



Christian Educators Journal

We can be sure of
CHANGE:
(but do we)
ENDURE IT
or **CAUSE IT?**
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I CAN!
but
MAY I?
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WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE,
ELIJAH?
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As many options as students provide the "looking and doing" in Bonzelaar's project classroom. Photo by The Grand Rapids Press.

Art Appreciation by Looking and Doing
Helen Bonzelaar

Teaching Christianly

Principles are hard to practice. Especially in a less-than-ideal world.

Adam learned early, while living under ideal conditions, the consequences of flirting with disobedience. He ignored the principle of obedience to his Maker, and his disobedience wreaked havoc in his life—and ours.

Adam's disobedience was stunningly effective because God always practices his principles, one of which is, "What a man sows so shall he reap." That principle is immutable. In a real way also, *what we fail to sow we also reap*, but the harvest is less than desirable.

Because through and in Adam humankind permanently substituted the principle of disobedience, the products we reap today are horrendously devastating: a nation spends nearly \$1 billion a day so that one day the planet and we may be one unholy fireworks; one-third of the world's bellies are empty while a tenth of the world buys reducing pills; the United States colors men's lungs black with tobacco shipped under the guise of foreign aid to the underprivileged; hundreds of thousands of unborn images-of-God are aborted while anonymous potential fathers sell sperm to satisfy the parental yearnings of childless couples; and scientists continue their efforts to create test-tube God-images while trying to determine who among the aged, the suffering, and the feeble they judge should mercifully die. Indeed, He that sits in the heavens laughs; for He knows that man ignores the eternity of life . . . and death.

The principle will not down: what we sow we shall reap. Our prisons bulge because men and women (and often our legal system) still think "it is okay if you can get away with it." But we never "get away with it." What we sow we will reap; what we do not sow we can never reap. Parents in Canada and the United States spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to place their children in Christian schools. In obedience to God, parents seek to have their children educated to live Christianly. The Christian school system is not immune from the harvest principle; this suggests the extent of the trust parents place in us teachers and principals. Not one of God's laws can be violated with impunity, neither by in-

dividuals nor by institutions and systems. God does not always punish individuals, nations, and systems precisely *because* of what we have done. However, results often follow actions because the harvest is incipient in the seed. In other words, men and systems suffer because harvest follows seedtime.

The harvest of Christian schools, a harvest which we share with the Christian home and the Christian church, gives us a sense of deep gratitude for its abundance. Thousands of Christian school graduates are the light and the salt of their families, churches, communities, businesses, industries, professions, and governments.

Yet, all is not well. That materialism, secularism, escapism, hedonism, and humanism have made deep inroads in Christian society is apparent to all. Do we Christian educators share the blame for this?

Many Christians today observe the form and ritual of Christianity, but this is not the essence of obedience. This is like sowing seeds that are sickly and pale; only a dwarfed harvest will follow. God said (Jeremiah 6:6), "I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings."

Every good seed does not fall upon good soil. Of course there is outright denial of and blatant disregard for God's laws. Yet we should recognize that failure to practice principles comes from weak or no understanding of them and from failure to be captivated by God's insistence on obedience always and everywhere. It is not that Christian adults have not had Christian education. They have—nine, twelve, and sixteen years of it. But too often all these years have not convinced them that their Christian education has made too much difference in their lives." As John B. said to me recently, "I can't see that my neighbors live much differently than I do. And for that little difference I just can't see \$5400 (\$1800 per child, 1982-83, Grand Rapids, Michigan) for tuition for my three kids.

It is easy for us Christian school teachers to frown, to become defensive, and to point out the many other reasons which may have entered into John B.'s decision not to send his children to the Christian school this year. He said he never felt that Christian teachers proved to him that they taught their subjects differently than public school teachers. Be that as it may, enough of truth is in his comment, maybe a kernel—or two—or more, to cause us as Christian professionals to ask ourselves, "What seeds are we sowing?"

Can it possibly be that sometimes we short-change John B. and others, alumni and parents who continue to pay the tuition for Christian education? Are our students learning the principles by which to live fully, fearlessly, obediently, and victoriously? Calvinist Christians particularly declare that *obedience* is the earmark of Christianity, and we need to learn that that is a necessary and inevitable harvest through victory and freedom in Christ Jesus.

The *blessing* of Christian education has concomitant responsibilities. Our students must see both. Do we teach this way? And if so, how? Can we teach Christianity if we do not or cannot explain what it means in and to our particular discipline? Or can it be that we do not teach Christianly simply because we do not know these principles? To say it even more candidly, is there, for each student we teach, \$1800 worth of difference between the Christian classroom and the public school classroom, the Christian teacher and the public school teacher, the Christian curriculum and the public school curriculum?

How do we teach music Christianly? Simply by avoiding certain words and phrases and types of melodies? How do we teach science Christianly? Simply by avoiding the difficulties surrounding the biblical version of creation? Or, for that matter, how do we teach Bible Christianly? Simply by demonstrating the do's and do-not's drawn from each passage or by drawing moralistic conclusions from a story or parable?

Sometimes we say about a person who has had a bad experience, "Oh, he is a victim of the system." It may be legal injustice, a bureaucratic foul-up, a technology or computer snarl. Can the reverse also be true, that a system itself is a victim? Can the system, the Christian education system, ever be a victim of its teachers and principals?

People are looking at our alumni and the alumni are looking at themselves. They sometimes wonder if the seed labeled "Christian education," packaged attractively and advertised widely, is all that different from generic education.

Is it? That's the question we need constantly and continuously to grapple with: in our hearts, in our faculty lounges, in our textbooks, and in our curriculum committees. Christian education is unabashedly founded on the principle of glory only and obedience always to God, whether one is eating, drinking, thinking, or talking, or acting. It is total. We teachers either consciously try to practice it or we do not. We either sow what we reap, or we will reap what we have not sown. There will be a harvest; that is God's principle and we are not able to dodge it.

Teaching Christianity requires that every subject be taught from a dynamic understanding of *Christian* and *education*, separately and together. The line between Christian education and public education is no longer sharply visible to many of its recipients and to some observers. Perhaps the recent decision of a United States District Judge requires of us that we review the principles of Christian education again.

The judge declared unconstitutional a "shared-time" program between public and certain Christian schools because, he said, the program violated the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. Under the program, Christian (including Catholic) school teachers of certain subjects, such as physical education, some fine art, and some remedial subjects, were placed on the public payroll and required to open their classrooms to all interested students.

The judge failed to understand how a Christian teacher could be neutral in those classes. And if they were not neutral, he concluded, they must be Christian, and if they were Christian there would clearly be a violation of the Constitution. Can a Christian teacher ever be neutral?

Neutrality is not an option for Christian teachers. The line between Christian and public education must be clear. It isn't merely a chalk-drawn line; it is a plumbline against which we measure ourselves. Our plumbline must be God's Word.

Can the system, the Christian education system, ever be a victim of its teachers and principals?

Long aware of the continuing need to articulate the principles stated and implied by the plumbline of Christian schools, the service organization Christian Schools International (Grand Rapids, Michigan), in *Principles to Practice* (3rd ed., 1982), addresses teachers, principals, curriculum study committees, and all those "honestly concerned about putting basic principles into practice" in their teaching. The book does not provide simple answers; it seeks to "stimulate discussion and help bring principles and practice" into closer harmony with each other. The principles provide a framework within which educators can refresh or develop their understanding of the Christian principles of education and how to practice them.

This book is better on our agenda than on our bookshelf. Its principles operating in our lives and lessons are more effective than lying dormant in our professional libraries. Principles are hard to practice.

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READER RESPONSE

Christian Education must focus on asking questions

Editor:

I deeply appreciate the research, intelligence, and Christian vision of Davis A. Young's "Genesis One and Science Teaching" (CEJ, Oct., 1982). The implications of the article go far beyond the teaching of science; they should affect the way every Christian teacher goes about his business.

Commenting on Calvin and Delitzsch on Day Five, Young writes: "If we take the comments of Delitzsch and Calvin together we could conclude. . . ." What students, left to themselves, would conclude, and rightly, is that neither of these authorities possess definite answers to the specific question raised. They might further conclude that a definite answer to that question is not possible, and perhaps not all that important either.

But of course we've not left them to themselves. In an article in *The Christian Home and School*, "A Model for CSI Schools?" I argued that our schools can serve their communities better when Christian education is focused more on asking questions in the light of Christ's redeeming presence than on teaching

students to conform to certain sets of answers. Dr. Young's article clearly indicates the need to recognize which questions are the sort that admit speculation and a variety of answers and which demand specific answers that commit us to certain courses of thought or action.

In his conclusion, Dr. Young suggests that we may and ought to insist on certain ideas that "Genesis 1 plainly teaches." I agree entirely with his conclusions. Trouble is, though, that while plainly teaching these major premises of our lives, the biblical writers employ a wealth of detail that to some readers may seem "plain teaching" while to others it is sometimes metaphor, sometimes myth, sometimes history, and sometimes parable. To teach children to negotiate these complexities, the Christian school teacher must help students develop a vision of searching out the mysteries of God's creation rather than living with a neat set of answers. This must be done, as Dr. Young makes clear, in science teaching. But it will not work there unless it is done in social studies, Bible, math, music, and language arts as well.

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Attaining Visual Understanding:

Art Appreciation by Looking and Doing

Helen Bonzelaar

"Hold it! Hold it a minute. I see something in that picture." The student's command to stop and look at an art masterpiece clinches the statement that children are interested in looking at and reading other people's art.

If the arts are necessary for living then what form will art expression take in average twentieth-century lifestyles? In earlier times, French monarchs commissioned gardens, popes commissioned frescoes

and reliquaries, and rulers posed for portraits. But what about the proletariat? Tribal peoples scarred their faces, Indians built totem poles, and potters decorated vessels.

Today people do the same: they use makeup, decorate entrances to their homes, and use decorative pots and bowls. Tastes and fads govern visual forms of the popular arts. For these, people need no formal schooling, said Harry Broudy (lecture, Calvin College, November 13, 1979). But education is required to encourage people to judge

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the visual qualities which fads follow, to develop their sensitivity to the controlling influences of visual environments, and to develop within children the inborn sense of the aesthetic for reading works of art. A good art program must aim at developing visual literacy and understanding.

Mary Rouse ("What Research Tells Us About Sequency and Structuring Art," *Art Education*, May, 1971) shows that in the middle grades children develop a growing curiosity about projective spatial concepts and have the ability to knowingly use visual devices in their own art. What are the educational agencies doing to further this natural tendency?

Among museum directors there seems to be an increasing awareness and sense of responsibility to provide hands-on activities for children to explore visual phenomena. San Francisco's Exploratorium is a hands-on museum designed by scientists and artists to create opportunities for visitors to learn why they see and hear and feel the way they do. The Arts Gallery of Ontario, Canada, has one of the continent's most developed educational programs to encourage youngsters in visual literacy and in relating visual phenomena to works of art exhibited in the museum. The "hands-on room," although designed with the younger set in mind, entices youngsters of all ages to arrange forms, to mix colors, to dress up and become a living portrait, and to connect these experiences with art in the museum. Recently Atlanta's High Museum had an imaginative labyrinth of galleries in which people could play with space and illusion and note how the masters have used these devices in their art.



How do artists show movement?

To be consistent with the basic thesis that the arts are necessary for living and that educational institutions are necessary to teach visual literacy, schools should teach toward that end. What form does visual literacy take in schools? Should art programs in the middle grades include studio art projects with tangible products only in order to captivate students' interests? Are children interested in developing their visual perceptive skills enough for curricula designers to develop instructional programs in visual literacy integrated in an art appreciation program?

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ART PROJECT: VISUAL LITERACY AND APPRECIATION

To answer some of the questions about what schools can do to encourage children to become visually literate through a study of art masterpieces, a team of four college education-students and their professor composed a series of art appreciation and understanding discussion-lessons with fourteen activities for two fourth-grade classrooms. Simultaneously the five evaluated the program.



Calvin students note children's responses to art masterpieces.

To document the students' responses to the discussion, the team made tapes of the activities and wrote extensive notes of children's behaviors. Following the presentations of art works, children were allowed to explore freely any of the fourteen *Explo Activities*. Examples of *Explo Activities* included light projecting and shadow making, sculpting with non-firing clay, making a book of simple line prints, playing an art styles game, creating reflections with a multi-angled, plexiglas device, reading books, and sculpting with scrap wood and glue. To note most carefully which projects students preferred and what they did with the materials available, the college team became participant observers. They noted the children's responses, and to understand their natural gravitation towards certain activities, the team also interacted verbally with the students.

Each art discussion/lesson related to a theme such as visual illustrations, artistic styles, an element of visual design, or an interpretation of artists' expressions. "Fool the Eye," for example, was a lesson on how artists use shadows in art. George Stever's untitled, non-objective painting illustrates how blobs of paint seem to float above the canvas because Stever painted subtle shadows below each blob. William Harnet's *Music and Good Luck*, on the other hand, was an example of shadows in naturalistic art; students first thought this was a photograph. Jasper Johns created consternation among students as they tried to detect which images in *Field Painting* are actual objects projecting from the assemblages and which images are painted illusions. A lesson in "Optical Illusions" was a peak experience in the program for fourth graders.

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Visual life in an industrialized world involved multiples as illustrated by Andy Warhol's art. The lesson "Multiples" dealt with the monotonous repetition of industrial multiple products. The "Mechanical World" lesson compared Leger's dehumanized machine-made figures with Duane Hanson's life-like sculptures.

Children thought critically when they attempted to discover which of six reproductions were Van Gogh's painting, and which were credited to Renoir. One grouped three reproductions according to the subject matter; another essentially said, no, the vertical paintings belonged together and the horizontal ones formed a group. Then children began to notice colors, paint techniques, and moods, all of which elements made a more accurate basis for separating Van Gogh's work from Renoir's. "Van Gogh's art is spooky," said one student, and "Renoir's is blurry-like," said another.

Noticing line was another thematic aim. Lines in Anuszkewitz's *Primary Hue* and simultaneous contrasts of colors intrigued the fourth graders. They enjoyed finding implied lines in Sheldon Brody's *Zigzag* and in a primitive wooden mask. They found Brigitte Riley's *Current* to be "fun" retinal play. In attempting to account for the visual aspects of *Current* and *Primary Hue*, children resorted to analogies with poetic qualities. They spontaneously employed metaphorical language: It looks like hair after a permanent; it is the ocean; it looks like a tunnel; it is the lens of a camera; or it is a time zone. Methods of decoding art masterpieces are discernible in visual experiences of everyday life. Teachers can capitalize and reinforce sensitive, imaginative looking by the viewer.

Children fantasized even more when they identified with the situations in which people find themselves in the "Lonely People" lesson. Picasso's *Child With a Dove* led the involved youngsters to suspect that the bashful child found a dove which he didn't dare to show his mother because she might make the child give up his newly-found friend. Degas's *The Glass of Absinthe* brought an empathetic discussion of divorce, quarrels, and people who ignore each other. Students consciously deciphered the visual clues which led them to determine the mood of the picture.

In all the lessons children were attentive and involved in spite of the fact that the teaching team was made up of inexperienced college sophomores and seniors. At one point children were so enraptured they did not notice the entrance of *The Grand Rapids* Press reporter whom they had been expecting.

Beyond the lessons it was exciting to discover how many children explored visual devices and themes in subsequent *Explo* activities. The range of

activities gave children options from among many projects. Some activities had permanent products, some had transitory products, and others had no products. Some activities were group-oriented and others were individual. Some provided opportunities for exploring ideas presented in art appreciation discussions; other activities did not.



Calvin students observed Mrs. Nella Snapper's 4th graders at Oakdale Christian School and Mrs. Linda Hughes' class at Bauerwood Elementary School, Jenison, Michigan.

Currently art educators emphasize personal expression only; therefore, it is important for teachers and curriculum designers to recognize that permanent product-related activities alone did not attract the students' attention in this research project. Rather, activities like using the overhead projector with scraps of theatrical gels, transparencies of grids, arrangements of hardware objects, and shadows and shadow puppets (all transient products), engaged students most in this project. The improvised light box and the flood light with shadow-creating materials enticed children to explore visual phenomena related to the lesson on shadows with transitory products. Even the fifty ordinary, fast-food fishwich boxes led children to build sculptures and pyramids with modular units which had to be disassembled after children created them.

It is interesting to note that although the teaching-research team made conscious efforts to avoid artists' bibliographical data, students on several occasions made comments like, "is that Van Gogh's painting?" "Is Leger still living?" Was Picasso the artist who painted this picture?" "I know that artist; we have a picture just about like that one at home."

CONCLUSION

The observations made during this pilot program resoundingly support teachers and curriculum designers who promote art programs which teach visual literacy through art masterpieces coordinated with studio projects. Proof for this comes from the children in this project who of their own volition draw multiples, print implied lines, distort facial features in clay, and compare styles in their own art. This suggests indeed that students want to develop their capacities to read visual phenomena and symbols. The children referred to the optical illusions after having had that lesson.

Instructional programs which correlate the art of the masters with studio projects surely do have merit.

Change—Endure It or Cause It?

The minute I drove onto our farm yard to visit the home place I knew something had changed: the huge old willow tree was missing. I cringed at the nakedness of the spot. Where was the stately trunk up which Grandpa had shimmied to prove his skill? Where were the outstretched limbs we had “ridden” as make-believe ponies and the wispy, willowy skirts that had gone swishing down to the ground? Some ruthless savage had blown in and toppled our lofty friend. Not even the fiercest tornado had the right to come and change our landscape!

Last June as I sat on a log in a creek at Mount Hermon near the Pacific coast, I marveled at a giant redwood—much stouter than our Midwestern willow—as it lay wedged across the creek bed, totally diverting the swift crystal current. Other similar magnificent giants lay across familiar canyon trails, and for the first time in over sixty years, annual hikers were denied those well-worn routes, all because profuse January rains had slid the slimy earth from beneath those ancient redwoods. We looked around and saw destruction—but in years to come, future generations will accept the altered view as if it were always the way they see it.

Change occurs constantly in our lives and in our environment. Not even the most steadfast among us can stop changes from occurring—even if we want to. Changes in nature are often termed “acts of God” for which one cannot even buy insurance. But, in God’s providence, we also experience changes in the realm of Christian education.

Let us look at some of these changes and then try to understand why they are necessary and often even healthy for us.

How has education changed since you began to teach? Are students the same as on your very first day of teaching? Do you have the same classroom? The same colleagues? Are *you* the same? Have you the same methods? The same lesson plans? The same perspectives? Do you handle difficulties the same way? I hope some of these items show change, for if nothing has changed, I fear you are stepping into educational quicksand.

In my own experience, perhaps the most obvious change is in the appearance of students. Whereas we

teachers once judged mini-skirt lengths and later the degree to which blue jeans had faded, we now contend with preppy prosperity and a fashion passion that requires students skipping school to shop. French braids now replace pouf in feminine hair styles, and even the masculine members of the class who have status carry wide-toothed combs extending from back pockets.

Somewhat less obvious are changed attitudes. Reflecting the openness of our present era, today’s students are much more prone to challenge authority, both verbally and non-verbally, than in earlier years. Parents tend to question education procedures more publicly than before, and as vigilante-type actions occur in some communities, young people tend to know and imitate their parents’ reactions more openly than in years past. The day of “Your teacher is right” is virtually gone. Today’s teacher must realize that the students are products of the open communication age. Those who were educated in the “turn-rise-pass” era find today’s students bold and full of disrespect. Yet today’s teacher may not judge too harshly. Although we may not approve, we must be aware that our students are reflecting the existence of an emphasis on individualism with its self-centered right to achieve happiness. For us who teach, that means helping our students to understand the contrasting biblical view of the individual being complete only in community, with a love that serves well beyond self.

... if nothing has changed, I fear you are stepping into educational quicksand.

Another change our students are displaying is a new affluence—which may seem ironic at a time when we are supposed to be experiencing an economic crunch—and with it comes less regard for money values. Binder paper and oranges, erasable Papermates and snack-boxed raisins—these rate equal worthlessness in classroom wastebaskets. Student-sketched Garfield replicas and pieces of cold pizza are assigned equal values on the classroom market at lunch break. Students cough up dollars as easily as quarters for the town residents who take orders for after-school purchases of bubble gum and Pepsi-cola. Economic values have changed since our own junior high years. Our students arrive from fully-carpeted three-bath, three-car homes. Can we help them handle the triple responsibility of establishing priorities in today’s economy?

More affluence results in a change of entertainment as well. How many of us who now teach spent our adolescent leisure time skiing or snowmobiling or playing video games at arcades?

Consider the changes in television entertainment. The 1982 Nielsen report indicates that 98% of households have television (more than have refrigerators, stoves, or indoor plumbing), and 86% now have color television. The increased availability of color and the increasing use of cable TV have probably contributed to the nine-minute average annual increase in TV viewing last season over the previous one. While situation comedies appear to be the most popular programming for children and teens, the themes and life-styles of those shows have changed rapidly from an emphasis on violence and obvious misuse of sex to subtle portrayal of alternate life styles from the traditional family as well as increasing emphasis on space and the occult. Among my own students I notice a growing addiction to afternoon soap operas to the extent that a student who is sick on a school day returns to eager requests to update class members on "Guiding Light" and "Days Of Our Lives." Materials produced in 1975 discussing the effects of television are already outdated. Surely we who wish to be responsible teachers must help our students deal with change in the entertainment realm while maintaining a serious heart commitment to our unchanging God.

How many of us who now teach spent our adolescent leisure time skiing or snowmobiling or playing video games at the arcade?

Today's classroom has changed in a more tangible way as well. Step to the back storage cupboard a moment and take out a 1971 literature textbook. Place it next to a 1981 publication and notice the increased percentage of illustrations to written material in the newer text. Today's major publications tend to include features with greater eye appeal to attract our more visibly-oriented society. A significant increase in contemporary authors and characters from a variety of ethnic backgrounds reflects the present insistence on non-discrimination. A new reluctance to submit to vocal censorship groups has resulted in the softened language of even classic literary selections. Today's American student is a product of a media world that includes fast action and vivid design; today's textbooks attempt to compete with the media. A teacher whose textbooks are carryovers from earlier styles may need to put forth extra effort to integrate supplementary sensory material with the text, for today's students are

yesterday's "Sesame Street" viewers whose early educational experience consisted of vivid, rapid-action shots and sound effects. On the other hand, the teacher may want to encourage students to value the printed word or the black-and-white line drawing; however, such a teacher must still recognize the greater challenge faced because of the students' media background.

Not only are the textbooks changed, but other materials are also less familiar to students of a decade ago. Today we have media courses and computer courses whose information may be outdated before today's eighth graders graduate from high school. With all the modern resources currently available, few teachers can satisfy students by merely lecturing from the same dog-eared notes year after year. (Some even have the same dog-eared jokes in the margins of those notes.) Nor should they be satisfied! The teacher needs to bring to the material a vitality and personal conviction of worth—else he or she may as well record rote notes on a machine and go out for coffee. An educator who falls into such a non-professional rut had better change texts, schools, or jobs. I am not suggesting we dispense with everything traditional. In fact, I always find it a comfort to return occasionally to sentence diagramming. Since most of the parents have themselves diagrammed sentences, they quickly endorse this method—the familiar is secure.

Another changing physical feature in the current classroom is the seating arrangement. At the risk of custodial discontent, many teachers are finding value in room arrangements far removed from the traditional rows and aisles facing north. Individual study arrangements are giving way to group arrangements for many class sessions. No longer do we all agree that a quiet classroom produces greater learning than a bustling one. We teachers need to evaluate the value of developing independent study habits as well as the need to build the concept of working together as we consider the physical arrangements of our classrooms.

Perhaps the most significant change of all is the change in constituents of covenantal Christian schools. As we come in contact with students and parents having a variety of lifestyles and backgrounds, we need to teach our students—and their parents—a respect for and a sensitivity about these differences. We need to remember that "different" is not synonymous with "inferior." We need to exhibit an acceptance for people ourselves so that we avoid judgments on lifestyles different from our own. Of course, this change presents dilemmas previously not encountered; that is why we will sometimes find it impossible to lean on traditions that once gave us security. As we bring together in one

classroom students with various types of television restrictions or Sunday observance or methods of praying or interpretations of Revelation, we who teach are called to demonstrate the law of love, not the law of legalism or tradition. Galations 5:16-18 talks about the heart commitment, about living by the Spirit. "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law" (Gal. 5:18). When we develop spiritual attitudes, we are released from judging others on the basis of tradition. Then we can deal with change that defies tradition. Then we can understand and apply Harry Emerson Fosdick's quip: Christians are supposed not merely to endure change, nor even to profit by it, but to cause it.

We need to remember that "different" is not synonymous with "inferior."

Sometimes a former student returns to my English classroom, flops into a desk, looks around, and comments, "Nothing has changed in this room!"

I know better. I muse a bit and reply, "Oh, yes, it has. Since you left this my class, it's never been the same!" I know, however, that much more has changed. For one thing, the teacher has changed—even though the same desks remain and the same clock face guards the same light blue walls of Room 1. ☐



Principal's Perspective

Ed Mulder, Editor

The Teacher, the Principal, and Curriculum Change

Daryl Vander Kooi

During the 1978-79 school year, teachers and principals of 69 members of Christian Schools International (CSI) schools participated in a research project designed to determine similarities and differences between the teachers and principals in their perceptions of the *actual* and *ideal* amounts of time needed for teaching 53 different communication skills. The project report, sent to teachers and principals after completion of the project, indicated:

1. Teachers and principals did not agree on actual amounts of time spent on the 53 different speech activities.
2. Teachers believed they should not spend time teaching these advanced activities [speech, debate, parliamentary procedure, etc.], while principals believed some time should be given to instruction.
3. The comparison between principals who teach and principals who do not teach indicated a significant difference in actual and ideal time estimates.

One could conclude from the research that in many categories Christian school teachers and principals agree neither on the amount of time teachers teach specific subjects nor on the amount of time teachers should spend teaching those subjects. This article discusses curriculum changes in terms of the basic problem, its potential consequences, and a possible solution.

BASIC PROBLEM

Most curriculum experts readily recognize that teachers are important for curriculum stability, continuity, and change. Most Christian schools depend upon teachers in matters relating to curricula because the schools have no funds to hire consultants or to have curriculum experts on staff. Classroom teachers must be aware of new developments in curriculum for their particular classrooms. Because principals, education committees, and boards either lack expertise or time, teachers are often requested to develop new curricula. The work can be extensive for teachers; they must evaluate the old, learn about the new, design ways to introduce programs, and develop lesson plans, projects, and materials. In most cases, the change also influences other faculty members in ways which necessitate time to discuss and resolve differences. Any change in curriculum needs the work and cooperation of the teachers.

Principals are also important in curriculum change. If a principal is convinced that existing programs are good, then teachers' changes are not likely to succeed. A principal who promotes improvements and creative thinking encourages change.

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The principal's perspective and knowledge are important because he is in a position of control. The principal controls the time by scheduling it for curriculum work or by obstructing it. The principal controls the funds by seeking monetary support from the board for consultants, materials, or workshops, or by blocking such assistance. The principal controls the communication by informing and persuading the education committee and the school board to support new developments or by maintaining status quo. The principal's perspective and cooperation are important to any successful curriculum change.

Since both teachers and principals are needed for curriculum improvement, one can logically conclude that both will need similar ideas, goals, assessments and perspectives or both will have the capability of developing those similarities. Both should share an awareness of the need to change or improve; this includes a common understanding of classroom teaching and a knowledge of specific deficiencies. They will need mutual support and encouragement to sustain the long hours necessary for a change. They also need a mutual knowledge of the ideal—the goals, the time to be spent on the objectives, the scope and the sequence, and the methodologies. Any misunderstandings of the ideal can lead to problems.

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

A number of negative consequences can develop if principals and teachers lack the necessary similarities. First, unrecognized differences can result in *bypassing*—a communication problem in which the parties *appear* to agree when they actually do not, or they appear to disagree when they really agree. Bypassing is a rather common miscommunication when educators use jargon, and when they use generalizations for goals. Second, unknown misun-

derstandings can lead to different implementations of curricula. If teachers and principals have different concepts of a proposed change, the implementation of that change will likely be hampered. Necessary materials such as workbooks, visual aids, and equipment can be missing, for example, or necessary schedule changes might go undetected.

Third, necessary evaluations of the program must be carried out. If principals or teachers misunderstand the change, the evaluations are likely to differ. And fourth, misunderstanding at various stages can lead to destructive conflict among the parties involved. Fifth, the implementation of change could result in poor results, the ultimate loss for the child.

Any or all of these potential problems can develop if differences exist between teachers and principals.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

No research is currently available to indicate final results of differing perceptions between teachers and principals, but groups anticipating curriculum change should avoid the potential problems. Principals, teachers, consultants, or CSI can develop instruments designed to measure principal and teacher perceptions, concepts, and goals associated with particular curricula. The instrument should include the objectives, the time to be spent teaching, and the units or lessons. Then similarities and differences can be identified. Differences can be resolved by group processes, workshops, or with the help of a curriculum consultant.

A successful change in curriculum in Christian schools depends upon common knowledge and common goals among teachers and principals. A successful change results in better Christian education for the child—our ultimate goal. Misunderstandings and dissimilarities should not prevent that goal. ■

Teaching the Fifth Commandment to Children

Robert P. Craig

If a child in the fourth or fifth grade were asked what the Fifth Commandment means, he might respond by listing specific behaviors: children should not sass their parents; children should take the gar-

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bage out immediately when told to; and children shouldn't get on their parents' nerves. My experience as a religious educator suggests that this view of the Fifth Commandment not only is prevalent among the young but also is commonplace for adults.

The Fifth Commandment was traditionally taught as a kind of guideline for children to obey their parents. By taking a closer look at the complete Decalogue, I find this interpretation is misleading. Originally the Ten Commandments were directed to adult members of the Jewish community and not exclusively to children.

What does the Fifth Commandment mean for us today? How can the value(s) inherent in this commandment be taught to students? To answer these questions it will be necessary to briefly study the commandment in its historical context.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In Exodus 20 the commandment reads: "Honor your father and your mother that you may have a long life in the land which the Lord your God is giving you." Something to note is that the word "obedience" does not appear in the commandment; rather, the commandment speaks of *honoring* one's parents. Obedience, as important as this notion may be, seems to be assumed rather than specified. It is not the main concern of the commandment, at least not in a rigid way. Let us see why.

The Hebrews, originally a nomadic people, spent much time in the desert, moving from sparse grazing lands to water holes. The climate was harsh: hot, scorching and searing heat, with sudden, violent sand storms in the day; the nights piercing cold. The Hebrews usually travelled by foot or, sometimes, by camel. One had to be hardy and robust, to say the least. The temptation was to leave behind anyone who was too weak or too sick to keep up with the clan. Thus, the major concern of the Fifth Commandment was originally for aged parents who might be neglected in favor of the young. It would have been easy when the caravan moved on to leave behind the feeble, senile, useless ones.

... the original intent of the commandment was to foster respect for the aged, the weak, the unproductive, and the defenseless members of society.

In this ancient society, many young people eliminated unwanted parents by leaving them to die in the desert. Or, the oldest son, who inherited the family fortune, might have declared that all the wealth had been offered to God, and thus the parents would be penniless and poverty stricken. Therefore, the Fifth Commandment specifically stated that parents were to be honored; aging parents in the ancient Hebrew society had few rights of themselves.

Something else should be noted about the latter part of the commandment, namely, "that you may have a long life in the land which the Lord your God is giving you." This was a kind of protective clause, for by respecting their aged parents, the young were insuring that when they grew old they would similarly be respected and not left to die. Thus the original intent of the commandment was to foster respect for the aged, the weak, the unproductive, and the defenseless members of society.

HUMAN WORTH

The basic value inherent in the Fifth Commandment concerns a person's ultimate worth and right to human respect. Since an individual's ultimate worth is predicated by the fact that he is a child of God, treatment of a person, any person, ought never to be based merely on pragmatic grounds. Policies regarding the aged, for instance, should not be based on the comfortableness of the young; the aged have rights of their own which ought to be respected. This commandment stands at the head of those directed to love of neighbor. It is a fundamental moral obligation that we honor and respect the human dignity of others, regardless of their social contribution.

Since an individual's ultimate worth is predicated by the fact that he is a child of God, treatment of a person, any person, ought never to be based merely on pragmatic grounds.

People should never be treated merely on the basis of their productivity. Yet society often measures people in terms of how much money they make, how many academic degrees they have, and other such criteria. So much of our motivation is external in the sense that we always expect to "get something" from our work or involvement. It is difficult to convince most people that some types of involvement may be valuable for their own sake; they may be intrinsically worthwhile. Sometimes even small children will respond, "And what do I get out of it?"

Such a value basis tends to make many feel valueless, useless. Thousands of young people take their own lives each year because they question their value and find no good answers for themselves. They feel they do not contribute to society, so why live! In fact, many adolescents seem to experience this; suicide is the number-two killer of adolescents in America. Many commit suicide because they could not meet the expectations they felt society had imposed on them: high enough grades, high enough achievement tests, or a spot on the varsity squad.

Indeed, society measures worth not on the basis of who people are—people of dignity because they are created by God—but on what people can do, how well they can perform. This view is certainly not consistent with the Fifth Commandment. As Christians we value a person because of who he is rather than on what he can do. We are equal and each one is unique because God created each in his image and likeness.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT IS STILL IN EFFECT

The Fifth Commandment implies that we should pay honor to *all* persons of authority when legitimate. Even though I suggested that obedience to parents and authorities was not *emphasized* by this commandment, it doesn't follow that obedience is therefore an outdated concept. In fact, application of the Fifth Commandment does include obedience to parents. And, in view of the growing number of Christian families that are disintegrating due to divorce or job mobility, the Fifth Commandment deserves special emphasis.

Parents have a right to the obedience, honor, and respect of their children. The future of the American family may depend on the quality of relationships between children and parents, and this relationship of honor and respect ought to continue throughout the child's adult life.

It is difficult to convince most people that some types of involvement may be valuable for their own sake; they may be intrinsically worthwhile.

Yet it is important to realize that there is a sense in which honor (unlike respect) is something that must be earned and deserved, for parents likewise have a responsibility to their children. The parent has not only the moral responsibility to provide support, nourishment, and care to the child, but also to give love. Likewise the parent has the basic duty not only to train and discipline the child, but also to regard and cherish the child as a person worthy of respect. Thus, giving food, shelter, clothing, and an education does not exhaust the meaning of parenting.

Likewise the Fifth Commandment speaks to the respect due all other legitimate authority. Jesus gave us a remarkable example of respect for proper authority, even though the worthiness of those vested with power and authority was questioned. The question, Jesus demonstrated, was not one of human

worthiness but of worthiness of authority. In our post-Watergate society we must be careful not to over-generalize and view all elected officials as corrupt and therefore withhold respect and cooperation.

IMPLEMENTING THE TEACHING OF THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

As Christian educators we can ask ourselves and our students a number of questions generated by the Fifth Commandment: What can be done about the welfare of others in our community? Is there anything we can do about inequality, racial discrimination, or poverty? Remember the adage: "If we are not part of the solution, then we are part of the problem."

... suicide is the number-two killer of adolescents in America.

There is much that our students and we can do to implement the values inherent in the Fifth Commandment. We can help assure people of their very basic rights: such as food, clothing and shelter. If I have two coats and you have none, and I give you one of my coats, I am not being charitable; rather I share with you what you deserve. I respect your right as a person to have clothing. The New Testament description of the early Christian community has much significance for us as a goal to work toward:

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed. They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their house for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved. (Acts 2:44-47)

While we do not suggest that every Christian sell his house and join a Christian commune, it is evident that respect for persons includes sharing with them. Acts 2 suggests sharing and community, not rugged individualism, as the ideal.

Thus the Fifth Commandment instills in us a moral responsibility to be true peacemakers and reconcilers among human beings. We must lead in helping others recognize that each human being is uniquely precious, for God calls each of us personally into existence because He loves us. We with our students need to constantly examine our lives in this regard.

The following questions and strategies are discussion starters (to be used on the basis of the level of understanding and development of the students, of course):

1. Have I genuine love for my neighbors? or do I use them for my own ends? Have I given grave scandal by words or actions?
2. In my family life, have I contributed to the well-being and happiness of the rest of the family by patience and genuine love? Have I been obedient to parents, showing them proper respect and giving them help in their spiritual and even material needs, if possible?
3. Do I share my possessions with the less fortunate? Do I do my best to help the victims of oppression, misfortune and poverty? Or do I look down upon my neighbors, especially the poor, the sick, the elderly, strangers, and people of other races and nationalities?
4. Does my life reflect the mission I received in baptism? Do I share in the charitable works of the church in whatever way I can? Have I helped to meet the needs of the church and the world and prayed for them, for the humane spread of the Gospel among nations, for peace and justice?
5. Am I concerned with the good and prosperity of the human community in which I live, or do I share to the best of my ability in the work of promoting justice, morality, harmony and love in human relations?
6. Have I obeyed legitimate authority and given it due respect?
7. If I am in a position of authority or responsibility, do I use this for my own advantage or for the good of others, in a spirit of service?

Discussing and implementing the above concerns is, to say the least, quite difficult. The point is not to have some type of "true confessions," in which the student demonstrates failure in reflecting on these sorts of issues or feels guilty because he is not involved in them. How much, for instance, can an elementary school child either understand or be involved in such activities? But involvement is a relative term, and even elementary school children can and must begin to reflect about their relationships within the family and with other students. The teacher needs to be careful not to invade the privacy of students and careful not to encourage them to discuss feelings and ideas which may be harmful to them, either emotionally or in other students' eyes. Yet these sorts of concerns need to be addressed, and a tactful, caring teacher can aid students in clarifying and deepening their values concerning the Fifth Commandment.

SUMMARY

The fulfillment of the Fifth Commandment means that we need to look far beyond obedience and honor for parents and authority, as essential as these activities are. It means that both our students and we need to examine our attitudes regarding our treatment of every human being with whom we come into contact. The primary value inherent in the Fifth Commandment is that we must respect, honor, and reverence each human being, for each is part of the reality of God Himself, for He loves each one. We may be dissatisfied with another's behavior, but it doesn't follow that we may then treat him or her as anything less than a person. ■

Event

Paul Ramsey

Quick-songed, reiterative and known,
Two notes and a pause, again and again,
Then three notes ruffle our hearing
In unexpected sequence—the quail's
Cry varied in spring in the early nighttime
And a tangle vanishes
Of resentment's crowdings.

For the moment?

For reality,
And in hope.



The Christian Positive Life Attitude

Ron Ezinga

It is inconsistent for Christians to be negative. With their past forgiven, their present secure, and their future irrevocably guaranteed, what is there to be negative about? Yet many Christians live defeated lives in spite of having claimed victory in Jesus. They miss out on the joy and exhilaration that a motivated Christian life can offer—a life built on a strong foundation, a life which takes the right steps to reach goals that have been carefully prioritized—in other words, a *Positive Life Attitude*!

... many Christians live defeated lives in spite of having claimed victory in Jesus.

This is what the *I Can* course is all about—building that foundation, teaching those steps, and helping to set, prioritize, and reach life's goals. *I Can* is a character education/motivational course, being taught from kindergarten through adult education classes, based on the book *See You at the Top* by Zig Ziglar, a Christian author and motivational teacher/trainer. *See You at the Top* was written as a motivational, personal development book for business-oriented people. As such, some of the terminology is naturally related to that audience since its use as a textbook was not conceived of at the time the book was being written. However, the teacher's guide and student manuals were developed from an academic viewpoint and they serve as the learning focus of the course. Lack of documentation in the textbook has been criticized, but everything in *See You at the Top* can be documented. A bibliography will be included in the revision now in process.

Ron Ezinga is president of the Zig Ziglar Corporation, Dallas, Texas.

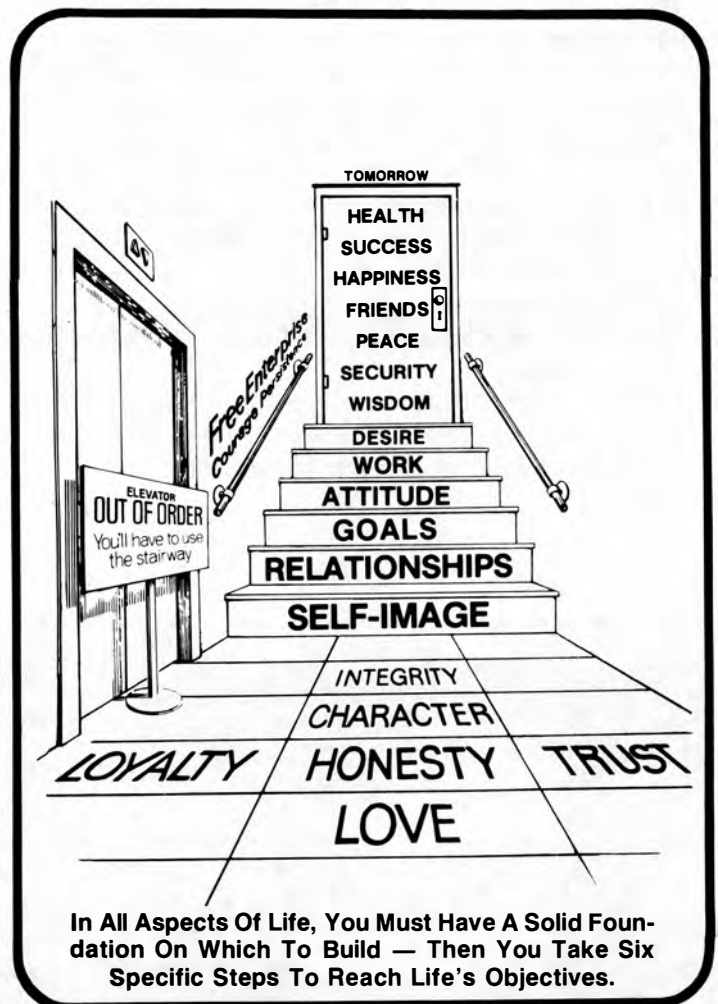


Figure 4—The Zig Ziglar Stairway to the top lists the steps involved (1983).

The Zig Ziglar Program for Success

Galen H. Meyer

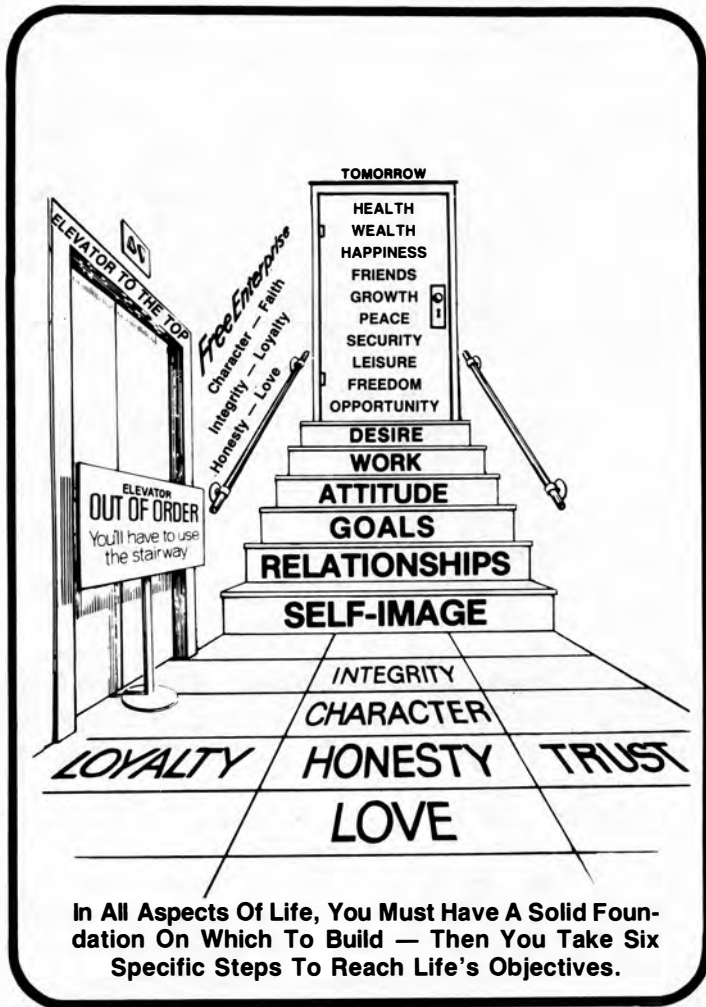


Figure 1—The above sketch represents an earlier diagram which Meyer discusses. See Fig. 4 for the current "I Can" ladder. Ed.

Among the pilgrims in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* is a Pardoner (a peddler of papal indulgences like the notorious Tetzl in Luther's day) who carries, in addition to his sheaf of pardons, a bag of relics—including the shoulder bone of a sheep that once belonged to a holy Jew. According to the Pardoner, it is a bone with miraculous qualities. A farmer only need dip it in his well to be blessed by it. Livestock that suffer the effects of snake bite or some pox will be cured immediately upon drinking water from the well.

Life in the Middle Ages was hard. Killer diseases made forty years a long life. Add to this the burden of social upheaval, poverty, the disappointments and anxieties common to human beings in any age—and it becomes more understandable why the people in Chaucer's day bought the Pardoner's relics. They desperately longed for the great panacea that would solve all their problems and make them rich. The Pardoner saw their desperation as a need he could fill.

People haven't changed much since Chaucer's day. Anxious about the way their children are growing up, the steady erosion of cherished values, the threat of alcohol and drug abuse, the state of the economy, and the future of the country, they are still desperate enough to look for the great panacea. No longer offered in the form of a powerful relic, the panacea today is likely to come in the shape of a seminar or course that promises to change the participant's life and fulfill his fondest dreams.

One such course is the *I Can* course which the Ziglar Corporation of Dallas, Texas, has actively pro-

What Are You Doing Here, Elijah?

Teacher Burn-out and the 7000

Steven Vryhof

Parent-Teacher Conferences.

7:15 PM I've talked with her before—last year at this time. I could flunk her son again this year; his work is lousy and too often non-existent. But, once is fair; twice is unrealistic. Jim is low-ability. Boy, is he low-ability! A perception problem. He never really did learn how to read and comprehend. A quart low, they say. Half a bubble off plumb. I look beyond her to the poster, trying to think of something to say. I have nothing but good feelings for Jim; the kids who have it and waste it infuriate me! I say something about special help. Has she talked to the counselors about tutoring. . . (again)? "Yes," she replies, then stops, "but the school, though Christian and sincere in its desire to help, doesn't really provide what Jimmy needs." I nod and suggest that there's no excuse; she should continue to pressure the administration to help students like Jimmy.

That did it. The weight of twelve years of parent-teacher conferences like this one overcomes her. She nods and looks away, but I see the eyes glisten. She thanks me, quickly rises. I say, "Let me know if I can be of help." She smiles, fumbling in her purse for a tissue, and is gone. I look at my hands for a moment. But another mother has walked up, smiling, extending her hand. "Hi, I'm Mary's mother."

10:45 PM So what about Jimmy? So much to do, so little time. I flip through the mail. Barnabas Foundation wants money. So does Calvin College. And Home Missions. And an inner city ministry. And an outer city ministry. I put them in the stack with two dozen other requests, from environment to hungry children, abortion to Sierra Leone.

I notice my "To Be Read" bookshelf—up now to twenty-nine books.

What is it about the eleventh hour that leads to these thoughts? Janet and Craig, both juniors, have to get married. Mark took a shotgun one Friday night and blew out a school door. I, along with the others, had flunked Mark. Jack in Wisconsin writes that his church is dead and dying—whatever that means. Coldness. Mediocrity. Complacency. Materialism. Disaffected youth. Pastors can't preach to save their own souls. How do you get a pastor to leave? I put that one on a pile, too. And the music. We had a "Christian Rock" group. I couldn't say if it was spiritually edifying; I was too busy watching the girl. Reagan will get the fathers back to work. Which reminds me—Bob's doing some good research on how acid rain is killing the fish in Michigan lakes.

And what have I been doing which matters in the sight of eternity? It seems the only thing a person can recount with any integrity is the faults. Here I was lazy, there indifferent. Here quick to criticize, there slow to understand. So I've taught a few where to put commas and dented the attitudes of others with a good poem. What, in the final analysis, does it matter? All I can see is that I can't accomplish nearly what I want to or even should. I pursue lesson plans and grading, but always I'm looking back and around at the more, or the other, or the rather to be done.

11:15 PM "And men look back, worn and bewildered, wondering how it is. . . ." Bill served in the Navy for five years. Far East duty. He's seen and done a few things. He was discharged in San Francisco. Got a hotel room and sat looking in the mirror for three days. That's good. It means he knows exactly what's going on.

"I'm the only one left. God's cause is losing out. And I, only I, am left."

And there he came to a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD the God of hosts: for the people of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left: and they seek my life, to take it away."

And He said, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the people of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away."

And the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. And him who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him." (I Kings 19:9-18)

God came to despairing Elijah. He comes to all of us when the sky is grey and threatening and there is no music in our hearts. He's not in the mighty wind, or the earthquake, or the fire. He comes with a still, small voice. "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

And (am I reading too much into this?) the manner of God's words and presence was not a tender pleading, "Oh, Elijah, don't feel bad, everything's going to be all right. Don't be afraid, Elijah. Come on, chin up, old boy. You'll do OK." I say I don't think that was the effect of God's word and presence. Rather, even though

the voice was small, I suspect the effect was more like an impatient scolding, "*Elijah! Stop it! Come, stand before Me! I am tired of your whimpering and whining, your crying and complaining, your lack of faith, your lack of hope. I am God, Elijah. I am in control. I am working out my purposes according to my plan. . . and it is certainly not your place to think that all is lost!*"

Elijah's response, interestingly enough, is not recorded. Perhaps it was the same as David's in Psalm 46 and Job's after he was confronted by God: stunned into silence by the realization that God is GOD. And in the sight of eternity, in the sight of that divine understanding, all human efforts fall into cosmic perspective.

. . . in the sight of eternity, in the sight of that divine understanding, all human efforts fall into cosmic perspective.

But besides the words of confrontation, there are the words of comfort: "Elijah, you are not alone. There are 7000 in Israel who have not bowed their knee to Baal, 7000 who have not kissed his mouth."

The 7000—those who don't compromise, those who don't conform, those who don't bow their knee to the Baals of this world! The 7000—the faithful, the few, those who obey.

I have seen the 7000—fellow teachers, students, and parents who are aware, concerned, questioning, alive, searching, dedicated. I have seen acts of kindness and compassion, love and selflessness, faith and good will, that move me beyond words. The lesson is simple: Never let the sludge and tedium, the Janets and Jimmys, the Pentagon and struggling pastors, the polluters and your own feelings of inadequacy, ever make you lose sight of the 7000. Even if you only see 500 of them, or fifty, or five. No despair. God has never been limited by numbers. He took twelve apostles, changed the world, and re-routed the course of history. He uses the few, the faithful, the 7000 . . . and he works miracles.

11:45 PM "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ☐

BACKGROUND

A little background on the author will help set the stage for a discussion of the Christian positive life attitude.

Zig Ziglar was raised by a devoted Christian mother, widowed when her twelve children were very young. Regular attendance at the local Baptist church was not an option offered to the children. It wasn't until 1972 that Ziglar committed his life to Christ; and since then he and his wife Jean have led each of their four children to the Lord. Because he takes Psalm 1:1 literally, all Ziglar's business advisers and key employees are believers. Ziglar is on the board of deacons and teaches a large Sunday School class at the Dallas First Baptist Church. The content for his class is the same as the *I Can* course, but he teaches it at the adult level. Because Ziglar knows that man is physical, mental, and spiritual, he regularly checks his ideas and findings with experts in those fields.

The course was created and initially taught by Mamie McCullough, a dedicated Christian teacher in a Georgia high school. She heard Ziglar speak and then read *See You at the Top*. Recognizing the principles and attitudes contained in that book as ingredients missing in the classroom, she requested and received permission to use the book as a text. Using her creative ingenuity, she designed and taught the first *I Can* course. The contents have had the involvement and scrutiny of several curriculum specialists and the course has been endorsed by qualified psychologists, all committed Christians.

RESULTS OF THE *I CAN* COURSE

While the credentials and competence of those who developed the course are important, the real question (after several years of use) is: What are the results. Results from a recent survey of more than 1,000 students who took the course are shown in Figure 2:

Results of <i>I Can</i> Course		Basis: 1000 students
85%	committed themselves to personal improvement.	
86%	improved their self-image and confidence.	
88%	developed a more positive life attitude.	
79%	learned to set and reach goals.	
63%	developed more patience and self-discipline.	
68%	are more kind and helpful to others.	
83%	developed more enthusiasm and hope for life.	

Figure 2

As happens in a survey like this, some of the lower percentages are most significant. This is demonstrated by Figure 3:

Results of <i>I Can</i> Course—Lower Percentages		Basis: 1000 Students
59%	developed a better attitude toward school.	
57%	get along better with family, teachers, employers, and friends.	
46%	improved their moral code.	
53%	take better care of property.	
46%	of those who used illegal drugs: quit or reduced usage.	
39%	of those who smoked: quit or reduced usage.	
34%	of those who drank: quit or reduced usage.	

Figure 3

In summary, Be doers of the word and not hearers only.

Psychologist John E. Gaus of Euclid, Ohio, writes, "... As a professional psychologist, I was most inspired by your book. As a Christian myself, I appreciated that perspective ... I see a tremendous need (even a sense of urgency) for this program in the lives of God's people."

Possibly the most potent testimonial is from Dr. William Duke, a Christian professor at Cornell University. In a letter recommending *I Can* to Rev. James Graves (Blythe, California), he writes:

... I have been teaching *I Can* for three semesters here at the University and have observed phenomenal results in attitudes, motivation and productiveness of the students taking it. The *I Can* course is the most beneficial course that can be offered to students today as a means of preparing them for life and the beautiful things it has to offer.

We believe a closer look by Christian educators at the *I Can* is warranted. Every human being, Christian or not, is created with God-given abilities.

ATTITUDES GOVERN ABILITIES

Very simply, development of those abilities is largely governed by attitudes: an *I Can* attitude or an *I Can't*. The difference between the two has incredible ramifications. McCullough explains this difference to her children: "*I can't* means either you don't know how or you won't ... if you don't know how, let me teach you; if you won't, let me spank you." Simple as that. Conversely, the statement *I Can* is latent with the power to achieve. Man is capable of achieving much but first he must believe *I Can*. Add the Scriptural dimension from Philippians 4:13—"I can do all things through Christ ..." and the motivation for Christians to be positive, power-filled achievers in whatever they do is established.

But are we positive, power-filled achievers? That question begs an honest, introspective look. Christians often go around looking like the cruise directors for the *Titanic*—thinking Christianity to be

synonymous with long faces and empty pocketbooks and equating the lack of material goods with spirituality. At the same time, many who have achieved and have been blessed materially live with guilt feelings because somehow "it ain't right to have things." As Ziglar often does in his book, one should note that there are careers and callings where successful achievement does not necessarily result in material reward. However, a large percentage of students being educated in Christian schools, as well as public, will go into occupations where effort is rewarded in a material way. It is important that the reader keep that context in mind; otherwise the focus can be easily blurred. This can lead well-meaning Christians to misunderstand and criticize the *See You at the Top/I Can* philosophy for a seemingly materialistic emphasis. Everyone is entitled to his own opinion but no one is entitled to wrong facts.

Christians often go around looking like the cruise directors for the *Titanic*—thinking Christianity to be synonymous with long faces and empty pocketbooks and equating the lack of material goals with spirituality.

The intent and results of the philosophy are expressed by Michael O'Hara, an alcoholism counselor from Truckee, California:

My spiritual life has turned all the way around since reading *See You at the Top*. My attitudes and actions are God-centered, not self-centered, now

In that context, then, one should analyze Figure 4, the stairway to the top, and the *I Can* course. The caption under the stairway says: "In all aspects of life, you must have a solid foundation on which to build . . ." A look at the foundation stones reveals solid, Christian characteristics: love, loyalty, honesty, trust, character, and integrity. The reader might well observe that Christians, as well as their schools, are founded on these principles. Praise God for that foundation already there!

However, the caption under the stairway goes on: ". . . then you take six specific steps to reach life's objectives." Those steps involve self-image, relationships, goals, attitude, work, and desire, while life's goals, or the doorway to *Tomorrow* are identified as health, success, happiness, friends, peace, security, and wisdom.

Starting with the step *self-image*, one works his way up the stairs. The Bible tells us that man is created in God's own image. With this as one's spiritual heritage, a healthy self-image should come naturally to the Christian. Dr. Anthony Hoekema of Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, in his book *The Christian Looks at Himself*, shares the

testimony that his life was changed as he researched and wrote that book. Ethel Waters once said, "God don't sponsor no flops." Yet the crowded facilities of mental institutions, Christian and secular, give evidence to the crucial importance of the self-image step and the need to do something about it. The *I Can* course identifies the causes and the manifestations of a poor self-image and gives specific instructions for improving it.

The second step is identified as *relationships*. Matthew 7:12 identifies the golden rule Jesus taught: "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." Luke 6:38 says; "Give and it will be given to you . . ." with the same measure you use, it will be measured to you." The statement oft repeated in the *I Can* philosophy is: "You can get everything in life you want if you help enough other people get what they want." While at first glance this appears to be a selfish, materialistic statement, in the context of the foregoing Scriptures it obviously is not. In fact, Proverbs 11:25 clearly reinforces this concept: "A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." *I Can* helps clarify the way a person should see others so he can treat them unselfishly with love and concern. This step enables students to develop interpersonal competence skills so desperately needed to cope with life in today's society.

The third step is labeled *goals*. Few will dispute the fact that a marksman has little chance of hitting a target he cannot see, yet many (Christians included) go through life as "wandering generalities" with no goals at which to aim. Lack of accomplishment is *usually* the result of lack of goals. The person in the last chair in band will never be first chair if he does not aim for it. The same effort that goes into excellence in the band, on the athletic team, the debate team and others, must continue in life. The studying, the practice, the commitment—all are necessary to reach the goal. The Apostle Paul, quoted in *See You at the Top*, says, "Forgetting those things which lie in the past, I press forward toward the mark." As the student learns in the *I Can* course, "winning is not everything, the effort to win is." Goal-setting unlocks the potential and sets up the discipline needed to use that potential. The *I Can* course not only emphasizes the importance of goals but also helps to identify legitimate goals, and it spells out in specific detail how to set and reach goals.

Attitude is the fourth step on the stairway. It becomes increasingly obvious that all the steps are integrally connected and this is most evident with the step called *attitude* since our attitude controls us. Ziglar says, "Our *altitude* is governed by our *attitude* not our *aptitude*." Think about that for just a minute.

After giving that some thought, participate in a brief exercise. Don't read any further than the next sentence which is your "assignment." Think about some people whom you really admire and respect and jot down on a piece of paper the qualities or characteristics you admire most in them. Try to list at least ten. Don't read any further until you have done this. Now, go down the list and put an A by those qualities which reflect attitudes and put an S by those qualities which indicate skills they have learned. Your list probably has characteristics like loving, caring, enthusiastic, hardworking, ambitious, honest, loyal, competent, prompt—and we could go on. The noteworthy thing about this exercise is that all the qualities listed above should have an A by them with the possibility that "competent" may involve skill. What is the point of this? It clearly shows the importance of attitude in life. A Harvard University study revealed that the reason an individual gets ahead in whatever he is doing is 85% the result of attitude and 15% the result of aptitude.

The paradox of this study is that it further revealed that 90% of education involves learning facts and figures while only 10% concerns attitude. That 10% almost totally revolved around activities such as athletics, band, choir, and other "non-educational" events. The average student, not involved in those ways, receives no attitude training at all. What courses then do children take to learn attitude? The obvious answer is, "None." To be sure, teacher's attitudes—good and bad—are caught by their students but in the true sense of the word they are not taught. The *I Can* course actively teaches attitude, the importance of the right mental attitude, and ways to control attitude, thoughts, and behaviors regardless of the situation. Attitude does determine altitude, and attitude is as teachable as it is learnable.

WORK AND DESIRE

The final two steps are called *work* and *desire*. These are closely related. *I Can* teaches that the real opportunity for success lies within the person, not in the job or occupation. Building a healthier self-image, developing better relationships, setting goals, improving attitudes and habits: none of these provide new abilities and talents. Rather they enable students to develop keener insights and interpersonal competencies that help them to develop their talents more full. In his parable of the talents, Jesus did not simply give a lesson in money investment (though it was that too). No, without a doubt, stewardship of the talents man is given, including abilities, was the lesson taught. It is no coincidence that the amount of money one has is usually directly related to the effort (work and desire) invested in developing one's God-given potential to the max-

imum, thereby having more talents to invest in not only the building of the Kingdom but also in family life.

The Bible is profuse in its promises of reward for hard work. Consider Proverbs 10:4, "... diligent hands bring wealth." Or Proverbs 13:4, "... the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied." Or Proverbs 14:23, "All hard work brings a profit." Herbert Otto in *Explorations in Human Potentialities* reports that healthy people are operating at only 10-15% of their potential. This represents a major challenge which holds great promise today: How can we develop and put to effective use the vast resources of talent and potential that exist in people? How can people change from self-defeating to life-giving behaviors? The *I Can* course was developed for exactly that purpose. It is intended to pull out the bigger, more capable person inside each individual and to help people get more of their talent into action so they and others can enjoy what they contribute. The course goes beyond informing students of what they need to do to meet their needs; it helps them to regularly apply the knowledge and skills in their daily lives.

"Success is not measured by what you accomplish compared to the accomplishment of others . . . it's what you accomplish compared to what you are capable of accomplishing."

Now we've completed the climb up the stairway. You will have noticed in Figure 4 that the elevator is out of order. This is to emphasize that life is not easy; nowhere in the *I Can* philosophy will anyone hear that life is easy. You will hear that life is tough, but that it can be exciting and rewarding. You don't pay the price for success but you can enjoy the price of success. As one works his way up the stairs, the bannister is there to help. Its components are *free enterprise*, *courage*, and *persistence*. Without individual courage and persistence operating within a free enterprise system, the results of taking the steps up the stairway would be minimal, if existent at all. In fact, most of the goals on the doorway to *Tomorrow* would not be feasible outside the context of a free society. Imagine the impact on the people in Communist countries that the Communist government has on their self-image and their goals in life! We should be thankful every day for the freedom we have in America and get involved in some way to keep our country strong and free. There are many areas in our society that demand the *salt* of Christian involvement; freedom is not free! Education of today's youth is crucial to America's tomorrow.

row and *I Can* is a valid tool in the hands of dedicated, committed Christian educators.

GOALS

It should be noted that the goals listed on the door *Tomorrow* represent many more that could legitimately appear there. Health is an important goal since mental and physical conditions directly affect many aspects of one's life, especially one's self-image and attitude. Happiness and friends are inseparable from the ability to enhance relationships with people around us. Neither of these can be attained by self-indulgent individuals such as was the rich fool in the Bible who was going to build bigger barns for his own benefit. Peace, security, and wisdom are goals which every responsible person should seek. All of these goals can be viewed as materialistic or humanistic; however, when considered in the context of a life built on a foundation of Biblical principles (love, loyalty, trust, honesty, character, and integrity), the spiritual dimension is very obvious.

Formerly the doorway showed prosperity and wealth instead of success (See Figure 1 on p. 17). The change was made to a term that would encompass both prosperity and wealth but go still further. In this area charges of materialism sometimes are made. What is success? The *I Can* philosophy identifies it this way: "Success is not measured by what you accomplish compared to the accomplishment of others. . . it's what you accomplish compared to what you are capable of accomplishing." This means that if you are an average teacher but you are capable of being an outstanding teacher, you are not as successful as you are capable of being. In the business world, if you are an accountant who is capable of being the vice president of finance but you are content in not developing those talents, you are less than successful. It follows then, using the illustration, that as an accountant you will earn less than you have the potential of earning, since money is the yardstick of your contribution. See how the parable of the talents applies here? It could be rightly assumed that Jesus would say to such an accountant, "You wicked, lazy servant!"

Yes, many Christians are burying their talents today, burying them for fear of what the Master will say in spite of what the Master has already said! God's Kingdom (schools, churches, missions, etc.) has flourished as the results of the prosperity He has first provided his people. Humanly speaking, many Kingdom projects can only be accomplished because of the giving of people who have been successful in developing their talents in business. Is it possible that this is the reason God's Bible talks so much about success than it does about heaven?

What is God's attitude towards prosperity or financial success? Think about Job, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Joseph, Solomon, David . . . no welfare cases there! Malachi 3:10 and Proverbs 3:7-10 set out priorities and give promises of success. Here are just a few of the hundreds of references to prosperity and material blessing: Deuteronomy 28:30, Joshua 1:8, II Chronicles 31:10, Psalms 1:1, Psalms 118:25, Psalms 119:14, Jeremiah 29:4-7, Matthew 19:16-23, and II Corinthians 9:6-11. The goal of success (including the material blessings that normally attend it) has a rightful place on the doorway for Christians, especially for Christians.

CONCLUSION

Look at Figure 4 again in light of all of the foregoing: a foundation built on Biblical principles which support a stairway of Christian concepts with free enterprise assisting the attainment of goals which fulfill God-given potential. That is what *I Can* is all about. It is a preventive, action-oriented program designed to build a healthy self-image, generate a positive attitude, develop good habits, help set and reach goals, improve grades, teach self-discipline and responsibility, and strengthen relationships with others.

Strangely enough, teaching these life-giving concepts is controversial. Secular humanists say *I Can* should not be taught in public schools because it teaches Christian values and principles. We plead guilty (and they are looking at the *public school edition* of *See You at the Top* which has all Scriptural references and quotations removed.) On the other hand, a Christian looks at the unabridged book (which is 10% or 30 pages longer due to Scriptural content), and says the Christian content is superficial, the philosophy humanistic and materialistic, and it should not be taught in Christian schools. Praise God that *I Can* is changing lives in spite of occasional critics on both sides of the fence. It is now in more than 2,000 schools, churches, prisons, and other institutions.

While most Christian schools stand tall next to public schools academically, they may not be content with that as their standard of excellence. God's standard is much higher . . . the challenge to excel is God-given. Our challenge to Christian school decision makers is to call two or three *I Can* teachers and talk about results. There's no risk in making these calls and there is much to be gained.

Yes, we do believe motivation and attitude training are needed in Christian schools as well as in public schools. *I Can* provides that because it "prepares today's youth for America's Tomorrow" by giving them a *Positive Life Attitude*. ■

moted as material for the Christian school curriculum. The core of the course is a textbook entitled *See You At The Top* by Zig Ziglar, a sales motivational speaker. It is accomplished by a student workbook developed by Mamie McCullough, a former high school teacher and now a member of the Ziglar staff. The *I Can* course is introduced to a school community through a well-publicized "informational meeting." This meeting, several hours in length, turns out to be something like the medicine show of the past. It is accompanied by a little vaudeville and given a bit of the old revival tent flavor. It includes peppy speeches, foot-tapping music, and testimonials.

. . . the panacea today is likely to come in the shape of a seminar or course that promises to change the participant's life and fulfill his fondest dreams.

The claims of the Pardoner for his old sheep bone pale by comparison to the claims made by the Ziglar Corporation for the *I Can* course. According to a publicity sheet handed out at a recent informational meeting, the course has "changed the lives of thousands." It will solve many school problems: apathy and cynicism, loneliness and fear, tardiness and absenteeism, underachievement, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, stealing, vandalism, sexual promiscuity, running away, and violence. The course will also give students a healthy self-image, better attitudes, good habits, goals, better grades, self-discipline, a desire to accept responsibilities, better relationships with others, a job, and a happy disposition. Besides all this, the course will remotivate teachers and fulfill any state requirement to teach the free enterprise system. If this isn't enough, *See You At The Top* suggests that the course will eliminate the need for any courses in sex education, drug education, and career education (p. 220)* while helping the school attain higher athletic honors (see the rear cover of the paperback edition).

The Ziglar panacea is a little like the product sold at the old medicine show (cures everything from hair loss to gout) in that it must be taken in huge doses if one is to get all the fantastic results. If the stuff doesn't work, it can always be said that the user hasn't had enough. In Ziglar's case, *See You At The Top* must be read, re-read, and reviewed. The student must underline parts and keep a notebook while reading (p. 23). He ought to begin and end each day

with a reading from *See You At The Top* (p. 9). In addition to absorbing the book, the student should listen to motivational tapes on a daily basis (pp. 202-203).

I CAN PHILOSOPHY

My chief criticism of the *I Can* course, however, does not concern its claims—but its underlying philosophy. That philosophy is best depicted in a sketch found in Ziglar's *See You At The Top*. The importance of the sketch (see Figure 1) to the student's understanding of the course is clearly stated when Ziglar says, "On the following page is your personal stairway to the top with the things you want, or want more of, listed on the door of your executive suite of tomorrow. We will use the stairway frequently to help you stay on track" (p. 10). Later on in the book, "the banquet hall of life" is substituted for "the executive suite" (p. 256).

The idea is simple enough. By taking the six steps and using the handrail, the man will get to the "executive suite"—and possess all things listed on the door.

Consider Ziglar's statement with Jesus' parable of the rich fool who achieved most of the things printed on the door to the executive suite. He was extremely *wealthy*, felt reasonably *secure* and at *peace* with himself, was *healthy* enough to make big plans, anticipated a long retirement—characterized by *happiness*, *leisure*, and *freedom*. "I will say to myself," says the rich fool, "you have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink, and be merry." The parable makes it clear that, though the rich fool achieved the "executive suite" with all the *things* Ziglar says will give one a "rich and rewarding life," it wasn't so—and he soon found out. "But God said to him 'You fool!'" (Luke 12:13-20 NIV)

My chief criticism of the *I Can* course, however, does not concern its claims—but its underlying philosophy.

One wonders too exactly what Ziglar means by the words listed on the door to the executive suite. Consider *health*. Nowhere in the book does Ziglar adequately define this term. He simply presents it as a goal that one can achieve by following his scheme. Suppose one contracts leukemia (as my father has) during the course of his career; is he to assume that it was the result of his having erred on Ziglar's stairway? What is the *peace* Ziglar promises? It does not appear to be the peace of which the Savior speaks when he says, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you" (John 14:27 NIV). The Savior's

*All quotations from Zig Ziglar's *SEE YOU AT THE TOP* are taken from the Abridged Educational Edition, published by Pelican Publishing Company, Gretna, Louisiana, 1977.

blessing of peace is freely given, to be received by faith; one cannot achieve the Savior's peace for himself by following anyone's scheme for success.

Ziglar defines *real security* as something that "must be earned" and as "accurately spelled out by using each letter as the first letter of another word. (S)ecurity (E)arned (C)arefully (U)sually (R)esults (I)n (T)reasure-filled (Y)ears" (p. 245). He obviously has in mind financial security. Ultimately, however, there is no security for anyone other than what the Bible sets forth when it says, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth . . . but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:19-20 NIV). *Opportunity* is simply defined as "America" (p. 176). Ziglar never explains how America can be a personal goal that one climbs six steps to achieve. *Leisure* is one of the things that Ziglar says will ensure a "rich and rewarding life" (p. 10). Yet a bit later in the book he associates "leisure time" with "frustrations, nervous breakdowns, broken marriages, alcoholism, drug problems, and crime rates. . . ." (p. 245). *Wealth*, given a great deal of attention in the book, is defined again and again as material possessions and money.

. . . there is no security for anyone other than what the Bible sets forth when it says, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth . . . but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven"

The only thing really clear about the goal listed on the door to the executive suite is that they are soundly materialistic—and I am convinced that materialism is not a sin in which we (or our children) need encouragement.

Ziglar's materialism becomes crude when he talks about the "worth" of people in terms of dollars. "from the neck down," he says, "very few people are worth more than \$100 a week. From the neck up, there is no limit to what an individual is worth" (p. 189). It is hard to see how anyone, especially the Christian, has a right to judge the worth of people in terms of dollars.

A spokesman for the Ziglar Corporation explained to me in a letter that Ziglar has in mind "people who use their backs" when he suggests that they do not deserve more than \$5,200 a year. This explanation does not remove the offense from Ziglar's statement, but only compounds it. Many people work with their backs (the man who picks up the trash, for example), and to pay them a wage with which they could not support their families is unjust.

Ziglar is at his best in *See You At The Top* when he talks about money. The ". . . man who earns \$50,000 a year could well be judged a failure if he is capable of earning five times that amount" (p. 36), says Ziglar—without the slightest intimation that perhaps the man, like Saint Paul, has "learned to be content" (Phil. 4:11 NIV). "You are obligated," Ziglar continues, "to earn more than you need because in so doing you create job opportunities for those less talented than you" (p. 119). Ziglar does not explain, however, what kind of obligation this is. Is it a civic obligation? Spiritual? Moral? Would I be a poor citizen if I were only to earn enough to meet my family's needs? A poor Christian? If it is a moral obligation to earn more than I need, am I a sinner for not doing so? The basis for this obligation as Ziglar states it also seems a bit limp. Does he mean to tell his reader in a subtle way that the really wealthy people in the world are only trying to help the unemployed? Or is he making a case for "trickle down" economics? Money, Ziglar sings gleefully, ". . . is soft and warm. It feels *good* and it's color-coordinated to go with any color you might be wearing. Not once has my redhead ever had to change outfits because what she was wearing would not go with what I was carrying" (pp. 37-38).

Ziglar can hardly imagine anyone not experiencing the same giddy delight he finds in money. "Occasionally I will hear someone truthfully say that they [sic] really do not want to earn large sums of money (ministers, teachers, social workers, etc.) but generally speaking any other person who says this will lie about other things too" (p. 38).

This one glib statement casts doubt on the integrity of my father-in-law who was not a minister, teacher, or social worker but a grocery clerk whose chief desire was to serve his Lord and church, and whose chief delight was his family. If there was anything "soft and warm" and anything that felt "good," it was to have his children visit with him around his kitchen table. Ziglar's statement is an offense to the memory of my father-in-law as well as many people like him.

What is the peace Ziglar promises? It does not appear to be the peace of which the Savior speaks . . .

"Almost without exception," Ziglar continues, "you can measure a person's contribution to society in terms of dollars. The more he contributes, the more he earns" (p. 36). The logic of Ziglar's statement is that a wealthy man is wealthy because of

his great service to so many people. "Generally speaking," says Ziglar, getting more specific, "... the well-paid minister is rendering more service to more people. The same is true of the teacher..." (p. 37).

There are exceptions to this general rule, however. Ziglar mentions *two*: the "dedicated minister" who believes he is called to serve a "small local area" and the "... dedicated teacher who choses [sic] to remain in a remote mountain or rural area or in a tenement area school..." "He or she might be the only hope many of the children have for raising the ceilings their families might have set for them" (p. 37).

I am convinced that materialism is not a sin in which we (or our children) need encouragement.

Notice that the poverty of children in mountain, rural, or tenement area schools is subtly blamed on the "ceilings their families might have set for them." The cause of poverty is thus neatly pinned on the poor themselves.

Overall there is very little empathy for the poor in *See You At The Top*. Ziglar says that extra effort, loyalty, enthusiasm, and hours will "... guarantee your job in hard times and earn you raises and promotions in good times" (p. 140). Along the same line, he approvingly quotes a friend who likes to say, "The good ones just 'ain't laid off'" (p. 241). (It is hard to imagine a teacher presenting this material in a classroom after a few of his own colleagues have been laid off.)

As a teacher in a Christian high school (not located in a mountain, rural, or tenement area—but in a prosperous suburb), my salary is less than that of most public school teachers with the same educational background and years of experience. For that matter, it is less than the salary of many who work in an automobile factory. Like other Christian school teachers, I work at a part-time job in order to meet the demands of my family budget. I would be extremely offended if a school board were to ask me to teach the *I Can* course to my students—and thereby present myself as making a less significant "contribution to society" or serving in a less important way than, say, a real estate man making \$50,000 a year. I would resign before I would do that. I would find it humiliating to have my class read:

Money... is a marvelous measurement of service rendered. Regardless of your profession, almost without exception, the more service you render, the greater financial rewards. One thing you have already discovered, when money is needed, there are very few substitutes. Every thing else being equal, I can assure you it is better to have it than not to have it. Besides, it is beautifully colored and goes with anything (p. 119).

How could I then answer the query of a discerning student who has decided to needle his teacher a bit. "You're teaching us kids to climb the steps to the door of the executive suite;" he might say—and then, to the sniggering delight of his classmates, add, "have you reached the executive suite yourself?" Or, hinting that he knows how much I earn as a teacher in a school not exactly in a depressed area, he might casually ask me whether I think I'm making a significant "contribution to society." After all, his uncle earns twice my salary driving truck.

According to Ziglar, there are seven kinds of goals that can be listed on the door to the executive suite: physical, financial, spiritual, career, family, mental, and social (p. 119). The financial goal receives the greatest emphasis in the book because money "simply measures the service you have rendered" (p. 119). The others get scant treatment. Becoming the school golf champion, the head cheer leader, the president of the senior class, and captain of the athletic team are strangely lumped together as a "physical goal" (p. 127). The social goal leaves the reader a bit puzzled too. Is it the goal of climbing the social ladder—to membership in the country club?

A new stairway sketch (see Figure 4) designed for a later edition of *See You At The Top* lists a specific "spiritual" goal on the door to the executive suite: wisdom. Wisdom was chosen, according to a spokesman for the corporation, after a study of the New Testament book of James. In this same sketch the handrail to help one up the six steps to success is renamed the "free enterprise system." James would be surprised, I think, to learn that it now takes six definite steps in a success scheme as well as a certain economic system for the Christian to acquire wisdom. "If any of you lacks wisdom," says James clearly enough, "let him ask of God who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him" (James 1:5). Fortunately, Ziglar's scheme in general and the free enterprise system in particular are not necessary for the getting of wisdom. If that were so, the Christian in a Communist country would face a real disadvantage.

Competition, Ziglar goes on, is "extremely helpful" in achieving one's goals. "Challenge the man

in front of you . . . if you continue to beat the one in front of you, it will be just a matter of time before no one will be in front of you" (p. 126). For the student who sets for himself the goal of becoming the first chair in the trumpet section of the high school band, this advice is clear enough. He must beat the student holding the fourth chair and so on, up the line, until he finally takes on the first chair student in a trumpet duel. But how does the advice about competition apply to the student who sets for himself the spiritual goal of wisdom? Or how about humility? Does he first beat the not-so-proud student, becoming more humble than he, and then take on the most arrogant student in the school until he is the humblest of them all? What form will the competition take?

The incongruity of Ziglar's outline for success (illustrated by the six steps and free enterprise hand-rail) with the achievement of spiritual goals points out a deeper dilemma in *See You At The Top*. Salespersons like to emphasize what they call its high spiritual content. Bible texts and examples are liberally sprinkled throughout its pages—but they do not sanctify or even offset the underlying materialism of the book. Seven times the student who studies *See You At The Top* must review the stairway sketch in order to stay on the right track. His destiny, if he follows the Ziglar success plan, is nothing less than an "executive suite" (a metaphor for money, power, and prestige) or the "banquet hall of life." His goals are: health, wealth, happiness, friends, growth, peace, security, leisure, freedom, opportunity—with the greatest emphasis on wealth. "There are probably some other things you want but I'm confident if you had the things we've listed you would have a rich and rewarding life," says Ziglar (p. 10). At the end of the book he reminds the student also to seek the Kingdom of God—but it sounds like an afterthought. If the Kingdom of God is to be sought *first* as Jesus says (Matthew 6:33), one wonders why it doesn't appear at the head of Ziglar's stairway. Perhaps it does not fit.

It is hard to see how anyone, especially the Christian, has a right to judge the worth of people in terms of dollars.

Apart from its basic philosophy, the shortcomings of *See You At The Top* as a textbook are enough to keep it out of the academic curriculum. Facts and figures cited as evidence for Ziglar's opinions are often loosely documented with "survey after survey

shows" (p. 41), "conclusive evidence points out" (p. 41), "scientists tell us" (p. 57), "teachers will tell you" (p. 60). Sometimes these facts and figures are rather serious and beg for documentation.

If it is a moral obligation to earn more than I need, am I a sinner for not doing so?

Ziglar's teaching about the proper roles for men and women is peculiar and a bit funny. Women, he says, "should think and talk like women," and men should "think and talk like men" (p. 108). It is not clear what this means. Is Ziglar suggesting that there are certain subjects for women to think and talk about (the laundry, for example), and other subjects (golf, perhaps) for men? Ziglar further suggests that if a boy sees his father doing dishes on a regular basis, he could grow up to be a homosexual:

I believe under normal conditions the wife should wash the dishes and make up the beds. Obviously there are circumstances which dictate that the loving husband dig in and help. Generally speaking, though, I don't believe it is a good idea for a little boy to see Dad in the dish pan, nor do I believe little girls should consistently see Mom assuming a male role and performing masculine chores. As my mother often said, 'Your children more attention pay, to what you do than what you say.' Let the little boy see the male role and he will grow up to be a man with a natural affection for the opposite sex. Let the little girl see the role of the female and she will grow up to be a woman with the natural affection for the opposite sex. (pp. 108-109)

If Ziglar is correct, high school counselors should try to keep male students out of home economics classes. Such classes demand a fair amount of dish washing during the course of a semester.

Politically, *See You At The Top* expresses the lingo of the right wing.

"One look at the Post Office, Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and the food stamp program will convince anyone that . . . the government doesn't know how to run a business" (p. 289). ". . . the rate of productivity per man hour in government is thirty nine percent below the average productivity level of the private sector" (p. 290).

Ironically, Ziglar likes to accent the progress of Black Americans in recent years (as opposed to focusing on racism) and, at the same time, decry the

intrusions of the federal government—without realizing that Blacks have made progress precisely because the federal government forced its will on the states through civil rights legislation. Ziglar subtly maligns Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal efforts to get the country out of the Great Depression when he says, "The enemy is Communism and it started under another banner back in the 30's. At that time Americans were sold on the 'free lunch' concept that they could increase their wealth by channeling it through a centralized government in Washington" (p. 280).

I would be extremely offended if a school board were to ask me to teach the *I Can* course to my students—and thereby present myself as making a less significant "contribution to society"

In the same vein, he passes judgment on the United Nations as "... little more than a pawn of the Communists and Third World Nations" (p. 304). Younger Americans, he continues, have the disadvantage of never having seen the country win a war. The Korean and Vietnam wars did not give them "... the sweet taste of victory or the thrill of seeing free people embrace their liberating heroes" (p. 282). Associating bloodletting with courage, Ziglar considers it a sign of American weakness to have restrained the Israeli military forces from demolishing an Egyptian army they had surrounded in the Yom Kippur War a few years back (p. 286). Restraint, however is sometimes a decision that wisdom dictates, not weakness.

CONCLUSION

See You At The Top is somewhat like a whole volume of "Guidepost" magazines. It contains many stories about people who have accomplished something, that accomplishment very often being great wealth. My criticism of the book does not intend to suggest that all of these stories are not worth reading. Some of them describe people who meet great challenges. The stories, however, do not warrant including the book in the curriculum as a textbook.

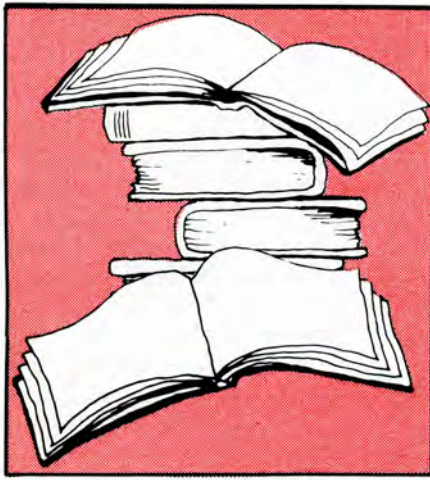
I agree with Ziglar that having a healthy self-image, learning to cooperate with others, setting goals, developing positive attitudes toward life, and working hard can be very good things. But I could not teach them using Ziglar's material anymore than I could teach Reformed Doctrine from the Book of Mormon.

"If any of you lacks wisdom," says James clearly enough, "let him ask of God who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him"

Before teachers and administrators adopt an *I Can* course, (assuming we desperately need a course on self-image and the rest), they must take a hard look at the student body. Using the Bible as reference, teachers should define "healthy self-image" before considering students to lack in this regard. Furthermore, if a poor academic record and a general lack of interest in extra-curricular opportunities seem to indicate poor self-esteem, teachers should look closely to see what this suggests (Christian schools usually rank rather high in both categories). Does lack of motivation on the part of some students warrant a full-fledged motivational course? Isn't personal and remedial help for the struggling student far more important? (Remedial help requires about the same money as the Ziglar material. A paperback edition of *See You At The Top* is listed as \$12.00 in a publicity program.) Won't the individual encouragement that teachers and parents can give such students be far more effective than a separate course?

If Ziglar is correct, high school counselors should try to keep male students out of home economics classes.

If Christian educators decide to teach a motivational course, it should begin with the teachers themselves and avoid all panaceas, both medieval and modern. ☐



BACK TO THE BLACKBOARD

Jay E. Adams

Presbyterian and Reformed
Publishing Co.
Phillipsburg, New Jersey 08865.
1982, 155 pp., \$4.95 paper.

Reviewed by
Donald Oppewal
Book Review Editor

Written by one whose major professional training and experience has been that of counsellor rather than classroom teacher, this book gives a new look at what Christian Schools International (CSI) has been calling decisional learning or, more recently, tendency learning. After preliminary chapters author Adams reveals his educational point of view in the assertion: "*Education is a moral activity*" (italics his). He offers his own explanation of the key term by the following: "Education is a behavioral, not merely an intellectual, affair." (p.43).

This professor of practical theology at Westminster Theological Seminary is one of an increasing number of thinkers who believe that Christian schools must make a clearer break with what he calls "the Greek, academic idea of cognitive learning" (p.45) and turn instead to the "biblical discipleship model."

This commitment to a biblical model causes him to identify the fruit of the spirit (love, joy, peace, etc.) for his taxonomy of educational objectives, and to note that these are all lifestyle outcomes. He then consistently derives his curriculum position from these objectives. His proposal on curriculum is that it be organized around "ministering projects" rather than courses (ch. 14).

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For him a project differs from a course in a number of ways. While a course focuses on one aspect of life (e.g. history, grammar) a project emphasizes many aspects of life *at once*. He thus sides with those who believe that curriculum should be interdisciplinary, cross disciplinary, or whatever will break down the walls between the academic subjects themselves, and between these and lifestyle learning.

He realizes full well that such a curriculum design will require changes in other aspects of education. Taken seriously it will cause team teaching to be the preferred style, rather than a teacher's working alone. It will require letter grades to be replaced by other means of evaluation; his proposal sounds like a pass-fail system of completion of each "project."

In a much too brief chapter called "Learning for Doing," he tackles the problem of a distinctively Christian teaching methodology. It is the least satisfying of the chapters although it is a good try at identifying a "disciplining" (modeling?) method.

It is encouraging to this reviewer to see a theologically trained mind in the Westminster tradition go beyond hortatory talk about biblical directives for Christian education and enter the fray at the level of goals, curriculum, and teaching method. One need not accept Adams' conclusions in order to see that he has done a fine job of linking biblical theory and practice. The attempt alone makes his book worthy of scrutiny of all career teachers and administrators in Christian schools.

Its large successes at linking biblical material to educational issues do not obscure the minor weaknesses. These emerge when a writer not schooled in educational literature tackles specific matters of classroom teaching, discipline, grading and individual differences. If he is not always on the money, he is at least in the running and has put educational money where his theological mouth is. ☐

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INNER CITY PRIVATE EDUCATION: A STUDY

The Catholic League for Religious
and Civil Rights

Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
1982, 62 pp., \$4.00, pb.

Reviewed by
Gordon DeBlaey,
Professor of Sociology,
Calvin College, Grand Rapids,
Michigan.

This pamphlet summarizes a study (commissioned by the Catholic League) of inner city Catholic schools. It should not be surprising to discover therefore that the pamphlet presents a rather glowing picture of the Catholic schools in the inner city, and concludes by calling for financial assistance (tax credit or voucher) to keep such schools afloat.

That obvious bias aside, this summary of a major research project supports what many of us always believed, and what other national research results (like James Coleman's new work *Public and Private Schools*) are finding: that is, that private schools are doing a good job of educating inner city youth.

Fifty-four Catholic elementary schools in seven major United States cities cooperated in the study. Data were collected from administrators, teachers, students, and parents by questionnaires, interviews, and on-site visits. The descriptions of the personnel, students, and constituents are interesting and sometimes a bit surprising. Almost 90% of the families using these Catholic schools, for example, are Black or Hispanic. This suggests that the whites who attend these Catholic schools are not trying to escape desegregation. Half of the families who send children to these schools have an annual income under \$10,000, while the average tuition per year per child is \$400.

There are two areas that are of particular interest in this report, and which are important for all religiously oriented private schools. The report confirms the dilemma of meager salaries vs. commitment to the "cause" that private school teachers often face and it discusses this dilemma for Catholic inner city school teachers in terms of their values.

The pamphlet also deals with the issue of Catholic schools being egalitarian or elitist. The relatively good track record of inner city students attending Catholic schools compared to inner city students attending public schools is often explained by claiming that Catholic schools pick only those students most likely to succeed. This report presents rather convincing data that such is not the case with these Catholic schools. It explains that the success of the students results not from selection but rather from socialization. That is, the report shows that the Catholic school personnel and the committed families in the school community enjoy the kind of unity of values that builds a school environment that is conducive to learning and positive behavior.

This pamphlet is not full of boring statistics. It is a very understandable summary of a worthwhile study of inner city Catholic schools. If you wish to obtain some additional insights (backed by empirical research) into the question of the worth of private schools, especially in inner city situations, then this summary will be worth your reading.

A GUIDE TO
CHRISTIAN COLLEGES
The Christian College Coalition

William B. Eerdmans
Publishing Company,
Grand Rapids, Michigan.
1982.

Reviewed by
Gordon Oosterman.

College catalogs are something like novels. They describe people and places only as the writers wish them portrayed. Here is a catalog of

catalogs that gives two descriptive pages to each of 63 Christian Colleges in the United States. This is not to imply that there are not many more Christian colleges available and, also, in Canada. Under Lutheran auspices there are many as well as independent institutions, but this publication understandably limits itself to members of the Christian College Coalition.

Most Christian parents recognize the importance of post-secondary education in the Christian liberal arts tradition, although a disappointing number of parents seem not to know or not to care. True, not everyone should continue formal education beyond high school, and some young people are well advised to go directly into technical or job training. Having acknowledged this, one still must conclude that the case for Christian liberal arts education, at least a year or two of it, has never been more timely.

This book was produced with the apparent intention of helping families decide which Christian college could serve best in terms of mutual backgrounds, commitments, and aspirations. One wishes that something more explicit had been written as a convincing case for attending a Christian college. This strikes me as decidedly more important than to write that "the townspeople are particularly supportive of intercollegiate athletic events."

I had looked forward to reviewing this book and make no pretense about indicating my disappointment. The predictable pages (if you read two, you know the format of the remaining 125) seemingly were gleaned from questionnaires filled in by the institutions' public relations department. Each account commendably begins with a short history of the institution and then comes the stuff the accrediting agencies are always anxious to count: bodies, buildings, and books in the library. There is no shortage of boastful language in describing campus settings; one begins to wonder if this is an institutional beauty contest. The relationship between size or scenery of the campus and the quality of Christian education is never sug-

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gested, in contrast to the Seventh Day Adventists whose philosophy of education does incorporate the notion.

The "Spiritual Emphasis" comes next, complete with denominational affiliation, and then the "Academics," always indicating the "percentage of Full-time faculty with Doctorates." To my knowledge no one has ever tried to demonstrate that someone with a doctorate (the Ph.D.) is either smarter, more strongly committed as a Christian, or a more effective teacher because of the doctorate; but no matter, this is what the public has been conned into thinking and the college public relations agents capitalize on it.

Then comes the "Student Life" listing of the many optional activities, including clubs and sports (one has ping-pong another table tennis) and also the guidelines of the college regarding appropriate student conduct. On the bottom of the second page are to be found current costs and fees along with the address and telephone number of each admissions office.

Perhaps there is a degree of unfairness in evaluating in terms of what is left silent, but I missed the intensity of the importance of coming to grips with the issues of the day from a strong and unapologetic Christian stance, something that should characterize the essence of activity on a Christian campus. I have no objection to courses being offered in piano tuning or nurse anesthesia, and I think I can tolerate some instances where "students may also design their own programs by taking the 'Personalized major' option," but throughout, the curriculum of many a college seemed provincial. Since Christians confess in the words of the Apostles' Creed their allegiance to Christ and corresponding concerns for His *universal* or *Catholic* Church (versus a regional or national church) why is there not more of a concern for studying geography, world affairs, and languages other than English (must we call them foreign)? Having indicated the encyclopedic nature of the publication which has an abundance of the clichés of the day (educating the "whole person," "to motivate

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students to become human beings . . . ,” “every student is encouraged to utilize his or her unique gifts,” “The parameters for behavior,” “human history,” etc.), I would nonetheless strongly affirm the importance of this publication. May it be generously placed in counselors’ offices, places where young people meet in churches, and any other place it can be seen and read by those considering college. Having taught on campuses of both Christian and state colleges/universities, without hesitation I would recommend a Christian college for your college-disposed children for the sake of academic excellence, Christian maturity, and the Kingdom of God.



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Promontory

Paul Ramsey

The road comes to the scored wooden barrier
 If one would travel beyond, no automobile is
 of use.

Beyond is a quarry, then the marshes of the
 hidden birds.

The map is illegible
 On.

The resolute must remember the absence of
 guarantees.

The irresolute must remember that even their
 vacillations faltered.

At the foot of the cliff is the beach.
 Some arrivers discern the wings.
 Some cast the dice of the sands.
 A shy one sings.



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... and finally ...

Crossing my desk the other day was a short news release from Joel Levitt, Coordinator of Art of Danbury (Connecticut) Public Schools. If you are looking for ways to show what your students are doing, read on:

“Christian schools bear an important message, and that message can be effectively told through children’s art work. Since many Christian schools are small institutions, gaining access to the media or to a large, general audience may be difficult for the school to do alone.

“In Danbury, Connecticut, this has been accomplished by Christian schools joining other private, parochial, and public schools in a series of rotating art exhibits in City Hall. The constant stream of traffic in and out of the building, and the local media attention the children’s art displays have generated, have given participating schools a chance to tell their stories in a colorful and creative way.”

Want more information? Write:
 Joel Levitt, Coordinator of Art
 Danbury Public Schools
 63 Beaver Brook Road
 Danbury, CT 06810