1

The Evangelical Synod and the New World of America

H. Richard Niebuhr was a "cradle" member of the Evangelical Synod of North America. His father, Gustav Niebuhr, had emigrated from Germany as a young man, attended the Synod's Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, and served as a parish pastor in San Francisco, Wright City and Saint Charles, Missouri, and Lincoln, Illinois. His mother, Lydia Hosto Niebuhr, was the American-born daughter of the Evangelical pastor with whom Gustav worked in the first of his charges, as well as an unflagging source of support as her husband carried out his ministry. Like his brother Reinhold, born two years before him, Richard followed the prescribed path to ministry in the Evangelical Synod by leaving home as a teenager to attend Elmhurst College, the denomination's preparatory school near Chicago, and going on to seminary at Eden.

For the decade and a half after his seminary graduation, Niebuhr pursued a career of distinguished service to the Evangelical Synod.

Following his ordination in 1916, he served as the pastor of Walnut Park Evangelical Church in north St. Louis. In 1919, he was appointed to the Eden Seminary faculty. Then, after a two-year leave to complete both his Bachelor of Divinity and PhD at Yale Divinity School, he became president of his alma mater, Elmhurst College, in 1924. He returned to Eden Seminary in 1927, this time as academic dean, a position he held until he went back to Yale in 1931, this time to join the divinity school faculty. During this same period, he also chaired the committee conducting the negotiations that eventually led to the merger of the Evangelical Synod with the German Reformed Church in 1934.

Unlike the other German immigrants that by 1840 had started coming in greater numbers to the Midwest, especially the Lutherans, those who were drawn to the Evangelical Synod had no serious objections to a union church identity. In fact, congregations chose to retain the *Evangelische* name of the German state churches composed of Lutheran and Reformed elements, resulting from a union the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm III had first initiated in 1817. "In so far as they agree," the Augsburg Confession, Luther's Small Catechism, and the Reformed Heidelberg Catechism formed their confession of faith. Disagreements were relegated to the light the Holy Scriptures might shed on them and to liberty of conscience.[1]

In addition, the warm concern for the physical as well as the spiritual welfare of both the individual and society that the *Innere-Mission* (Home Mission) movement championed among German Evangelicals was just as evident in the New World denomination. Gustav Niebuhr, for example, vigorously supported the Synod's Emmaus Homes for the care of epileptics. Also, while serving his parish in Lincoln, Illinois, he not only oversaw the work of a newly

1. Carl E. Schneider, *History of the Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Church* (St. Louis: Eden, 1925), 12, 39–43.

constructed Deaconess Hospital, but took an active interest in the budding deaconess movement for women desiring to do this kind of church work.[2]

Despite this ecumenical frame of mind and heart, the Evangelical Synod was slow in adapting to its New World context. Niebuhr's brother Reinhold remembered it as a "little Germany": congregations continued to use their native tongue in worship and confirmation classes and to operate their own parochial schools. Little or no knowledge of English was necessary for most of their clergy to function. More than four decades after its founding, Eden Seminary petitioned the Synod for permission to add a faculty member to teach classes in English; this request was turned down because the Synod's board of directors feared that this might deprive vacant German-speaking congregations of the kind of pastor they needed. Hence, some American-born ministerial students who began their preparation at Elmhurst College were forced to learn to improve their German. When they arrived at Eden, they were the only ones on campus capable of conducting classes in America's official tongue.[3] Until World War I, the Synod also kept close ties with the union church in Germany. Eden Seminary in particular took from it not only its academic standards, but most of its faculty and nearly half of its students. Since he was an American-trained pastor, therefore, Gustav Niebuhr was denied an appointment to its faculty.[4]

Like their father, Richard and Reinhold believed it was time for their Synod to "come out of her shell" and enter the mainstream of America's culture.[5] At Eden, the brothers found in Samuel D. Press a mentor who was willing to listen to their kind of voice. While he

2. William G. Chrystal, *Niebuhr Studies* (Reno: Empire for Liberty), 31–34.
3. Ibid., 79
4. Ibid., 32.
5. Gustav Niebuhr, "Die Zunkunft der Deutschen Evang. Synode von N.A.," *Der Evangelishce Diakonissen Herold* 7, no. 3 (February, 1913): 8.

had studied theology in Germany, Press did not disavow his native-born American roots. He not only became the first professor to teach his seminary classes in English; he freely introduced his students to the theological contributions of Americans like Jonathan Edwards and Mark Hopkins. In his course on the Old Testament prophets, moreover, he repeatedly drew his students' attention to the utterances of Amos as a model in addressing contemporary social problems.[6]

At the same time, it took the cataclysm of a world war to shake the Evangelical Synod out of its ethnic isolation. The outbreak of conflict on the European scene in 1914 created a loyalty issue for pastors and members of their congregations. Pro-German sentiments were natural and common enough to motivate another Niebuhr brother, Walter, to serve briefly as a war correspondent accompanying the Kaiser's armies on the battlefields of eastern Europe. Like him, Richard soon questioned the tremendous sacrifice of human life on all sides that warfare entailed. In addition, Reinhold chose to cite "disloyalty" as a "suspicion" that German-Americans had brought upon themselves.[7] For Richard, it became another reason for making English the primary language for worship in the north St. Louis congregation he was serving.

Once America entered the war in 1917, Richard Niebuhr joined his brothers in endorsing the Allied cause. When Reinhold became the executive secretary of the Synod's "War Welfare Commission," Richard stepped forward to take care of its business and correspondence in the St. Louis area. He also enlisted as an army chaplain, though he never served troops in combat because orders for him to report for chaplaincy schooling did not come until the summer of 1918. As William Chrystal has pointed out, these patriotic gestures became a "matter of necessity" for the Niebuhr family and

6. Chrystal, *Niebuhr Studies*, 49–75.
7. Reinhold Niebuhr, "Failure of German-Americanism," *Atlantic Monthly* (July 1916): 13–18.

their Evangelical Synod. Despite what they said and did to the contrary, German immigrant ties still made Reinhold subject to government investigation, and Walter resigned from the Creel Commission because he was suspected of being a "Kaiserite" and a "fifth columnist." Furthermore, wartime patriotism, which Reinhold in particular had grounded in President Woodrow Wilson's plans for a more lasting peace, quickly gave way to disillusionment on the part of the entire Niebuhr family when the Treaty of Versailles brought most of those same plans to naught.[8]

Nevertheless, World War I was a catalyst for the Americanization of the Evangelical Synod. For Richard, reform of its education system for preparing church workers was the place to begin. He and Reinhold believed that the programs at Elmhurst and Eden, patterned as they were on German models of higher education, had given them insufficient exposure to the social and physical sciences and had failed to challenge them when it came to researching primary sources. He not only called for more attention to the need for graduate scholarships, but became something of a consumer of graduate-level classes himself. Besides the work he did for his doctorate at Yale, Niebuhr enrolled at Washington University in St. Louis, Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary in New York, the University of Michigan, and the University of Chicago. In addition, he advocated for equally sweeping revisions in congregational educational programming.

The Synod positions Niebuhr assumed during the 1920s provided him with a golden opportunity to make changes in his church body's educational system. During his three-year tenure as president of Elmhurst College, the initiatives he advocated included accreditation, curriculum revision, reorganization of the faculty into eight

8. Chrystal, *Niebuhr Studies*, 111.

departments, a faculty ranking system, a salary scale, and a program of sabbatical leaves. He also drew up a set of ambitious plans to create a school endowment, expand the campus facilities, and open Elmhurst's doors to students interested in careers other than church work, to women, and to the community at large. The creation of a federation of several small Protestant colleges in the Chicago area was also part of his vision.

H. Richard Niebuhr scholars tend to overlook these years of his life. I have chosen the writings that follow not only to illustrate the formative influence on him of the Evangelical Synod, but to demonstrate the beginnings of his strong determination to help this immigrant church become a denomination that would more fully take up its role in the world of America to which its members had been coming for nearly three-quarters of a century.

Youth

Written toward the end of H. Richard Niebuhr's second year as a student at Eden Seminary, this poem expresses the heady optimism of a young idealist. World War I, which began later that year, was a crushing blow. At this point, Niebuhr had no inkling of the difficult days that were to come for the church in which his spiritual formation was taking place. On the other hand, the poem provides evidence of his lifelong sense of being a participant in the history of the whole Christian church on earth and of God being present in every moment of its unfolding story.

Source: *The Keryx* 4, no. 3 (June 1914): 1.

My life is strong with the strength of years
That were and are to be;

My soul is bold with the vanquished fears
And the victories I shall see;

My thoughts are the gleam of a prophet's dream,
The light for men unborn—

The heritage of death is mine,

To give the living a right divine,
And to put the wrong to scorn.

My hands are filled with deeds of fame
Of soldier, saint and sage;

My heart has brought the martyr's flame
A fire to burn and rage;

The sacrament of their blood is spent,
To hallow and make me true—

Their faith, their strength are mine to share,

Mine is the blessing of their prayer,
I'll be the answer, too!

I am both yesterday and to-day,
And to-morrow is mine to choose,

Mine is the victory in the fray,
And mine the blame, to lose.

But I am a son of the Mighty one,—
I battle in His name:—

His strength is mine to do the right,

My arm is His to win the fight—
Should I be put to shame?

The Hope of the World/Eden and the War

During his last year at Eden Seminary, Niebuhr served as the editor of its student publication, The Keryx. *These two brief editorials demonstrate how deeply affected he was, and would be throughout his life, by the human toll of modern, industrialized warfare. While he shared the sympathy many members of his Evangelical Synod felt for the German cause, he also saw America as a nation that stood in the vanguard of world progress. Already in 1914, moreover, he was placing his hope, as he would in subsequent world conflicts, in a divine purpose that transcended victory by either side—a purpose that would serve to further God's kingdom on earth.*

Sources: *The Keryx* 4, no. 4 (September 1914), 13–14; *The Keryx* 4, no. 5 (December 1914), 13.

The Hope of the World

The heavy pall of death lies on the whole wide world. Destruction grins with hideous malice from the blackened devastation of ruined cities, that once lifted their proud domes and spires to the eternal blue. Gaunt misery stalks over trampled fields where golden grain, that was to nourish men, lies trodden in the dust; stalks stealthily into the huts of peasants, into the silent cities, where the noisy wheels of industry are stilled. Famished women shriek to feel its cold breath, cold as from a tomb; palsied men cannot drive its ominous presence from their doors, and wondering, wide-eyed children begin too soon to understand the woe of life, that is the woe of death.

The cold rain drizzles on marred faces of the dead, staring with blank eyes up to a dismal heaven. The shambles reek with blood—blood, and death as far as the eye can see. But even the bitterness of dying seems sweeter than the agony of living, living in blood of comrade and of foe.

Men have unlocked the doors of hell and mankind lies crushed beneath its iron terror.

The clutch of death is at the throat of humanity. And we, far from its awful presence, feel the breath of the world choking and sobbing, the terror of death beating in its heart. Overpowered by the inutterable [*sic*] woe of brother-men, we are so weakly helpless to alleviate their pain. We would share their agony if it might thereby be lessened. We would gladly give our lives if death might thereby be satiated. But there is naught to do.

Naught to do? Nay, there is much to do, new life to give, a new world to build, a new heaven to raise. In the heart of America beats now the life of the world. The burden of man's progress rests in its hands. America must be strong to bear the burden onward and upward. America must not fail in the crisis.

Death shall not be victorious! Oh, America, you are the womb of life today. Pray to your God, that your child may be a man-child, strong unto peace, strong to bear the sorrows of a world, to dry its tears and bring a new life, a new hope to those in the shadow of death.

Eden and the War

We at Eden have a most eager interest in the progress of the European war, especially because of the fact that several of our comrades have friends and relatives in the struggle. One of Cramer's brothers was killed in an engagement in France, while the other lies wounded in a hospital. Many others have relatives for whom they fear—so Jersak, whose parents reside upon the battle-fields of the Russo-German conflict. Beccken, Bergstraesser and Stange have had news of the death or wounding of persons very close to them.

The greater part of us can happily and with a good, clear conscience place our sympathies on the side of German. Not only

because we trace our descent from Germany, or because our education is under direct German influence, but because we have the conviction that under all the diplomatic sugar-coated statements, there is some truth and justice to Germany's claims.

Nor are we at Eden men among those who pray for an unconditional peace at any price. Although our hearts yearn for Germany victorious, our prayer has been and will be that peace may come only when it shall be to the furthering and strengthening of the kingdom of God in the belligerent nations as well as for the world. Not a peace based upon sentimentality, but a peace bringing a moral victory to all nations is our prayer. We know that suffering has furthered the kingdom of God heretofore on earth, and we know that this terrible scourge of war can and will be used by the Omnipotent for humanity's uplift and for the extension of the kingdom of heaven.

The Purposes of Catechetical Instruction

An often-overlooked biographical detail is the fact that in 1919 Niebuhr served as the Evangelical Synod's Sunday School Executive, a position that gave him the opportunity to actualize some of his hopes for educational reform in his church body. Confirmation was the equivalent of believer's baptism in the Synod, a rite of passage that was preceded by a period of intensive catechetical instruction. The experience was a source of great pride among the Synod's congregations and their families. In this essay, therefore, Niebuhr took a bold step by calling for the modification of this tradition. Yet he was convinced that religious education involved not just inculcating abstract truths through memorization but also preparing young people for real-life situations in the world.

Source: *Religious Education in the Evangelical Synod, 1920–1923: Official Report of the Third National Convention of the Evangelical Sunday Schools, St. Louis, Missouri, June 28–July 3, 1923* (Board of Religious Education of the Evangelical Synod of North America), 235–42.

May I begin by making a change in my announced subject: There are two words in it to which exception may be taken: catechetical and instruction. They are both good words but they do not deserve to be exalted too much. I should like to substitute the terms: The Purposes of the Pastor's Class in Christian Education. It would be carrying coals to Newcastle were I to try to show how necessary it is to have a purpose in mind—a real purpose—in our work as educators; yet it is evident that frequently our teaching is being carried on without a definite purpose in mind—often because we have so many purposes that we cannot center upon one. The purposes which are presented to us by tradition and modern education theory—all claiming to be

the only purposes which deserve any kind of consideration—need to be criticized by every individual teacher, certain ones need to be eliminated, certain ones put into a subordinate position, and the right, guiding purpose so established.

The first purpose which we may eliminate as a *purpose* but may reintroduce as a *means* is represented by that word "instruction." Instruction has been the traditional aim of the pastor's class, and for that reason the catechism has been the main handbook also. Our work must not be conceived as instruction for several reasons: First of all because the Christian religion is not a system of doctrines which can be taught as a set of propositions. We have inherited from the reformation and even more from the eighteenth century an intellectualistic idea of Christianity which is quite in contrast to its true genius. The catechisms, in general, were written at a time when Christianity was looked upon as essentially a system of right beliefs. The purpose of the catechetical class was to give the children a system of right beliefs about God, about Jesus, about man, sin, immorality, the church, etc.

Now it is apparent that Christianity as the religion of Jesus Christ and of Paul, and as the religion which you and I seek to cultivate, is not primarily a matter of right beliefs at all, but primarily a matter of right attitudes—of right sentiments and right thoughts—but of a right direction of the will primarily. Christianity is spirit life. And we are very far today from believing that right belief alone is a guide to right action. Yet it is evident, I think, that while Christianity is not primarily intellectual, it contains a large intellectual element and that there is need for theology in Christian education. But theology is not the primary thing, and the teaching of theology is not our purpose.

Secondly, instruction is not our aim because the child is not primarily intellectual. The idea behind our catechism and behind much of our teaching is that the child is a little adult, and a very

intellectual little adult at that. Most adults are not intellectual enough to be touched deeply by our catechetical instruction. Men, modern psychology has amply demonstrated, are not primarily thinking, but primarily *acting* beings. When we speak to them in intellectual terms only we are speaking over their heads the large part of the time. Add to this the fact that the truths which Protestantism is concerned about are abstract truths, or truths which can be clothed only in very abstract language, and the fallacy of an intellectual aim in "catechetical instruction" becomes even more apparent. [Otto] Baumgarten in that excellent little book *Neue Bahnen*, writes; "A fundamental law of all newer pedagogy demands consideration of child nature and its naivete. 'When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child.'" But how do we usually speak with our children? As if they were interested in the inner life, as if they stood in constant inner conflict with themselves, as if they lived under the oppressive sense of sin, as if they yearned for salvation! As if there were any continuity in a child's thinking upon inner questions; as if it of its own accord, without being forced, reflected upon an unseen world, or upon its self! But all instruction in Christianity turns about the hidden man of the heart, about the concern for the eternity of the inner world. And especially Lutheran Christianity is completely dependent upon Paul, who not only put off all that was childish but who was as unchildlike as ever any one was, who constantly looked upon the state of childhood from the viewpoint of its incompleteness and weakness." Protestantism, Baumgarten goes on to say, is much more in danger than Catholicism of being ineffective in its instruction because of this inner character of the religion which it teaches. The child thinks only in concrete terms, but in instruction we must use abstract terms. Yet we need not do so nearly to the extent to which we do. For instance, it is possible to teach concretely about the life of Jesus, but only

abstractly about the nature of the exalted Christ. But our catechetical instruction takes the exalted Christ into consideration a great deal more than the Jesus of the synoptic Gospels.

Again instruction is not a correct purpose because the primary principle of education is that we learn by doing, by expression, by activity. But we are too often concerned merely with impressions when we conceive our aim to be instruction. Impressions which are not expressed cannot stay in the mind; they almost literally pass into one ear and out of the other. The kind of truths which we place our emphasis upon in instruction can never be expressed, except intellectually.

Furthermore, instruction is not a correct aim because it emphasizes the amount of the material. We must get through the catechism we say, and we are very glad if we finish the book a few weeks before Palm Sunday and so have ample time for review. In the long run it makes very little difference whether we get through the book or not. If the child is not led into the right attitude to God and man learning the whole of the book doesn't do any good. And if half of the book serves that purpose we may let the other half go. Being a Christian is never a completed process. All that we can hope to attain in catechetical instruction is to start the child upon the right track. If we do, we must trust him to acquire the deeper insights for himself. If we do not, we shall not be able to attain anything by getting through a certain amount of material. But again, it is evident that there is a certain system of Christian truth and that this system in its essentials ought to be made a part of our instruction. The primary point here is this; the catechism which we use no longer embodies what we conceive today to be the essential elements of the Christian religion. It may contain them but it doesn't emphasize them, and it emphasizes much which no longer seems important to a great number of Christians today.

Another false aim of catechetical instruction is represented by the method of memorization. If our object is the memorization by the children of a certain number of definitions and statements we shall be wasting our precious time upon an effort which will bear little fruit. But I think that it is so evident to all of us that it is hardly necessary to dwell upon the point. Memorization we all know is not learning, and a memorized definition may be far from having any real effect on Christian life. At the same time a certain amount of memorization is decidedly useful and necessary—the memorization of the great creeds, of Bible verses, of great hymns, which will serve to make articulate the inarticulate religion of the great mass. One might mention any number of other aims which are more or less incorrect—and all of them the conscious or unconscious purposes of much of our work as teachers. Preparing for church membership may be a very false aim if our idea of the church is that of an ecclesiastical institution whose function is solely the preaching of the word of God and the administration of the sacraments. Preparing the child to receive the sacraments may become a purely external and unmeaning process. Again education may be looked upon as a process intended to save the child's soul and its main means thought to be the stirring of the feeling of sin and repentance. Undoubtedly the sense of sin is an essential part of the Christian life, but not as primary as it is often made out to be. Psychological studies of the religious feelings of adolescents indicate that the sense of sin is frequently much more physiological than psychological and more psychological than religious. The sense of the absolute holiness of God and of the profaneness of human nature, is to be nurtured of course, but the negative sense of sin ought to be only the reflex of the positive sense of the holiness of God. From God to sin, not from sin to God is the actual course of the religious life. As in the case of Isaiah the vision of God comes first and then the outcry: "Woe is me, I am

undone, for I am a man of unclean lips and dwell among a people of unclean lips." Or as in the case of Job. "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee and I repent in dust and ashes." The souls of many children are unnecessarily tortured by much teaching about sin. Adolescence inclines anyway to be gloomy and the disillusionments which come to children in our confirmation classes are often teaching enough about sin. Let us speak of sin in a straight-forward and honest way, but let us not try to nurture an emotional crisis in the lives of children by speaking vaguely about sin as a general thing. There at least should be emphasized: the feeling of sin which we find in our boys and girls in the confirmation classes is connected to a very large extent with the fact of adolescence, with the growing of the sex life, and what is needed by the child there is not only the strong emphasis upon the divine demand of purity but also a fatherly helpfulness on the part of the teacher in assisting him to face this crisis in his life without unnecessary qualms.

Another purpose which is frequently advanced as the true aim of religious education is that of unfoldment of the child's religious capacities. This also contains a large measure of truth but religion is not an instinct which can be developed by encouraging free self-expression. It is a way of life which must be acquired. Religion is probably less an individual than a social matter, though of course it is both. At all events it is not enough to say that education must unfold latent qualities in the child. Some latent qualities it must suppress, some it must encourage, others it must supplement. Man's native inheritance is not enough to make him a Christian.

And finally it is necessary to criticize the aim of education which we find advanced so much today and which has been referred to as a necessary partial aim or means to keep in mind—the aim of producing the right behavior in the child. Religion is much more than mere activity. It is a matter of sentiments, attitudes, as well as

of actions, and the culture of the right sentiments and attitudes is a necessary part of education as well as training in a certain kind of life.

The aim of the catechetical class must fall in line with the general aim of all religious education. And for this it is difficult to name a single formula. As a matter of fact despite all of our theories we usually have a number of aims in religious education. We have almost all of those which were criticized previously. The harm results when we exalt any one of these aims into the whole purpose and forget the wider nature of the child and the wider spirit of our religion. What, let us ask first of all, is the religious life? Some say it is the adoption and maintenance of a definite attitude toward the highest social values—it is love of the neighbor as of the self, in the case of the Christianity. It is the desire to give and conserve for the neighbor all of the values which we should like to have for ourselves. Others maintain religion is primarily the adoption and maintenance of a definite attitude toward God, it is loving God with all the heart and soul and mind; it is, in Schleiermacher's phrase, the feeling of dependence upon God. It seems to be impossible to reduce these two characteristics of the religious life to one. There are some who maintain that right love of the neighbor brings love to God, others that love of God is necessarily followed by love to the neighbor. But the facts are against both theories. There are many lovers of God in the religions of the world who are very little concerned about their neighbors and there are lovers of men who have no attitude of dependence upon and love toward God. Christianity, as Ritschl has pointed out, is not a circle with a single center, but an ellipse with two foci: the love of God and the love of the neighbor. Christianity is both religious in the narrow sense and ethical. Drop either one of these foci, try to combine one with the other, try to draw a circle with a single center and you distort Christianity. Not that the two

foci are unrelated; they are the foci of one ellipse, but they are two nevertheless.

The result of this understanding of the nature of Christianity for education is that I believe: religious education has no single aim but a double one. They are not very far apart from each other. They do not mean that the child must change this direction to seek now the one, now the other aim, but they do involve a change of attention. A man who attends only to God is in danger of becoming a mystic, who is not concerned about his brother men. A man who attends only to right living with his fellowmen is in danger of becoming a moralist without the optimism which the love of God brings without the energy which religion produces and without the inner glow of communion with God. Our minds are so constructed that we can attend to only one thing at a time, but while we attend to the one thing another one may be in the fringe of consciousness and color our whole mental attitude. A Christian is a man who approaches God with the idea of his sentiment of love for his brother men in the fringe of consciousness, and who approaches his brother men with the idea of God and the love of God as the immediate background of his attending consciousness.

Now what we are concerned about in religious education is the culture of the attitude of love to God and of love to man. It will not do to say that we are concerned with the culture of the sentiment and attitude of love. Love always has an object. There is love of the world, love of persons, love of gold, love of definite comforts, but is there such a thing as love in general? And what we are concerned about is the attitude of love in respect of two definite objects, God and men. It follows however also that love of men is too general a term. Let us say, love of neighbor, always of definite men, each definite man with whom the child comes into contact love also of course of the societies of men, the church, the state, above all of the ideal society,

the Kingdom of God. We might use this term Kingdom of God as inclusive of both God and man and say with [George Albert] Coe that the aim of religious education is "growth of the young toward and into mature and efficient devotion to the democracy of God, and happy self-realization therein," if the term Kingdom of God or democracy of God, is not explained in a onesided [*sic*] fashion, as meaning only the rule of God, or as meaning only the society of men. The peril of having two aims, united in the constant living reality of an individual active mind which passes from one to the other, is to be preferred to the danger of losing either aim out of account by seeking simplicity of statement.

The aim of religious education then, perhaps, can be stated as follows: The aim of Christian education is the guidance of the growth of the young into the relationship of love to God and love to men. If we want to use the language of Paul: it is the nurture of the mind of Christ in each individual.

It is guidance of growth, not instruction, not inculcation, not training, because the relationship of love cannot be imparted by instruction, it cannot be inculcated by methods of memorization, it cannot be trained as habits are trained. It has a natural basis in human instincts and in the human situation in the world. The instincts of parental love, the tender emotion, the instinct of subordination, the instinct of wonder, the emotion of awe, these are probably innate patterns in the individual mind and they are all involved in the characteristic religious response to a religious object. Furthermore, the human situation in the world of nature and of men nurtures the feeling of dependence, the attitude of loyalty and devotion, feelings and attitudes which we seek to connect with a religious object, with God. It is not our task to create these attitudes but to bring them in connection with two definite objects: God and fellow-men. We must guide the growth of these innate tendencies. Furthermore,