PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH

john m. dettoni, ph.d.

NEED TO BEGIN WITH THE FOUNDATIONS OF MINISTRY

1. Biblical view of Person - what is it to be a human being?

2. Biblical view of the purpose of the Church

3. Biblical view of the needs of persons

4. Psycho-social view of the needs of persons

5. Biblical, psycho-social goals of person/learners

QUESTIONS ABOUT PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

What is a philosophy?
-- World and life view/weltanschauung
-- Way to make sense out of experience
-- Cognitive, conscious commitment regarding how to interpret reality:
  -- What is real?
  -- Ontological status of experiences
  -- Epistemological concerns: How do we know?
-- What is important: values
-- What is life for?
-- Why do I do what I do?

What will a philosophy do?
1. Describe what ultimate reality is and how one knows it
2. Uncovers ultimate values:
   -- Criteria for choices
3. Defines purposes and reasons for communicating
4. States how people learn
5. Relates divine revelation (Scripture) and work of the Holy Spirit to teaching and learning
6. Answers: What is worth dying for
              What is worth teaching

Summary: Philosophy is a personal and corporate "North Star".

WHO NEEDS IT?

Wrong question -- we all have one!

Need to:

1. Consciously reflect upon what one does -- Ask "Why/"
2. Articulate it
3. Critically evaluate it and feedback correction
4. Operate on it (use it!)
5. Continue to refine it

E.g. of basic biblical statements of philosophy of educational ministry
Acts 20:24
Romans 1:16-17
Ephesians 4:11-16
Colossians 1:9-10
Colossians 1:28-29
BUILDING BLOCKS TO A PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION AND DISCIPLESHIP:
QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

I. What is ministry? Why does a person do it?

II. What is personhood?

III. What is knowledge and how do people develop and learn?

IV. What is real (metaphysics, ontology)? Of what "stuff" is reality?

V. What is the nature of teaching?
   Why?
   What?
   In what agencies teaching occurs?

VI. How do society and culture affect learning?

VII. What is the Church?
    and what is the church?

VIII. What is Christian education, or Christian Formation and Discipleship?
     (What in the church is not Christian or educational?)
WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

1. COMMUNITY - MATT. 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

not so much "called out" but "called together"
congregation, assembly
suggests:
   new community
   Jesus as head
   replaced community of Israel
   related to God through Messiah
   supernatural

II. Belongs to God through Christ

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers which he bought with his own blood.

I Cor. 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ--their Lord and ours ....

I Tim. 3:15 ...if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

I Pet. 2:9-10 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

I Thess. 2:14 For you, brothers, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews ....

III. Composed of redeemed

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.
IV. Instructed and guided by Holy Spirit and gifted by Him

Acts 20:28  Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Eph. 4:11-12  It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ....

1 Cor. 12:7-11  Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Rom. 8:1-39  Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its
own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom. 12:6-8  We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

I Pet. 4:10-11  Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

V.  Teaching community

Col. 3:16  Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude
in your hearts to God.

Matt. 28:18-20  Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

II Tim. 2:2  And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

VI. Fellowshipping, holy community  (Fellowship is not a chocolate cake or cabbage roll or sticky rice dish!!)

Acts 2:42, 47  They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

I Pet. 2:5  ...you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

I Cor. 1:2  To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ--their Lord and ours:

Rom. 12:1-2  Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual [Or reasonable] act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

VII. Christ is to church as HEAD is to BODY - Christ is THE only leader, King Eternal, and

VIII. And members of church are to each other as bodily parts are to each other

I Cor. 12:12-31  The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole
body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

Eph. 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

IX. Eschatological community

Tasting now the age to come

Matt. 18:20 For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Rom. 8:23, 28-39 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matt. 28:20 ... and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Eph. 1:18-23 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order
that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

X. Loving community

I Cor. 12:31b-13:3; 14:1 And now I will show you the most excellent way. 13:1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. 14:1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.

I Pet. 4:8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

XI. Witnessing, serving, and ministering community

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

I Pet. 4:10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

Matt. 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in [Or into; see Acts 8:16; 19:5; Romans 6:3; 1 Cor. 1:13; 10:2 and Gal. 3:27.] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I
have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Acts 1:8   But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Gal. 5:13   You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.
## BI-POLAR FOCI OF PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING-LEADING MINISTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontological (ultimate reality is beyond empirical world)</td>
<td>Empirical (reality is only what can be sensed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control in person</td>
<td>Control in school (society)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-mastery</td>
<td>Mastery over nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation, change</td>
<td>Cultural perpetuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life-long time</td>
<td>Schooling year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulation to new thought</td>
<td>Transmittal of old thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning is active</td>
<td>Learning is passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning in order to be</td>
<td>Learning in order to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience, existential</td>
<td>Content, rational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner factors</td>
<td>Outer factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestalt (whole of person and life)</td>
<td>Behavioristic (discrete items, S --&gt; R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching is facilitating</td>
<td>Teaching is telling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching is guiding</td>
<td>Teaching in directing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfolding</td>
<td>Containment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Indoctrination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## TWO VIEWS OF LEARNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental</th>
<th>Acquisitional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is... growing</td>
<td>gaining, grasping, getting to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of internal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structures.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
<td>teacher and therefore teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>depends on...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>construction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of reality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sense out of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td>teacher directs, is THE authority (Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is...sharing,</td>
<td>knows what one ought to learn, at what age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helping,</td>
<td>to learn, and to what degree. Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facilitation</td>
<td>controls learning.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Teacher is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involved in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>process)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**What is</td>
<td><strong>knowing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Testing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Testing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consists of...</td>
<td>recall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ELEMENTARY SUMMARY OF FIVE BASIC PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION

Below are several major philosophies and elementary definition of each. It should go without stating that his sheet is extremely limited in its scope. Each of the philosophies could and does take volumes to describe adequately. Also, depending on which philosopher one reads, one will observe various nuances and independent statements that are idiosyncratic to that particular philosopher’s philosophy. With these caveats in mind, please read on.

I. IDEALISM
   Objects of the mind are dependent on one’s consciousness. Objects do not exist apart from the knower; they are dependent on the knower. What is known is what is real. Reality is what is within a person.

II. RATIONALISM
   Truth is derived independently from experience. Knowledge is known apriori (laws of thought, innate ideas, eternal/universal truth). These exist quite apart from the person and from experiences.

III. EMPIRICISM
   Knowledge comes only from sense data. Non-empirical experiences, such as attitudes, preferences, likes/dislikes, values, beliefs, etc. have no real existence in themselves (no ontological or metaphysical reality); they cannot be verified. These are subjective, internal, non-rational, and emotive. They are not true knowledge because they are unverifiable to others. Only what is empirically verifiable is real, but even this is open to relative perception. Empiricism leads to probability not to certain, absolute knowledge. Absolutes do not exist, absolutely.

IV. PRAGMATICISM
   Meaning is in the practical nature of things, in their usefulness. What works is true and exists (in some way). Scientific verification, a la empirical evidence, is the pragmatic test for truth.

V. EXISTENTIALISM
   Existence precedes essence. Existence of the person takes precedence over the essence (laws of logic, formal proofs, definitions of truth, abstract and immutable and ultimate principles). Personal and individual existence is ultimate. Only what one experiences personally can be true and real. The person is the subject and never the object.
VI. MYSTICISM
Ultimate reality is personal union with whatever one considers ultimate. This ultimate (God, for the Christian) is known immediately without any mediation. Reality is known non-cognitively, is not describable cognitively and is subjective.
EXAMPLE ONE:
A PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

THEORY OF PERSONALITY

Humans are a unique product of God's creation. They were created in the image of God and consequently has implanted in their very being the seeds of religion and a sense of Deity. But though humans know somewhat of God because of His image in them and because of the testimony of Nature, human beings have openly and willfully rebelled against God. The result has been estrangement from God and a helpless continuing in sin for them. Humanity, therefore, needs a way out through the Lord Jesus Christ. People without a personal, one-to-one relationship with God through Jesus Christ is never all that they might be. They are not whole persons. Common grace may make humans much of what they might be, but the acceptance of the saving grace of God will provide them with the potential for becoming all that they should be.

THEORY OF LEARNING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The human experience is one of growth and change, not only of an organic sort, but also in ideas and their application to experience. The means by which change and growth take place are drawn from that which we learn and come to know. Learning is an inner, active, continuous and disciplined process towards a definite goal. Teaching is guiding and learning process, setting forth relevant truth in a disciplined and organized fashion.

There are a variety of ways of learning and knowing. These are never contradictory in the final analysis, but are complementary and supplementary. Sensory perception, intuitive reasoning, existential response and revelation are all parts of the learning process.

Christian education must be aware of all avenues of knowledge and speak to and through the total learning process. Some things are known more through one of these ways of knowing than others. It seems, however, that at the beginning of the learning experience, people choose out of the multitudinous data that surround them those things which make sense to them and which they use to construct a coherent and pragmatic response to the total environment that they experience. This discriminatory process is called learning and involves the learner as object upon whom the data (subject) impinge and as subject with which the learners interact to formulate their response.

In Christian education the Scriptures, the Holy Word of God, are at first a part of the data with which the learner is confronted. They come to be recognized by the learners as the unique, final, and objective authority regarding God and Humanity's relationship to Him. The Holy Spirit, the Divine teacher, uses Himself, Scripture and human teachers to effect learning.
FUNCTION OF EDUCATION

The function of education is to transmit the lessons of the past, to apply these lessons in contemporary situations through understanding and creative approaches, and to develop new insights, knowledge and understanding of the present in order to achieve a proper adjustment of the individual to society. Education accomplishes this through an organized and disciplined approach of guiding the learning process to produce an individual whose character is being changed by that which he/she is learning.

THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Inasmuch as society is forever in the process of change, the unchanging principles of God's revelation must be adapted to and related to the particular social and cultural environment of any given group or individual in society. To do this, those who are charged with educational responsibilities must seek to have a thorough understanding of the life and times in which learners finds themselves. This of necessity involves them with their society.

CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH

The New Testament concept of the church is that holy, supernatural community of believers, related to God through Jesus Christ, the Savior and Lord, directed by the Holy Spirit in worship, instruction, fellowship, and participation in the sacraments, and involved in selfless service to mankind through the power of the Holy Spirit as He operates in their daily lives. The mission of the church is to bear the Gospel in its entirety in life, thought, word and deed to the world. The New Testament concept of the church has been expressed in part through various socio-cultural forms including worship services, buildings, denominations, and local congregations.

DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian Education is the teaching-learning process by which a person becomes increasingly matured in his relationship with God through a personal encounter with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord by the work of the Holy Spirit through the Scripture. The content of Christian Education comprises both the Living and written Word of God as they are known factually and in application to one’s life and, in turn, communicated to others so that each person properly relates him/herself to their own self, God, family, society and nature and is able to make independent decisions, serves in the local organized church and in society, obeys the Scriptures, and leads a disciplined life conducive to emotional, spiritual, mental and physical well being. Any methodologies are legitimate that do not deny the tenets of Scripture but fulfill the purposes herein stated and meet the goals subsequently set forth.
EXAMPLE TWO:
A LOCAL CHURCH'S PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

TO: CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE
SUBJECT: A THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Some months ago I gave myself the task of summarizing for us the basic principles of this book which will help us develop a biblical approach to Christian Education.

Because I feel it's important that the Children, Youth and Adult Committees work out the detailed philosophy and approach for their respective age level, I'll suggest here only a general philosophy from which committees can pursue specific implications.

I. Basic Theological and Philosophical Principles

A. Nature of our Faith

1. The possession of divine life is that which sets apart a Christian from a non-Christian and the Church from other institutions. John 10:10, Ephesians 2:1-10.

2. The Church, as the Kingdom of God, is to be a community with a distinctive culture that bears the stamp of God. Matt. 6:9-10.

B. Purpose of Church

1. The process (stimulation and support) through which growth towards Christlikeness takes place is the functioning (mutual ministry) Body of Christ. I Cor. 12-14, Romans 12, Ephesians 4.

2. Best in the context of relationships, through the process of socialization. The Body of Christ is the socializing agent through which a new born individual grows into the new culture of Christlikeness.

3. The making of disciples is an interpersonal and transactional process, involving teacher and learner in a wide range of real life experiences. Life of Christ.

4. The Church is a family in which the quality of the love relationships between its members is most critical to the process of discipleship and growth in Christ. Romans 12; I Cor. 12.
CF501 Syllabus

D. Reproduction of our Faith

1. Evangelism is essentially the task of representing or "being" Christ to a lost world. To live His life, we must be like Him; thus the priority must be on developing mature disciples. John 13:35.

2. Evangelism, like discipleship, is essentially a relational process.

3. The visible expression of Christ's love within the family is the most compelling evidence of the Gospel's truth. John 13:35.

E. Leadership of Church

1. Each believer is a minister, who has an active ministry in the body. I Cor. 12.

2. The biblical model for leadership is one of servanthood is which the primary relationship is one of being "among" rather than "over"; in which the task is to serve others in that which is important to God (building up the body); and in which the method is one of "being" and "doing" (modeling). Matt. 20:25-28.

3. Leadership for the Body is multiple. The leadership team (Pastors, elders, deacons, etc.) function as a model, for the rest of the Body, exemplifying a pattern of life the whole Body is to develop.

F. Role of Scripture

1. Scripture is the revelation that accurately describes God's own understanding of life and meaning. It is in fullest harmony with reality. I Cor. 2:6-11.

2. Scripture is an invitation to respond to God and live in the framework of reality. I John 1, John 8:31-32.

II. God's Concerns, Approaches (flow from theological principles).

A. Nature of our Faith

1. Christian faith must be understood, communicated and nurtured as a way of life (socialization).

2. Christian education must focus on the whole person: Belief, attitude, value and behavior systems.

3. The primary context for "learning our faith" must be real life situations.
B. Purpose of Church

1. A central concern must be the process of growth: Helping individuals develop close, personal relationships with others, in which context, mutual ministry, and thus growth, can take place.

C. Process of Growth

1. Education effort must focus on applying the process of socialization to the life of the Church.

2. Socialization (discipleship) includes the following requirements:
   (1) A model/mentor through which those being discipled can learn.
   (2) A transactional relationship in which teaching and learning move both ways – spiritual mentoring.
   (3) A life context in which the discipler may be viewed in multi-dimensions, not simply his role as a classroom teacher – a mentor, helper, facilitator of spiritual development.

3. The following seven factors contribute to the shaping of the above three requirements.
   (1) There needs to be frequent, long term contact with mentors.
   (2) There needs to be a warm, loving relationship with mentors.
   (3) There needs to be exposure to the inner states of the mentors.
   (4) The mentors need to be observed in a variety of life settings and situations.
   (5) The mentors need to exhibit consistency and clarity in behavior, values, etc.
   (6) There needs to be correspondence between the behavior of the mentors and the beliefs of the community.
   (7) There needs to be conceptual explanations of the lifestyle of the mentors, with instruction accompanying shared experiences.

4. Christian education must focus on identifying, developing and encouraging the use of those contexts that promote interpersonal, loving relationships.

D. Reproduction of our Faith

1. Christian Education must encourage maturing disciples to creatively reach out and touch the lost world around them, both through reflective and initiative witness.

E. Leadership of Church

1. Teachers are leaders in the sense of being models and examples; in the sense of developing an "among" relationship; and in the sense of serving their learners.
2. This leadership style also has strong implications for the style of parenting.

3. Official church leadership needs to be highly visible to the Body as a whole.

F. Role of Scripture

1. Christian education must discover and use approaches that communicate Scripture as a reality to be lived and observed rather than only a concept to be learned.

2. The place of Scripture in the daily, ongoing, experiences of members of the Body as we live our separate lives and come together must be explored with and be visible to each other.
These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.

Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, promised you.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

* Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.
* Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates.

1. **VERSE 1 - SOURCE**

These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,

2. **VERSE 1 - LEARNERS**

These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,

3. **VERSE 1 - PURPOSE**

These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,

4. **VERSE 2 - BEHAVIOR OPERATIONALIZED**

5. **RESPONSIBILITY OF ADULTS**

6. **HOW TO TEACH CHILDREN**

   - DAILY
   - CONSISTENTLY
   - THOROUGHLY
- COHERENTLY

- ENVIRONMENTALLY (surrounded by stimuli)

...so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, promised you. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates.

*WHERE DOES "TO KNOW" ENTER IN ABOVE?*
THE PROBLEM OF MODELING
(APART FROM THE PROBLEM OF BAD AND/OR INADEQUATE MODELS)

FORM OF STIMULUS-RESPONSE/SOCIAL LEARNING.

THE LEARNER:

IS SURROUNDED BY MODEL WITH COMMUNITY

IS ENCOURAGED TO COPY MODEL(S)

MUST REMAIN IN COMMUNITY AND IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH MODELS

NEEDS POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT TO SHAPE BEHAVIORAL RESPONSES

MODELS DO NOT POSE QUESTIONS NOR SEEK TO DISEQUILIBRATE LEARNER

INTERNALIZATION NOT ENCOURAGED and IS Seldom CONSIDERED BY MENTOR/MODEL OR LEARNER

(INTERNALIZATION NOT PART OF LEARNING THEORY)

THEREFORE, CERTAIN BEHAVIORS (VERBAL AND ACTIONS) ARE ENCOURAGED/ DISCOURAGED

BY POSITIVE/NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT

REINFORCEMENT IS THE MAJOR MEANS

BEHAVIORISM IS THE PHILOSOPHICAL GROUND

EXTERNALS CONTROL LEARNER ULTIMATELY

LEARNER IS NOT ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR LEARNING

—SOCIETY IS OR MODEL IS
Teacher behavior that says "good", praise, reward, stimulus-response technique.

Whose behavior rewarded?
Learners' or teacher's?
Whose correct answers -- teacher's!!
Goal of reinforcement is systematic reward of correct answer
   Learning view: memorize
       acquire data

Whose logic involved
   Learners'? Teacher's?
   Wrong answers – “You are incorrect; you are wrong.”
   -- According to adult logic, or "bad" grade (am I bad if I get bad grades?)
   Wrong answer should lead to more questions for further inquiry, study

Philosophically – reinforcement is unworthy of being human – We do this with animals, not humans made in the image of God!
   Demeans person
   Requires unlearned response
   Lacks application and integration
   Correct response counts
   Emphasizes memory and social learning, not thinking
   Allows for manipulation
   Goals for learning external to learner
   Learner passive in process

Psychologically --
From learners’ perspective:
   Incorrect answers may appear very logical and reasonable.
   Problem is not wrong logic or invalid logic but incomplete.
   Learners: express what they made out of their experience and to discuss (transact )
       with others and not have "wrong" stated immediately.
Teacher's perspective:
   Aware of immature, inadequate responses.
   Point out gaps, contradictions, problems, contrary, evidence, dialogue!
   Lead discussion with other learners.
   Turn to other resources (interact with things).

Thus, lead learners to a more adequate representation of reality -- internally for themselves.
TRAINING VS. DEVELOPMENT

Training:

Training is what we do with dogs, cats, and other animals, and plant. To train is to shape behavior (not being) to conform to external conditions placed upon the organism by the trainer.

The trainer ("teacher") decides what the goals of the training are to be by using behavioristic reinforcement (S --> R) teaching techniques. Training is task focused, not people focused. People are trained in order to perform tasks, not to develop and grow as people. (Inner change of being is not necessary -- a dog will revert to dog-like behavior if training is not reinforced sufficiently.)

Development:

Development implies facilitating what is innate, viz., 1) growth from less to more mature, 2) constant activity that leads to knowledge (cognitive), feeling (affective), doing (behavioral), and being (existential).

Development encourages persons to make decisions and to be responsible for their own development as they are able (capable, i.e. considering developmental levels of individuals e.g., a child has fewer decisions compared to a mature adult).

People are the focuses of development. Learning occurs in order to help a person become a more mature human being and to reduce less mature status that retard more complete integration, finer discrimination, and more complete differentiations.

MEMORIZATION VS. REMEMBERING

Memorization:

Rote, sometimes unconnected commitment of often irrelevant and/or less than meaningful data to storage in mind in order to pass an authority (usually some sort of teacher) led, directed and enforced test of some sort.

Remembering:

Conscious decision on the part of the learner in whatever context. To have at immediate recall some personally relevant data. Learners decide it is important to remember
Learners consciously (or from use) commit it to storage in their own manner of remembering
What is remembered may be used to pass a test
Memorization may be a short-cut to remembering

Remembering is learning because it requires an internal reorganization/transformation of external data into internal referent (categories).