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Evangelism and Christian education: my feld education experience and its effect upon my ministry

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PROJECT ESSAY

Evangelism and Christian Education:

My Field Education Experience and Its Effect Upon My Ministry

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of Requirements for the Master
of Religious Education (MRE) de-
gree

Submitted By

Larry G. Britton

March 29, 1976

Interdenominational Theological Center
Atlanta, Georgia

7.32

Evangelism and Christian Education

My Field Education Experience and Its Effect Upon My Ministry

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Preface

We are often reminded that the Christian church exists today because of the evangelistic spirit of the first Christians. Consequently, we are told that we should all, as Christians, be evangelists. To most, to evangelize is to witness; however, the problem is most Christians do not know how, when, and where to witness. Therefore, if the perpetuation of the church is dependent upon the majority of Christians being witnesses, the church is doomed. Fortunately Christianity is strong enough, at present, that the minority can carry the load for the 'silent majority'.

Nevertheless, those of us who feel the urge of evangelism continue to 'plug' for it. In this writing I am attempting to 'plug' for evangelism by way of Christian education. Should we few evangelistic enthusiasts be able to carry the load of Christian perpetuation, still there is the hope for Christian dominance of the modern world. Consequently, we are yet 'a voice crying in the wilderness' for more evangelists to carry the gospel to the lost and the dying.

This writing offers yet another glitter of hope that more Christians will recognize the need to be about our Father's business. This is a call to Sunday School, Bible band and training union instructors to evangelize thru Sunday School, Bible band, sewing circles, etc. These are the areas of Christian education thru which evangelism must go.

Acknowledgements

This writer is indebted to a number of people who have given valuable assistance in making this project essay and this juncture of educational achievement possible.

I must render thanks to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Richard Britton, who saw me through undergraduate school and thus made it possible for me to enroll in graduate school.

Next I wish to express appreciation to my dean - the Reverend Oliver Haney - for invaluable assistance over the past two years. Along with him I must express, as best I can, my gratitude to Bishop J. O. Patterson and his indomitable vision for making C. H. Mason Seminary a part of the Interdenominational Theological Center.

To my advisor Dr. Jonanthan Jackson, thanks for guidance, advice and 'dy-no-mite' Christian education classes. Also muchas gracias to Dr. Bennie Goodwin whose inspiration and information thru Christian education classes enhanced this writing immeasurably.

To Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Bass whose assistance came at a very crucial hour, thanks very much. Also, thank you, Mr. C. Young.

To Bishop Audley King and the Second Jurisdiction - many thanks. And thanks to Bishop Harold Bell, in whose church I worked and learned much.

Lastly to my wife, Loretta, thanks a million for your invaluable assistance.

Introduction

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

Evangelism and Christian education are both well-used terms in the Christian church. However, definitionally and theologically these terms are often ill-used. Evangelism is usually relegated to a select few, to those with zeal and to those who profess to have a special calling to the ministry. Christian education is also reserved for volunteers or those who are specifically trained for this ministry. Perhaps this is all right. However, the need exists for the church to recognize the crucial necessity of evangelism and Christian education. Also, there needs to be a thorough examination of the priorities and objectives of these ministries. To have an interest in evangelism and not in Christian education or vice versa is fallacious.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The purpose of this paper is to help bring about an awareness of the interdependence of evangelism and Christian education. Not only this, this writing is an attempt to bring evangelism thru Christian education into the limelight. And, in this writing, I describe my field education experience and how I attempted to apply evangelism thru Christian education.

METHODOLOGY:

I have made use of Christian writers who advance the idea of evangelism thru Christian education. By defining these two ministries and describing their relationship, I hope that the reader will begin to share my opinion concerning the significance of the relationship. I have also made use of my field education experience to develop my points concerning this synonymous relationship.

LIMITATIONS:

My major limitations have been those placed upon me by the very nature of this project essay. Also my own relatively recent discovery of the significance of the subject matter makes the amount of material consulted limited.

I. Evangelism: Defined from Two Perspectives

A. The following is a general, but hopefully encompassing definition of evangelism. The definition is one adopted by a Presbyterian General Assembly. Therefore, I shall refer to the definition as a theological one.

"Evangelism is the presenting of Jesus Christ...(by a messenger of God)...so that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, men shall come to put their trust in God through (Him), to accept (Him) as their Savior from the guilt and power of sin, to serve (Him) in the vocations of the common Life."¹

It is a matter of..."witnessing the gospel to the total personality of man in his sinful condition so that he may respond to Christ...."²

To 'witness' is to tell others or to share with others our experience with Jesus Christ. The 'gospel' is the message of Christ's crucifixion, resurrection and exaltation. One's 'total personality' is his mind or intellect, will and emotion. One's 'sinful condition' is the result of his estrangement from God. Evangelism seeks some type of 'response to Christ'. That response of course may be negative or positive. The positive response sought is belief in Jesus Christ and repentance of sin.

B. The next definition of evangelism is based upon my own personal understanding of it. I have drawn upon various sources in developing my definition.

Evangelism is the process of winning converts to the Christian faith by teaching, preaching, canvassing, and propagandizing so that Christianity might become a dominant force in the existing world order.

Evangelism is often used synonymously with revivalism. However, this writer suggests this kind of usage is erroneous in that it limits the real scope and potential of evangelism. The above definition is an attempt to encompass the full scope of evangelism. Included in the process are teaching, preaching, canvassing and propagandizing.

The teaching or educational aspect of evangelism shall be dealt with under the topic "Evangelism and Christian Education." However, it may be suggested here that to divorce the teaching aspect from evangelism is to make the whole task more difficult and ultimately self-defeating.

Preaching is the more familiar method of evangelism. There is a growing group of Christians who feel that with the emergence of the other successful methods of evangelism, preaching can be and should be de-emphasized. On the other hand, writers such as Richard Owenbey, suggests that the emotional warmth, the genuine zeal, and the response - provoking effect of preaching is significant enough and unique enough (to preaching) that the de-emphasis of preaching would be detrimental and likely fatal to any program of evangelism.

The methods of canvassing and propagandizing are enacted by way of mouth, tracts, handbills, tent crusades, radio, television and door-to-door campaigning.

II. Christian Education: Defined from Two Perspectives

A. Donald Stewart in Christian Education and Evangelism

offers the following definition of Christian education:

"Christian education is the experience in the process of which the individual learns about God as revealed in Jesus Christ and with the aid of the Holy Spirit accepts him as personal (Savior) and Lord, grows increasingly toward the attainment of complete selfhood in Christ, and casts his lot with those of like faith in personal and communal witness in all aspects of life."³

One of the major phrases in this definition is "grows increasingly." Christian education is for the developing of disciples. It is Christian nurture. Christian education is about making the Christian faith a pervasive and prevailing way of life.

B. Based upon my personal understanding: Christian education is the process of informing, instructing and enhancing people concerning God, the gospel, and the church of Jesus Christ by means of preaching, teaching, defining and enacting the meaning and the motives of the gospel in order for individuals to be brought into the faith and for those already in the faith to increase in knowledge and spiritual strength.

III. Evangelism and Christian Education

A. The similarities in the definitions of evangelism and Christian education are indicative of the inseparability of the two ministries of the church. The ultimate objectives of these two ministries are distinct, yet unified and dependent. Put simply, evangelism is the task of winning disciples; Christian education is the task of developing disciples. "You are evangelizing when you are reaching out to the people outside the fellowship. You are educating when you are building up those who are in the Christian worship."⁴ To ask which comes first - evangelism or Christian education is like asking the chicken or egg question.

However, C. E. Autrey, in You Can Win Souls, suggests "...men are not saved by the teaching process but the teaching process prepares man for a saving experience with God."⁵ This seemingly suggests that Christian education comes first. On the other hand, Paul Loth, president of the Evangelical Teacher Training Association (ETTA), suggests: "Without evangelism the educational process becomes routine and unproductive."⁶ Therefore, one may infer that these ministries are crucially interdependent. Christian education complements evangelism and vice versa. "Christian education must be evangelistic to keep it from becoming simply formal intellectual exercise. ...(Evangelism) must be educational to keep it from being merely emotional and superficial."⁷

B. The educational departments of the local congregation are the most strategic places for evangelistic thrusts. According to Elmer Towns of the Evangelical Teacher Training Association, Christian education plays two major roles in its relationship with evangelism: (1) it provides contacts and (2) it prepares for conversion. It provides contacts through the many programs such as youth meetings, leadership training, camping, young married clubs, etc. These programs bring people to the church where they can hear the gospel. These persons' relations to the church are through these educational agencies. Therefore, Christian education must be the principal evangelistic force if these people are to be won. The opportunities for witness through these agencies are numerous.

Preparation for conversion is one of the "raison d'etre" of Christian education departments. Christian education agencies should provide "...a systematic study of both the Word of God and the great truths of our Christian faith."⁸ Consequently Christian education has divers opportunities to present the claims of Christ to the students. Teachers must teach for results; effective teaching produces conversions. One must understand the what and the why and how of the gospel before he can respond to it. "The teacher - evangelist should be guiding the pupil into learning experiences that prepare him for salvation, lead him to Christ and establish him in his faith."⁹

So, it is obvious that the center of Christian education is and should be evangelism. In other words, the primary educational objective is evangelism. "Christian education inspired by the spirit of evangelism seeks methods by which God

and man may work together for the creation of Christian personality."¹⁰ As the teacher does the work of an evangelist, so does the evangelist affirm great gospel teachings. In view of this interrelationship of these two ministries, evangelism not only asks - Will you be a Christian? - but, what kind of Christian will you be?

Elaborating upon evangelism in Christian education

Richard Owenbey says:

"Using the word evangelism in its broadest and best sense, we see that it must include all possible vital and effective processes in education, while Christian education worthy of the name must involve the evangelistic spirit and objectives. These processes of evangelism and education do not conflict but are integral parts of a unified spiritual process."¹¹

There is then no conflict that exists between evangelism and Christian education. Any type of conflict is a creation of those who are not aware of the potentiality in the interworking of these two ministries. Some religionists believe that Christian education tries to replace meaningful and often supernatural encounters with the Divine. In other words, they feel it is an attempt 'to teach religion out of books.' One might question the necessity of Christian education if it aimed primarily at transmitting knowledge out of books. However, Christian education is an attempt to develop correct attitudes and motives, as well as to develop character. "Christian education is not Christian...unless it utilizes educational methods in working with God to make

Children, youth (and adults) genuinely Christ-like."¹²
The Christian educator actually should be as dependent upon divine resource and inspiration as the evangelist is. By the medium of man's intellect, God has always revealed truth.

Evangelistic enthusiasm, warmth and sincerity is limited and short-ranged without the aid of genuine scholarship and learning - that is, if the church envisions a Christian world order. "... (A) Christian world cannot be created without enthusiasm...but needed is...the plus of sound processes of Christian education."¹³ An educational foundation is essential to evangelism. Even in mass evangelistic appeals, one must make his appeals under the assumption that his listener's have some prior knowledge of Christ and salvation. "If the sowing, the cultivating and the reaping must all be done at the same time..., "¹⁴ the job is awesome.

By the same token Christian education with its sound teaching is not enough. It needs the warmth and enthusiasm unique to evangelism. Religion (in this case Christianity) can be taught "...but it is more effectively taught in situations...charged with the evangelistic spirit and saturated with genuine religious contagion."¹⁵

IV. Evangelism and Christian Education in Field Education

A. My Field Education in teaching experience was in Knoxville, Tennessee at Paradise Community Church of God in Christ. The church is a small storefront mission church located on Ben Hur Street in East Knoxville. Ben Hur is a very strategic location for a black church in that it is in the heart of a growing black populace. I was thrust into a precarious, yet challenging and potentially thriving situation. It was a precarious situation because the church was less than two years old. The only pastor the church had ever had, left abruptly without notice. Following his departure over half of seventy members disappeared. Some joined other churches; others returned to the streets. This church had begun as a way station for the poor, the outcast, the drug addict and the wino. Thus this precarious and seemingly disastrous departure of the pastor made the situation challenging. The church's past rapid growth made me realize its potential.

I went to Paradise Community Church for two reasons initially: (1) as a Field Education requirement and (2) as a favor for the Knoxville District Superintendent, the Reverend Harold Bell. I stayed there from February, 1974 to May, 1974 because it represented an evangelistic challenge primarily through Christian education.

Since the church had originated as a mission church under the auspices of Grace Tabernacle Church, I did my work there under the direction of Grace Tabernacle's pastor, Reverend Bell. He gave me three options as to how I would like to carry out my duties as "Interim Associate Pastor." Because all pastoral appointments come through the State Bishop and because our church's Constitution specifies it, at this time, Reverend Bell was the official pastor of this mission church left vacant.

My options were (1) to take full charge of the church by conducting services on Friday night, Sunday morning and Sunday night; (2) to have Sunday School and to transport the members to Grace Tabernacle for morning worship or (3) to work with any program he deemed expedient until the State Worker's Conference in April, at which time he would recommend me to the State Bishop as pastor. I selected option number two - to conduct services on Friday and Sunday nights and to have Sunday School - leaving there at 10:30 to go to morning worship at Grace Tabernacle. I shall discuss my attempts at evangelism and Christian education in each of these services.

Friday Night

From the outset, I must admit that Friday night was my least effective service. My efforts on Friday night were evangelism through preaching and pastoral teaching. I was assisted by a missionary from Grace Tabernacle. She was to

conduct services in my absence, as well as to assist in services while I was present. My major obstacle was my absence during the week. I had no real means of building the attendance on Friday nights. The zeal that existed at the end of Sunday night fizzled out before Friday night. My major need was innovation for Friday night. The problem with this was that innovation sometimes resembles inconsistency, especially to the group to whom I ministered. The composition of the group seldom varied; neither did the number. The Friday night group consisted of ten to twenty adults and five to eight children who were forced to come. These adults were always older than 35, but younger than 65. They were accustomed to Friday night service being a time for testimonies and praise. Of course this can be meaningful worship. However the meaningfulness is questionable when the same testimonies and same praises are done in the presence of the same people week after week. Though I labored to alter this cycle, it was too ingrained to affect in four months' time. The only variable was my selection of sermons and lessons. The emotional response to my sermons and lessons were positive. However, I tend to think that even the response was conditioned.

Christian Education: Sunday Morning

The brightest aspect of my field experience at Paradise Community Church was through Christian education. Perhaps my success was indicative of the poor condition that the Christian education department was in before I took over. At any rate, I feel that, had I been at Paradise Church longer than four months, and had Paradise Church been resurrected, it would have been because of the Christian education department.

The small attendance of Sunday School did not hamper or discourage my efforts. It warranted the facilitation of only two classes: an adult class and a children's class. The adult class consisted of 5 to 10 adults; the children's class consisted of 10 to 12 children. Both classes initially made use of our denomination's publications.

It was my variation from the denominational publications that aided me in winning the interest and cooperation of my adult class members. The selling point was class input. These adults had much to offer in light of experience (religiously and secularly). Focusing upon a study of Jesus from a theological, existential, and experimental point of departure, these adults were surprising in their comprehension and enthusiasm. Each week I gave them some simple, but in depth project of research into the life, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus. Through this 6 weeks of study the majority of the students began to understand for the first time who they were in light of Jesus Christ and the Christian church.

Along with this study we looked at traditions of the Christian church, as well as of the sanctified - Pentecostal church. We studied the validity of certain traditions, such as dress codes, in light of contemporary society and the Bible.

This was my evangelistic thrust - through the Sunday School. I made an effort to win the people into a genuine saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. I did not doubt the genuine experience in Christ that many of them may have already had. On the other hand, I stressed an intellectual conception of Jesus Christ and the church so that these people might be able to share their experiences. I scheduled a series of evangelism classes. The interest was high. All my students expressed their desire to attend these Saturday evening classes.

Sunday Night

I assume Sunday night was better and more effective than Friday night because Sunday morning was still fresh upon most of the people's minds. We tried a variety of worship experiences. On the first Sunday nights we shared in communion services at Grace Tabernacle. On the other Sunday nights, Supt. Bell invited quests for musicals, fellowships and worship services. The biggest attraction was a musical in which Bill Moss and the Celestials concertized. On the nights when there were no specials, I encouraged dialogue on issues such as community drug abuse and what Paradise Church could do about it. We began to make plans for Paradise

Community Church to really become a "community" church. We began setting up plans for developing certain objectives to make our presence known in the community. The radio and bus ministries were considered.

The glitter of progress and advancement was snuffed out as quickly as it had appeared. The original pastor reappeared one weekday, called a secret meeting of all his old members and decided that the best course for his church was another denomination. Because of the way the legal incorporation of the church was worded, Paradise Church became a part of another denomination without any opposition. All our plans and hopes were drowned. For many of the old members the new course was the right course. Maybe it was. For me it had proven to be a challenging and inspiring experience. And, I feel that the very fact that I had sowed some seeds of evangelism in Christian education meant I had succeeded in many respects.

B. My Field Education in Administration experience was at Grace Tabernacle Church of God in Christ, Knoxville, Tennessee, pastored by the Reverend Harold Bell. I began this work in May, 1975, following my tenure as interim pastor of Paradise Community Church. I did not begin this work as a field education project. However, since I continued this work through the summer, I was given permission to use it as my field education in administration project.

Grace Tabernacle, as a church has been organized since 1967. Grace Tabernacle has been at the present location, 3536 Skyline Drive, for the past five years. The ministry of the church has been extensive. The need for the position that I hold arose as a result of this extensive ministry and as the result of the extra responsibilities that the pastor assumed after being appointed to the executive board of the jurisdictional church in Tennessee and subsequently being appointed jurisdictional bishop of South Carolina.

My responsibility was that of chairman of the Commission on Ministries. The Commission on Ministries was a newly formed group, created by the pastor. I was its first chairman. Therefore, the work that I have been involved in over the past eight months has been almost entirely organizational. I am able to entitle this section "Evangelism and Christian Education in Field Education" for two reasons: (1) because the ultimate purpose of the Commission is evangelism through Christian education in essence and (2) because within the Commission, I serve as chairman of the department of evangelism, while training a Christian education director.

The following are the introductory statements that are a part of a publication that the Commission on Ministries is completing. In developing this publication, the Commission made use of, at my request, several publications of the United Methodist Church's Council Ministries.

The Commission on Ministries

Planning is a "must" if the church's ministry is to be successful. Cooperation and Coordination are the keys to fulfilling the church's total ministry. The Commission on Ministries of Grace Tabernacle is to coordinate and to help bring about cooperation in the total ministry. The Commission on Ministries of Grace Tabernacle is a pastoral appointed group representing the diverse, but uniquely cohesive, ministries of this local church.

All needs and concerns of the local congregation relative to the ministry of the church can be brought to the Commission on Ministries for consideration, deliberation and appropriate action.

The Commission on Ministries began its work by identifying needs and setting priorities for action. The Commission has attempted to design the ministries to meet specific needs; after which it commissions task groups to implement the ministries.

The work areas or task groups consist of the following:

1. Evangelism.....L. G. Britton
2. Mission.....L. P. Morrison
3. Christian Education.....L. M. Britton
4. Auxillaries.....C. Thompson
5. Music.....L. Brown

Each chairperson of these specific areas (1) shall acquire helpful materials and input, set up objectives, determine methodology (to reach objectives), and incorporate (via pastoral approval) these goals into the total ministry of the church; (2) "shall interpret and recommend to the...(Commission on Ministries)...ways of implementing the mission of the Church represented by the area"¹⁶; (3) shall make specific recommendations to the church at large, to enlist support and participation.

In the process of determining objectives and methodologies, each area of the Commission on Ministries bears in mind universal goals of the church such as:

- (1) Nurture - deepening and strengthening the commitment of children, youth, and adults to Jesus Christ.
- (2) Fellowship - building person to person relationships.
- (3) Worship - developing and enhancing the worship experience of persons individually and of families.
- (4) Outreach - reaching out to bring people into the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and to serve the community in the name of the Lord. *

In other words, the Commission takes its mandate from the needs of people that are apparent around it. Therefore, we, the Commission on Ministries, approach this grave task and spiritual responsibility with an acute sense of urgency

* adapted from Council on Ministries of United Methodist Church.

and sincerity as we seek to relate to and to humbly serve our neighbors as (serving) ourselves.

As revealed in the preceding statements on the Commission and its purpose, each area of the Commission was to develop objectives, methodologies and recommendations. As chairman of evangelism within the Commission, I developed these three things for that specific department. The following is the introductory statement I presented in the publication:

"Evangelism"

"Evangelism in the local church is vitally concerned with the whole gospel for the whole congregation."¹⁷ Evangelism or a department of evangelism within the framework of the church is theologically sound. Not only this, evangelism should be the hub about which the church - its programs, practices and priorities - revolve.

The following definition of evangelism is the one I have selected for the Commission:

"Evangelism is the presenting of Jesus Christ so that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, men shall come to put their trust in God through (Him), to accept(Him) as their Savior from the guilt and power of sin, to serve (Him) in the fellowship of the church, and to follow (Him) in the vocations of the common life."¹⁸

In view of the potential and scope of evangelism found in the word itself, one writer suggests:

The word evangelism is derived from the Greek word "evangelion", which is translated the "gospel." Inside the structure of evangelion is the word evangel which encompasses the heart of Christianity. "Evangel" means good news about God's nature, purpose, power and love.¹⁹

A complete program of evangelism seeks to employ all valid methods: educational, revivalistic and personal. The Commission on Ministries suggests the employment of three major methods of evangelism: (1) personal (2) educational (3) mass.

The foundations of evangelism are (1) the word of God (2) the Holy Spirit (3) Men.²⁰ These foundations provide for a viable structure in that they allow for ministering to man totally. Totality comes to evangelism when it is centered in Jesus. "By word and deed Jesus brought the claim and the power of the reign of God to bear on the whole person in his whole world."²¹ The Commission assumes that this type of evangelism, alters society at large as it changes individuals. When the spirit and mode of Christ's evangelism pervades and prevails, nothing or no one is exempt from redemption; no facet of life is left untouched. "This wholistic approach to evangelism proclaims boldly the power of the gospel to save persons and to remodel the world."²²

Evangelism Within the Commission

As chairman of the Commission on Ministries I have had the awesome task of developing, directing, and enacting the spiritual mission of Grace Tabernacle Church. In the process of attempting to do this I have had to give guidance to the individual directors of each area of the Commission.

The young lady appointed as Christian education director did much research in her attempts to develop her objectives, methodologies and recommendations. In the process of her research, she discovered that to wear the title of "Christian Education Director," one should have at least a bachelor's degree in that field of study. Therefore, at her insistence, I have taken extra time in helping to develop her program. With my influence she has made evangelism her central emphasis in Christian education. In developing her strategies she has as her ultimate test of validity the question: Does this allow for an evangelistic thrust?

One of my most enthusiastic members of the Commission is the director of the Mission department. In developing her objectives she wondered if a duplication would exist in the objectives of evangelism and mission. After consultation and a little outside help from the pastor, we concluded that the emphasis for mission would be first physical help, then spiritual help, and for evangelism, vice versa.

The department that now lags behind all of the others

in the Commission is the music department. This is because the original appointee was replaced when the pastor saw fit to give her another position in the church. At present the young man who replaced her is a student at Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee. His minor is in music. Hopefully, this training will enhance this area of the Commission.

My major assistance for this area is in structure and form of the objectives and methodologies. Other than this I am about making sure that we keep a qualified person in this position. My knowledge and abilities in the area of music are totally minimal.

Under the heading of Auxillaries falls the Usher board and the acolytes. My primary consideration in this area was convincing the director of the major significance of the ushers and acolytes in the success and enhancement of the worship services. After a session in which I discussed the form and the meaning of objectives, the director developed some excellent objectives.

The Commission on Ministries included the following items in its budget presented for approval for January 1, 1976 through December 31, 1976:

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| A. Missions | B. Evangelism | C. Music Department |
| 1. Home | 1. Mass | D. Auxillaries |
| 2. Foreign | 2. Radio | E. Christian Education |
| 3. Church | *3. Dial-a-Prayer | F. Civic and Charitable Institutions |
| 4. Conferences | *4. Bus | G. Other Churches |
| | | H. Miscellaneous |
- * re-installation tentative.

Because I serve(d) a dual role as an executive board member of the church at large and as an Administrative Area chairman, during the budget hearings I asked the Mission director to represent the Commission. She presented the proposed budget well. It was approved by the executive board unanimously. One of the items on the budget was "conferences." The Commission feels that by sending its directors to various conferences to acquire information in these areas, the local departments will be enhanced. Also, we have made plans to invite trained persons in each area to conduct conferences at Grace Tabernacle Church. The conferences will be open to the church membership at large. They will be a part of my attempt, through the Commission, at making Christians aware (educating) of their responsibility to the world (society) through the church evangelistically.

V. The Ultimate Effect Upon My Ministry

The ultimate effect that evangelism and Christian education have had upon my ministry cannot be justifiably measured until I have been in the ministry for a longer period than I presently have. However, I shall attempt to capsule the ultimate effect evangelism and Christian education have had up until this point in time.

My understanding of both evangelism and Christian education have been enhanced greatly during my studies at the Interdenominational Theological Center. However, the Center has been a greater aid to my understanding of Christian education than it has to my understanding of evangelism. My personal study of evangelism was the result of my zeal for evangelism. I discovered that much of my zeal was 'not according to knowledge.'

What Christian education is and the need for it in black churches and black society was an awareness that I achieved through my Christian education professors. The keen interest that I acquired for Christian education made me wish that it somehow coincided with that area of the ministry to which I felt called by God - evangelism. Little did I know that these two ministries were inseparable, when I enrolled in my first Christian education course.

I recognized the need for an evangelistic thrust when I accepted the challenge of Paradise Church. The needs that existed there prompted me to organize a series of evangelism.

classes. Heretofore, I had taken advantage of the Sunday School hour to evangelize. Those evangelism classes never occurred because of the abrupt re-appearance of the former pastor. Nevertheless, I had not wasted my time. Two weeks later I conducted my first seminar in evangelism in Nashville, Tennessee.

From May of 1970 until May of 1975 I had served as secretary of the department of evangelism of Tennessee Second Jurisdiction Church of God in Christ.

One month before our annual state evangelist convention in May, 1975, the president of the evangelist board asked me to serve as instructor for the day sessions. I accepted and realized that my preparation had not been in vain.

Making use of many principles of Christian education, I conducted a 5 - day seminar entitled "Soul Winner's Institute." I awarded all of those who completed the seminar with certificates of achievements. The objectives for the seminar were:

- (1) to begin the ground work for soul winners' training programs in every local church (in the jurisdiction).
- (2) to inform and instruct concerning the problems and procedures of soul-winning.
- (3) to point out the necessity for developing the soul-winning ministries within the total program of the church.
- (4) to examine: the hospital ministry
the prison ministry
the door-to-door visitation ministry.

(5) to bring into focus the priorities of a congregation's ministry.

(6) to put the principles learned in the seminar to work by going out into the immediate community to witness.

Through this seminar I was evangelizing by educating Christians.

Following this seminar I was asked to conduct a Leadership Development seminar in Murfreesboro, Tennessee on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University during a state youth convention. Again principles of Christian education were valuable as I bore in mind the ultimate goal of Christian church leaders - evangelism. This was the week of June 15, 1975.

The next month I was in Jackson, Tennessee at a Christian education convention. There I conducted a seminar based upon Melvin Banks' Winning and Keeping Teens in the Church. The seminar was entitled "Winning and Keeping Teens through Innovative Christian Education." The very name connotes evangelism through Christian education.

In August in Nashville at our jurisdiction's annual convocation, I was asked to teach classes under the heading "Evangelism." Also in August I conducted classes at my state Bishop's local church, as well as at the local church of a district superintendent. The next month I was in Knoxville conducting evangelism classes at a district conference.

At the beginning of fall semester, I was asked to teach a class in the C. H. Mason Bible College, sponsored by the Central Georgia Jurisdiction. I volunteered to teach a class each Monday night in evangelism. The textbook from which I taught was entitled Evangelize Thru Christian Education.

As a result of my zeal for evangelism that was given direction in Christian education classes, I began to find my place in the ministry. I understood more clearly that preaching was only one aspect of a multi-faceted ministry. The meaning of Christian education, I discovered, could not be elaborated upon apart from evangelism. It was obvious that I had been favorably victimized by some instructors who had been evangelizing (winning converts) through Christian education (courses).

CONCLUSION

This writing has been attempt to depict my personal convictions relative to Christian education and evangelism. The time and effort put into this writing has been a learning experience and has enhanced my belief that these two ministries are essential to the maintenance, growth and development of the Christian church. By way of thoroughly defining these two ministries I hope to have shown their interdependence. Also, I have tried through this writing, to exhibit the fact that there is no conflict between evangelism and Christian education.

By using the examples of evangelism and Christian education in my field experiences, I have attempted to show the significance and essentiality of these ministries in action. In effect, the sections on field education are my exemplification and justification of my initial three sections.

Evangelism and Christian education, soul winning and soul nurture, are the crux of the Christian movement. This fact cannot be over-emphasized. Evangelism thru Christian education is and can be very strategic in any church program.

FOOTNOTES

¹Minutes of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Part I, Journal and Supplement, 1955, p.131. Cp. Stewart, Christian Education and Evangelism, chap. 5.

²Elmer Towns, Evangelize Thru Christian Education (Illinois: E.T.T.A. Press, 1970), p.8.

³Donald Stewart, Christian Education and Evangelism (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), p. 98.

⁴Howard Ellis, Evangelism For Teen-agers (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952), p.15.

⁵C.E. Autrey, Basic Evangelism (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1951), p. 92.

⁶Elmer Towns, op.cit.,p. 4.

⁷Ibid.,p.6

⁸Ibid.,p.28.

⁹Ibid.,p.30.

¹⁰Richard Owenbey, Evangelism in Christian Education (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1941), p.66.

¹¹Ibid.,p.56-7.

¹²Ibid.,p.57.

¹³Ibid.,p.58.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.,p.65.

¹⁶James Alexander, "Guidelines for Evangelism" (Nashville: United Methodist Publishing House, 1975),p.5.

¹⁷Ibid.,p.6

¹⁸Stewart, op.cit.

¹⁹Mendell Taylor, Exploring Evangelism (Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1964), p.19.

²⁰Elmer Towns, op.cit.,p.20.

²¹James Alexander, op.cit.,p.11.

²²Ibid.

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