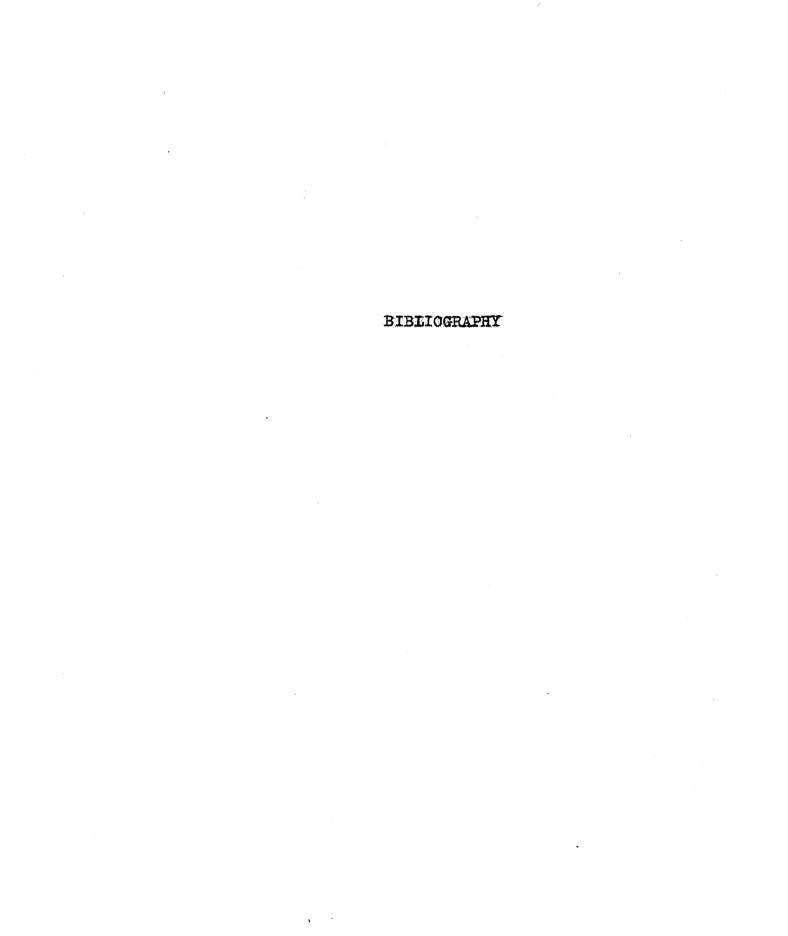
The questionnaire study does not bear out the view that a person is always a Christian if his habits and conduct are Christian to the observer. There certainly is a real place for the development of Christian habits and character in the child's growth, but, nevertheless, there

seems to be a plus which he acquires when he realizes what Christ has done for him and accepts Him as his Savior. This is the dynamic influence which sends the individual out to win others, and ultimately will bring in the kingdom of God.

There is real value in the influences suggested for evangelism, such as worship, decision days, Bible study, making a creed, and coming in contact with other Christians in a cooperative Christian project activity. But the matter of invitation has been left rather vague. If mass-evangelism is so largely in disrepute, it seems as if the only alternative would be personal invitation which should be the responsibility of every Christian leader and layman. The writer feels that suggestions as to this method of evangelism have not been developed fully enough, and that its importance and potentiality have not been realized. The suggestion as to the importance of the home and of young people's conferences is a valuable addition to the methods suggested in the sources. Both these agencies should be enlisted in the evangelism of youth.

It has been made plain that the religious experience is a continual process and is never finished. This statement in the sources has been verified in the questionnaire study. The suggestion for a decision day which is known as "Forward Step Day" is valuable in this connection. This allows for different stages of growth within the same group.

In conclusion, the study has led the writer to regard the definition of evangelism given in the Introduction to be adequate. It is the presentation of the Christian message, or Gospel, in such a way as to make Christ a personal factor as Savior and Lord in the life of the individual by his own conscious choice of Christ and his commitment to the Christian life. So conceived, present-day religious education must of necessity be evangelistic.

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