

What School For Our Children?

EDWARD HEEREMA, TH. M.

NATIONAL UNION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS
865 Twenty-eighth Street, S. E.
Grand Rapids 8, Michigan

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*"The fear of the Lord is the
beginning of knowledge."*

--Prov. 1: 7

*"True learning and true piety go
hand in hand, and Christianity
embraces the whole of life -- those are
great central convictions that underlie
the Christian school."*

-- Machen

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I. WHAT DOES GOD REQUIRE OF US

The coming of the first child into the home is an altogether rich experience. There is a deep joy that comes with the gaining of something precious long awaited. Carefully and happily laid plans are beginning to materialize. Another story of the castle of dreams is suddenly built, and a bud has burst on the promising stem of marital love.

There is another element in this blessed experience. When the first little bundle of life comes into the home a new sense of responsibility dawns in the hearts of the happy pair to whom the child is born. They are now parents. A great task never before discharged is thrust upon them. God has entrusted to their care a human soul, a soul that must be loved wisely, taught intelligently, molded and disciplined faithfully. With some sense of uneasiness, perhaps, the young parents realize that what they do for that child is filled with tremendous possibilities for good or for ill, for splendor or for tragedy.

In the case of the Christian parent, however, the compelling weight of this new responsibility is even greater. It is not only that he feels keenly that he must rear a child unto taking its proper place in society as a worthy citizen of community and country. Upon the Christian parent a much heavier load of responsibility rests. God has entrusted to him the tremendous and exacting task of rearing a child unto fitness for citizenship in the kingdom of heaven.

Any Christian parent whatever may be his particular theological viewpoint, must necessarily feel the weight of this burden. However, when we consider the matter in the light of the special relationship that children of Christian parents have to God, the weight of this responsibility becomes disturbingly heavier. To appreciate this load of responsibility in its full weight, let us look at an important event that occurs not long after the child's birth.

In the church of God the eager parents hold up the new little life in their arms the minister of Christ places the seal of the covenant of grace upon the child. The child is baptized. At this familiar ceremony something tremendous and glorious is made clear. It is not that the parents dedicate their child to God, although that is involved. It is not that the little one there *becomes a* child of God. Rather, in the sprinkling of the water of baptism upon the child, the minister of Christ makes clear that the little one there presented is the beneficiary of all the blessed promises of God and of His covenant as centered in Christ Jesus our Savior.

What do we mean by that? We mean that the ceremony of baptism is a clear, visible indication (sign) and guarantee (seal) of a relationship which every Christian parent can and should claim for his child. We mean that God is hereby regarded as being in living relationship with the soul from the very beginning of its existence, from the very start of the process of the training and the molding of the personality. We mean that God, making use of His own creation, the family, takes for Himself the most determinative and educationally most important human relationship, namely, that between parent and child.

This covenant relationship of the Christian child to God is squarely based on the whole-structure of God's dealings with His people. This relationship rests on a marvelous arrangement that God has established whereby the stream of life and the stream of revelation and grace flow into each other. This relationship was first clearly announced to Abraham, the "father of us all," the man with whom God first formally established His covenant of grace. To Abraham God spoke that most glorious of promises, the divine assurance that is the very heart of God's dealings with His people. God vowed that He would be truly God unto Abraham and to his seed after him (Gen. 17:7). (See also Jer. 31:33, Heb. 8:10, II Cor. 6:16-18). That is the glorious core of the covenant of grace in which our children are baptized. It was this central promise which Peter clearly had in mind when on the day of Pentecost he called upon his hearers to be baptized, for, said he, "the promise is unto you and to your children" (Acts 2:38-39). Furthermore, just who the seed of Abraham are is made perfectly clear in Gal. 3:29, where Paul declares, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

When God made this central promise to Abraham He reinforced it with a physical sign, circumcision, to be administered when the new life was but just born, only eight days old. From many passages in the Bible it is clear that God's people understood this physical act in terms of a deeper spiritual meaning. From passages like Ex. 6:12, Deut. 10:16, Jer. 4:4 and Jer. 9:26 it is plain that circumcision meant *cleansing* or *purging* to the Old Testament child of God. Circumcision was a visible sign of that inner cleansing of the natural sinful man which is necessary if he is to enter into the fellowship of God and the covenant of grace.

When Christ came the basic structure of promise did not change. (See II Cor. 6:16-18). Only the reinforcing sign was changed. The bloody operation of circumcision as the sign of the covenant was replaced by another sign of cleansing, namely, *baptism*. (See Acts 22:16, Col. 2:10-13).

This sweeping promise with its reinforcing sign and seal means that all the saving mercies of God will be the child's portion, the unspeakable mercies "of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life" (Westminster Confession, Chapter 28, I). It simply means that the parents will not be working in the dark so far as life's most important relationship is concerned, namely, the child's relationship to God. That fundamental relationship does not rest in mere sentiment or parental wish or purpose. Rather, resting on the sure foundation of God's covenant promises, the parents can rear the child in the glad confidence that the child is the Lord's. "Now are they holy" (I Cor. 7:14).

How utterly precious this confidence is. What a calm and settled atmosphere in which to nurture and admonish a living soul. However, mark it well, the whole picture has not yet been drawn. God's blessed promises are rarely realized without the use of human means. This is clear, for instance, in the realization of the promise that God's elect shall come from every tribe, nation and kindred. And so they shall -- but not without the preaching of the gospel by human beings.

Thus it is in the realization of the blessings of the covenant of grace in our children. These blessings are sure; God is faithful. But these blessings are not to be realized without strenuous

effort on the part of those to whom God has entrusted these little ones. Commensurate with the richness of the blessings guaranteed by the covenant is a weighty obligation that God places upon Christian parents. What is that obligation? At the time of baptism when the mercies of God in Christ are represented by the water the parents are called upon to say "yes" to a question which in one communion is asked as follows: "Do you promise to instruct your child in the principles of our holy religion as revealed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament?"

This vow, solemnly made when the parents receive for their child the sign and seal of the sure promises of God's covenant of grace, clearly involves the following sweeping requirement: *the parents shall diligently see to it that every educative influence that shall mold the child's mind and life must not only be in accordance with the "principles of our holy religion," but must also clearly and positively impart these principles.* As the young parents gaze tenderly upon their babe, that grave responsibility and challenge ought to weigh upon their souls with all the inescapable insistence of divine command.

In order that the full impact of this responsibility and challenge may strike us sharply, we must briefly answer the question: What are the principles of our holy religion? In reply to that question we could very properly say that these principles simply mean all that the Bible teaches, the whole counsel of God. However, for our purposes we would do better to boil the whole body of scriptural teaching down to three general but concise propositions:

- (1) The final touchstone of all truths is the Bible, the Word of God.
- (2) All things must be related to God the Creator, and the final purpose of man's life in the totality of its interests shall be the glory of God.
- (3) God's truth can be known and His name glorified only when man is in a saved state in Christ Jesus, and Christ has become the Lord of his life and thought.

To be sure, not all has been said here that could be said in description of Christian truth. But these are the basic elementary principles that must be faithfully and consistently taught so that they will completely capture the souls of the children that God has entrusted to our care and training. The Word of God as final truth, the glory of God in all things as the final aim of life, salvation in Christ as the God-ordained means to man's true life for time and eternity -- this in the framework within which all controllable influences in the child's training must take their place. God asks and allows no less for the lambs of his fold.

II. DOES THE PUBLIC SCHOOL MEET THIS REQUIREMENT?

In the rearing of a child many, many influences are brought to bear upon the developing personality. There are, however, three main centers of influence in which the molding of a child's mind and character is especially determined. They are the home, the church and the school.

About the home and the church we are not now primarily concerned. This must be said, however. The parent who takes his covenant vows seriously will ever exercise a keen concern through precept, example, Bible-teaching and prayer for the development of his child in the way and life of the covenant of grace. And furthermore, it will ever be his keen concern that every other main center of influence affecting the child's nurture will support and strengthen the parent in his efforts to keep his covenant vows, so solemnly made to God. Certainly home and church should, each in its own sphere, work hand in hand in this great and glorious task of leading little ones in the way in which they should go.

But how about the school? That is our main concern here. It need hardly be said that the school is indeed a major center of influence in the forming of a child's mind and character. In fact, viewed only from the standpoint of the time spent in this center of influence, it is a more dominant sphere of child training than is the church, and possibly even the home. As far as the church is concerned that is clear enough. The two hours or so per week spent in the church look very insignificant when compared to the twenty-five to thirty hours the child spends in the school. On this score alone it becomes very clear that the type of training our children receive in the school should be a matter of deepest concern. The parent must face this question: Does the school support the home and church in their efforts in the Christian nurture of the child, or does it neutralize or even oppose these efforts?

Also on another score the gravity of this matter is apparent. It is in the school that the child meets more new experiences and enters more new doors of interest than in either home or church. It is in the school that the child learns to look over the length and breadth and height of creation, learns to know how people have lived and thought, learns to look understandingly at flowers and trees and birds, learns to appreciate the orderliness of numbers, learns something of the meaning of citizenship, learns to soar on wings of poetry and music and other arts.

As the plastic, eager mind of the child absorbs all of these new experiences and as he enters all of these doors to new realms, shall or shall not this process go on in accordance with the clear-cut biblical principle that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"? Shall or shall not the child enter into all of these areas of life in the knowledge that God is truly Lord of all? Can any Christian parent rest easily when he asks himself whether his child shall explore all of these new areas of interest without God, as if God did not exist?

These are exceedingly important questions. Let no parent dismiss them lightly. Childhood is the seed-time of life. It is then that the directive and sustaining convictions of life are planted. It is the *child* who must be trained in the way in which he should go. Home, church and school must unitedly labor to make God central and supreme as the boundaries of the child's life broaden and his experience deepens.

Does the American public school meet this high requirement? The answer is a regrettable but definite "No." The regret is not due to any reluctance to stick faithfully to certain great principles. It is due in part to regard for the feelings of those many sincere people who feel that the public school is an institution of which Americans ought to be unhesitatingly proud. This regret is due also to painful regard for the fact that there are thousands of children of Christian

parents being taught in a system which by its very structure must exert a paganizing influence on the lives of these little ones. Furthermore, we must not be blind to the fact that the American system of democratic, common school education has been acclaimed by liberty-loving people the world over. Horace Mann is almost an American idol because of his noted work in this field. This brochure is not written in blindness to these things, or with an intent to belittle the benefits the public schools have brought to thousands of America's children. Also, there are many sincere Christians teaching in these schools. This article is not meant to chastise them, though I trust it will provoke serious thought in the minds of those who honor this pamphlet by reading it.

Is It the State's Business?

However, we must face the question: Is the American public school the proper place for the education of our children, whom we have promised to rear in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? We have already said "No." Why do we say "No"?

We say "No" because in the first place there is at the very foundation of the American public school system a questionable and dangerous presupposition. That presupposition is simply that the state is responsible for the education of our children. Is that true? Perhaps many American citizens can give ready assent to that. But can a Christian parent assent to that? The matter can be very simply put as follows: The Christian parent must consider his child as belonging to the Lord. From that it follows that the child's whole training shall be to the end that the child shall recognize the Lord as truly Lord of all, and as the Saviour and Master of his entire life with all its interests. Can the state teach a child in that spirit and with such an end in view? Obviously it cannot. If the state should try any such thing we would have a situation that would be definitely contrary to the American principle of the separation of church and state.

In the minds of many sincere people the state's responsibility takes on a qualified character. Such people say that it is the business of home and church to teach matters pertaining to religion, but it is the state's business to teach reading, writing, arithmetic, history, etc. What shall we say to that? The reply is plain enough. Such a division results in a serious split in the child's mind and character. The state cannot teach these so-called "secular" subjects in any religious context. They must be taught without reference to God. Therefore, such an education builds up in the child's mind and life a sharp and most harmful distinction between religion on the one hand and much of life on the other. Such teaching based on the above division of responsibility definitely does not mold the child's mind in a deep God-consciousness that shall permeate all of life. This we hope to make clearer at a later point in the discussion.

In these times when we have seen many foreign states use the effective instrument of education to mold the minds of the young into blind allegiance to an all-powerful state, it is a little difficult to understand how any thinking American can be comfortable in the assumption that it is the state's business to educate the children. Is not the establishment of a federal Department of Education a constantly recurring threat to the freedom of America's educational institutions? There is only one effective counter-agent to all such dangerous, totalitarian trends, and that is to raise an effective challenge to the assumption that it is the state's business to educate our children. Such a challenge cannot be effective when we merely take verbal

"pot-shots" at this principle of state responsibility. It can be effective only when we establish a system of education based on quite a different notion of responsibility. That we hope to make clear in the next chapter.

What About the Word of Light?

Martin Luther once wrote, "Where the Holy Scriptures are not the rule I advise no one to send his child."² No Christian can disagree with the thrust of that warning. But what place shall be given to the Bible if we are to heed Luther's warning? The Bible takes the place it properly deserves only when it is the abiding touchstone of truth, and all of life and thought is brought under the sway of its teaching. Does the Bible occupy any such place in the public school? The question is answered in the asking.

In fact, Christian parents should pause at the fact that by the very nature of the public school the Bible must of necessity be ruled out, especially so as the "rule" of all that is taught. That was already made clear very early in the history of the American public school. In 1826 Massachusetts passed a law to the effect that no textbook might be used in the state schools which in any way favored any religious group. When Horace Mann became Secretary of Education in the state of Massachusetts in 1837 he sought to bring matters into line with the law of 1826. His efforts were vigorously contested by Christian groups, but to no avail. The struggle could have no other outcome. If the public schools were to be truly democratic, they could, allow for no teaching that was opposed to the beliefs of any group in the schools. By its very nature the public school outlaws religious instruction -- so long as the population is composed of Lutherans, Calvinists, Catholics, Jews, Atheist, Bible-lovers, Bible-haters, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Unity sect, Christian Scientists, etc., etc., etc. The only exception is that comparatively rare case in which all the people of a given area are of one belief. In such cases instruction in the particular religious tenets of that group is often given. But such exceptions in no way affect the obvious limitation on religious instruction that the public school by its very nature must require.

To be sure, the Bible is read in some public schools, perhaps in many. Our first reaction to that is one of gratification. But, let us pause to consider this more carefully. Is much real good accomplished by the mere reading of the Bible to youngsters, usually only a few verses at a time, without devoted instruction in its meaning? On the contrary, much harm may be done. The Bible so handled becomes merely fine devotional or religious literature in the minds of the children, and it is not looked upon as the Word of God that must be the beginning of all knowledge and that must inform us of our true estate before the holy God. A child who daily hears the Bible read as merely good, uplifting reading will develop in his mind a real hindrance to acknowledging the Bible as the Word of God apart from which there is no light and no life.

Another solution to the question of the relationship between religion and education has found favor among many who are dissatisfied with the present divorce between religion and education. Realizing that the public school by its very nature cannot teach any one religion, some

² Quoted in W. H. Beck, *Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States*, p. 6

people deeply concerned about this matter have suggested that the public school teach a course in general religious ideas that are thought to be common to all religions.

What shall we think of this suggestion? The serious flaw is simply that the truly religious man has always been committed to a definite set of principles and ideas. There is in him no vague sense of general religious ideas. He has one definite religious commitment which demands the devotion of his whole being. This very recent suggestion is quite out of line with all that history tells us about the matter of religious commitment.

Some Christians point with real satisfaction to the practice allowed by some states by which a certain amount of school time (an hour or two per week) is released for the religious instruction of the children in the church of their choice. This is often regarded as a real gain for Christian education. It is natural to sympathize with those who so regard the matter. But it is only a pitiful makeshift. It does not go to the heart of matter. That will become evident, I trust, as we examine public school education in the light of our second principle of scriptural truth.

Is God Lord of All?

"Secularization" -- this is a word that has taken its place in the study of the history of American education. What does it mean? It means that slowly but surely through the passing years American education has been divorced from religious teaching. It means that the teaching in the public schools has reached, a point where all is taught without reference to God and His Word.

It is especially this that stamps the public school education as grievously inadequate, yes, dangerous, for children of Christian parents, and for any children. It is not necessary to point to specific instances of evolutionary taint or anti-Christian teaching in the textbooks used in the schools, though such instances would be very easy to find. It is not necessary to hurl startling charges at the public school and its teachers, though in some cases they would be justified. The subtle and real damage of the public school education is perfectly plain by the very nature of the instruction there given. The instruction may not have a religious flavoring or basis. It must be secular, non-religious!

Thus hard fact no doubt figured in the now famous supreme court decision in the case of *Vashti McCollum v. Champaign County* (Illinois). Delivered on March 8, 1948, the opinion ruled religious instruction out of the teaching program of the public schools. Therefore, as the child's mental horizons broaden and his experience in life deepens, his mind is molded by an education in which God is ignored, that God of whom and through whom and to whom are all things. That is *secularism* -- and that is *paganism*.

Thoughtful Christian leaders have already long ago voiced their alarm at this dangerous trend. A report submitted to the Synod of New Jersey of the Presbyterian Church in the year 1845 warned of "a race of irreligious and infidel youth, such as may be expected to issue from public

schools."³ In the year 1846 the great Princeton stalwart Charles Hodge wrote that the common schools were assuming "a positively anti-Christian character."⁴ In recent times J. Gresham Machen has raised his voice against this secularistic education in no uncertain tones. "By this purely secular, non-moral and non-religious training," Machen has declared, "we produce not a real human being but a horrible Frankenstein, and we are beginning to shrink back from the product of our own hands."⁵ Peculiarly forceful is the famous statement of Nicholas Murray Butler, former president of Columbia University, that "the influence of our tax-supported schools is on the side of one element of the population, namely, that which is pagan and believes in no religion whatsoever."⁶

Perfect clarity is called for at this point. The destructive character of this pagan secularism must be as plain to us as the light of a blazing noonday sun. For illustration we shall look at the subject of arithmetic, that branch of learning that plays such an important role in the modern world of technical science. As the child studies arithmetic, how shall he understand the orderliness of numbers? Shall he grow up with the unthinking assumption that numbers are just orderly and that's that? Or shall he be taught that the orderliness of numbers reflects the orderliness of God the Creator, who in wisdom has made and sustains all things? Only the latter method of teaching is truly Christian. Such teaching forms the foundation for the development of a science that is truly Christian and for the development of scientists who are truly Christian. Here, too, as, in every branch of learning, it is imperative that the child learn from the start that the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."

The same principle can similarly be applied to history, nature study, geography, citizenship and the other subjects composing the grammar school curriculum. But by now it should be clear, without multiplying illustrations, why we criticize the public school educational system. It is essentially pagan, that is, God-ignoring. It molds a child in the all unconscious and damaging assumption that there are large areas of life where God is not in control, yes, where God can be ignored. For this same reason the setting aside of an hour or two per week for religious instruction is only a very poor makeshift. It does not get at the root of the trouble. Still basic to this practice is the idea that large areas of human interest can be taught apart from God. The child is still being reared in that damaging dualism between religion and life.

"What you say is no doubt very true," some one may say, "but cannot the harmful effects of such secularizing education be overcome by proper training in home and church?" In reply to that objection it can be said that in certain instances that may be partially true, hardly ever wholly

³ Quoted in L. J. Sherill, *Presbyterian Parochial Schools, 1846-1870*, p. 14.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 24

⁵ J. Gresham Machen, "The Necessity of the Christian School," *Christian School Yearbook*, 1933, pp. 13f.

⁶ W.H. Beck, *Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States*, p. 348.

true. A parent can constantly remind the child through teaching, scripture reading and prayer that all things are of God the Creator and therefore He is Lord of all. The same can be done in Sunday School. That is, however, a very feeble weapon with which to combat the damage already done. It is at the very point of teaching that this must be brought home. The whole atmosphere of the schoolroom, the whole spirit of the instruction must be God-centered. Otherwise, as already pointed out, the child will all unconsciously grow up with a split in his mind -- a cleavage between the many broad interests of school (where he spends so much time and has so many social and other ties) on the one hand, and the religious teaching of home and church on the other.

Others may object that the secularistic teaching of the elementary school may be effectually corrected by sending the child to a Christian college. That is not a very impressive argument. It is in childhood, the seed-time of life, that a true God-centeredness must be taught. It is a well-known fact that those who are so reared, in non-Christian elementary schools and in Christian colleges, find it very hard to appreciate fully the all-pervasive character of the kingdom of God. Young people so reared are often bound by the wholly false notion that missionary work or the gospel ministry are the only proper and truly Christian vocations for one who has given his heart wholly to the Lord. That is secularism, too, in reverse. Those so educated have not been saturated from childhood with the working conviction that life in the fullness of its interests must be lived to the glory of God in the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ. The damage of the dualism of earlier secularistic training is not easily undone.

The Education of Sinners

Tucked away in Victor Hugo's great novel *Les Miserables* is this arresting statement: "Destroy the cave ignorance and you destroy the mole crime." In that statement is expressed an optimism that has permeated most modern educational theory and practice. Pestalozzi (1746-1827), the father of modern educational theory, "possessed a deep and abiding faith ... in the power of education as a means of regenerating society."⁷ No man has had more influence on the educational theory and practice of our time than has John Dewey. Imbedded in all of his thinking in the field of education is the belief that "the public school is the chief remedy for the ills of organized society,"⁸ the public school being set up to fit the pattern of the society in which the pupils must take their responsible place.

What shall we say about this optimism? Has it been justified by the results of that educational program and by the events of our times? Can we agree that the mere gaining of knowledge is a guarantee of personal and civic worth and responsibility? Or, to be truly modern, can we agree that the contemporary public school with its socialized program has made for a high-principled social consciousness, or for a real "social efficiency"? When we see the nation's crime bill grow staggeringly higher year after year, when we are shocked at the tremendous growth of crime among the young, when we see that the graduates of America's public schools

⁷ Cubberley, *The History of Education*, 1920, p. 572.

⁸ Ibid, p. 782.

are alert to an argument of dollars and cents and often dull to questions of principle, when we see the decay of our democracy into a tug-of-war between pressure groups who seem unable to look over the walls of their own interests and needs, when we see America's parents neglect the nurture of our future citizens because of a childish need for more pleasure and more money, when we note what is the cultural level of the people as observed in endless empty radio chatter and second rate television shows and juvenile music, when we note that the watchword of success in our universities is this wretched refrain, "It's not what you know, it's who you know," -- when we see all of these festering sore on the body of our society, can we confidently agree that more secularistic education is the way to social regeneration? I think we have reached the hour of reckoning when we can say that such optimism is wholly unwarranted, yes, is decidedly dangerous.

Especially two trends in modern educational theory and practice have been stressed to offset the bad results of the false optimism expressed above. One of these trends is a greater emphasis on character education. Educators have hoped that a program of character education would fill a serious loophole in our secularistic training. Though proponents of such a program are to be congratulated on seeing the loophole, one can nevertheless have little zeal for such an effort. It has proved to be an ineffectual makeshift, superimposed upon a system that is basically wrong. Such a program divorces character training from the great religious principles which alone can mold true character.

The second trend intended to offset the results of the false optimism described above is the effort to fill the minds of the pupils with a deeper social consciousness. To be sure, the modern socialized system of education was not designed for the express purpose of overcoming the effects of this false optimism. Nevertheless, it is correct to say that John Dewey and others have looked to this greater social emphasis as the means of correcting the individualistic, anti-social tendencies of the growing citizens and of establishing a really effective and worthy society. "Education for democratic living" has become the educational slogan of the hour. To be sure, a greater social consciousness should always be imparted to students. Nevertheless this trend in modern education is again a wretched makeshift and even a dangerous one, for it virtually substitutes Society (or Humanity or Democracy) for God. At the root of this trend is the utterly dreadful assumption that a social consciousness can form an effective character and a worthy member of society, and that a real God-consciousness is not necessary to that end. Is it any wonder that a responsible investigating committee found Communism flourishing in the New York City schools just a few years ago? Is it any wonder that the cries of "socialism," "communism" and "communitistic leanings" are continually being raised, regarding the public schools? The trend we have been discussing is of the very essence of Communism. No wonder our nation is having such a wretched and confused time with the whole question of allegiance to the nation's ideals and form of government. When sinful humanity (or democracy) becomes the end-point of the educational process, the truth-less, God-less spirit of Communism and Socialism must inevitably set in.

What is wrong with the American public school system on this score? What is at the bottom of this false optimism that has called forth such ineffectual counter-measures? What is wrong with an educational system that has wrought so much havoc in our time with the notion of

the freely expressing self as the proper avenue of education? What is wrong with an educational system whose products state and practice their moral code as follows: We can do as we please as long as we don't get hurt doing it. What is wrong? Simply this. Our modern educational system is utterly blind to the fact that those whom it educates are sinful, and that this basic sinful character will express itself in man's pursuit of all the interests of life. This modern educational system completely ignores the all-important consideration that man must be re-born, re-made, if he is to discharge the high calling of one created in the image of God. Our modern educational system is blind to the third great principle of our Christian religion, namely, that man must be in a saved state in Christ Jesus if he is truly to discharge the high calling of one who is responsible first of all to God and also to his neighbor. To an educational system that ignores the basic need of the human soul we cannot entrust our covenant children. With Dr. Machen we must repeat that "by this purely secular, non-moral and non-religious training we produce not a real human being but a horrible Frankenstein, and we are beginning to shrink back from the product of our own hands."

III. THE EFFECTIVE ANSWER TO GOD'S REQUIREMENT

By now it should be abundantly clear that the public school does not meet the high requirement that God lays upon Christian parents in regard to the crucially important matter of the education of their children, or rather of God's children. The question naturally follows: What kind of education will meet God's requirement. We need an educational program where the Bible is not only looked upon with high regard but where it is actually and practically the supreme touchstone of all truth and all learning. We need an educational program where God is not only an awesome name to the children, but where by direct instruction and indirectly by the whole God-honoring spirit of the program the child is actually and practically trained to relate all of his life to God to the glory of His great name. We need an educational program that will not only teach the children to recognize Christ as their Saviour, but that will actually and practically tutor the child's mind in the knowledge that only in the saving mercy of God in Christ Jesus can relief be found from the destructive effect of sin upon all human enterprise and effort.

Who Shall Do This?

Another important question now forces itself upon us. Who shall assume the responsibility for the establishment of schools that shall maintain such an educational program? In answer to this general question of responsibility in education one of three parties has generally been singled out as the responsible agent in education, namely, the *state* or the *church* or the *parent*. We have already dealt briefly with the matter of the state's responsibility. It has been pointed out that by the very nature of our modern mixed society and by the very nature of public school education a genuine religiously-centered program is ruled out. For those who find it hard to part company with the deeply ingrained notion of state responsibility, and in order to point out more clearly the responsible party in education, I should like to stress the following matters in addition to what has already been said on this score.

In the first place the fact should be underscored that the roots from which our American public school has grown were definitely religious, that is, positively Christian. In the years 1642

and 1647 respectively the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed two laws that "represent the foundations upon which American state public school systems have been built."⁹ The law of 1642 ordered the town officials to ascertain whether the parents were attending to their educational responsibilities, and whether the children were being taught "to read and understand the principles of religion and the capital laws of the country."

But this purely voluntary system did not work. Therefore in 1647 another law was passed calling for the establishment of schools in the various townships. Furthermore, the law made it plain that one of the main reasons for the establishment of such schools was that the children might gain a knowledge of the Scriptures. Pervading the whole history of the founding of our public schools is this religious emphasis. Cubberley, outstanding student of the history of education, declares that behind the efforts of the Calvinistic Puritans was "the general Calvinistic principle that education was an important function of a *religious state*."¹⁰

Is this statement by the noted historian correct? Even if it were wholly correct the statement would still have limited value for us in today's social situation. Mark well Cubberley's important qualification -- it was a *religious state* that exercised the responsibility of which Cubberley speaks. The Massachusetts of 1640 with its distinctively religious character no longer exists. Hence Cubberley's statement serves only to make plain that the beginnings of our public school system were definitely religious. His statement cannot be used to establish the principle of state responsibility in education, for the state Cubberley refers to no longer exists.

Just what was the duty of the state in education at that time? What does Cubberley mean when he says that "education was an important function" of the state as it then existed? That this matter may be perfectly clear I should like, in the second place, to point out the following principles which the historian of the Massachusetts public schools tells us were established by the laws of 1642 and 1647. Those who are inclined to say that a true American should give unreserved support to the public school of today should read these principles with care. In part these principles are:

1. "The universal education of youth is essential to the well-being of the State.
2. The obligation to furnish this education rests primarily upon the parent.
3. The State has a right to enforce this obligation.
4. The State may fix a standard which shall determine the kind of education, and the minimum amount."¹¹

One can hardly agree to article 4 of these principles without some important qualifications. But what is noteworthy is the emphasis on the primary obligation of the parent in the matter of

⁹ Cubberley, *ibid*, p. 366.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 365. Italics mine.

¹¹ By Martin. *Quoted* in Cubberley, *ibid*, p. 366.

education. The duty of the State is quite secondary, being only that of enforcing the primary obligation.

It is this point that earnest Americans should clearly understand. The American public school did not begin with the unqualified assumption of state's responsibility. It began rather with the clear avowal of the responsibility of Christian parents for the Christian education of their children. The duty of the state was to enforce the faithful discharge of this specific responsibility. Our modern secularistic, non-religious public school system under the control of the state is a stranger to these principles. As a matter of fact it seems quite plain that the laws of 1642 and 1647 upon which "our American state public school systems have been built" called for the establishment of definitely Christian schools under the control of the parents. That is the type of school for which this pamphlet is pleading.

Parochial Schools

Who then shall assume responsibility for establishing an educational program of the kind that our children need and that God requires? Shall it be the church or the Christian parent? This is a moot question among those who love the cause of Christian education. Failure to come to a clear-cut answer to this question had no little to do with the failure of American Presbyterians to establish Christian schools in the years 1846-1870.¹² If the church is to assume the responsibility, we have what are called "parochial" schools, that is, parish schools. Such schools are under the direct supervision and control of the ruling body of the local church.

Outstanding advocate of this system is, of course, the Roman Catholic Church. Its system of parochial schools is well known. The Roman Catholic Church deserves our highest praise for its insistence that education must be religious at its core. Parochial schools have been maintained and are maintained by several church groups in America, particularly in the state of Pennsylvania. Such schools have been maintained by Moravians, Mennonites, Lutherans, Dutch Reformed, Quakers, Presbyterians and Baptists. In our time an impressive system of elementary parochial schools is maintained by the Lutherans of the Synodical Conference, particularly by the Missouri Synod Lutherans. In the year 1950 the Lutherans of the Missouri Synod maintained 1,277 elementary parochial schools in North America with an enrollment of 98,136 pupils, and ten high schools with a total enrollment of 3,366.

Shall we agree that it is the church's business to maintain day schools for the education of the children of Christian parents? A spokesman for the Lutheran parochial schools has summarized the argument for the parochial school in the following manner. Since education in spiritual matters cannot be divorced from education in other matters, and since religion must permeate all of life, therefore "the teaching of all branches thus devolved upon the Church to the same extent and degree and made the school a vital part of the program of each Church."¹³

¹² Sherrill, *Presbyterian Parochial Schools, 1846-1870*, p. 37f.

¹³ Beck, *Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States*, p. 8.

In that statement of the principles basic to the parochial school there is much to which we can give our hearty assent. Certainly the stress upon the integral relationship between religion and the whole of life is most heartening. Yet, it is hard to understand why the church has to embark on a program of teaching geography and history and spelling in order to teach effectively the facts of Bible history. I cannot agree that the proper teaching of Bible history and doctrine requires a teaching program in all the branches of learning.

Furthermore, is it the church's business to teach arithmetic and spelling, reading and writing? The New Testament church has been given a specific task. The New Testament church must preach and teach the glorious message of divine redemption in Christ Jesus, and it must do this in the context of the whole counsel of God. It is hard to see how the teaching of geography or arithmetic has a proper place in the discharge of this responsibility. The church's sphere is that smaller area of special revelation. The sphere of education is that wider area of general revelation, though naturally the purer and clearer light of special revelation must cast its illuminating rays over all of the area of general revelation. To put it differently, the spiritual principles which the church preaches and teaches must control every aspect of the lives of the members of the church. But that is something other than saying that the church as an organization shall direct and control all of these matters. The parochial school really roots in the Roman Catholic conception of the control of the organized church over all of life.

We do well to remember that modern educational theory with all its serious faults has taken the form it has in part because of revolt against the stranglehold that the organized church had on education. The ideas of Rousseau and Pestalozzi must be looked at in the light of their quarrel with the stereotyped, authoritarian, wooden methods and principles of an education that was in the control of the church. In the very nature of the case the interests of a school must be more varied than are those of the church, for the area of general revelation is larger than that of special revelation. One has little trouble sympathizing with much of the spirit of liberation that characterized the modern revolt against such a stifling educational setup.

The Parent-Society School

Although one must naturally have deep admiration for those who sponsor and maintain parochial schools in this day of renewed paganism, nevertheless the conclusion seems fairly clear that the answer to this question of responsibility in education lies with the Christian parent, or, rather, with Christian parents organized for the great task of educating their children. We believe that the covenant obligation places the burden of the child's training quite squarely upon the shoulders of Christian parents (see Dent. 6:1-7). Interestingly enough, in the democracy of ancient Athens the responsibility was placed on the parents, and the education of the children was left to their discretion.¹⁴ As already noted, the pioneer efforts in education in our country likewise placed the responsibility upon the parent. It is the parent who must have a deep concern for the success of his children and for the enrichment of their lives. It is the parent who must

¹⁴ Cubberley, *ibid*, p. 24.

have within his soul a burning passion that the children God has given him shall grow up to serve that God with their whole being, in the totality of the interests of their lives. This broader responsibility the church of Jesus Christ cannot properly assume, though it must naturally imbue the parents and the children with the basic spiritual principles that shall guide and govern the whole process of Christian nurture.

More specifically, under the command of this principle of the parents' responsibility Christian schools are founded and maintained by Societies of Christian parents bound together by close doctrinal ties and by a common determination to give their children a positively Christian training in obedience to the command of their covenant God. Such a larger Society elects a smaller group of individuals to serve as a Board of Directors who shall exercise supervision over the school. An effective organization of such schools for Christian instruction is the National Union of Christian Schools, with headquarters at 865 Twenty-eighth Street, S. E., Grand Rapids 8, Michigan. Comprising this Union according to the figures for the year 1951-52 are 141 elementary schools and 15 Christian high schools, with a total enrollment of 26,651 pupils. 8 1/2% of the pupils in these schools come from the Christian Reformed Church, 8% from the Reformed Church in America, 4 1/2% from the Protestant Reformed Church, 11% from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and 5% from other churches.

It would not be correct to say that the Christian school maintained by a society of Christian parents differs from the parochial school in that the society school is wholly independent of the church whereas the parochial school is part of the church's program. That distinction is only relatively, externally true. The church's business is the faithful preaching and teaching of the Word of God, administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of proper discipline of its members. But it is the church's high calling to instill in its members a deep and holy determination to serve God with their whole being in every walk and interest of life. In the exercise of this holy passion the school and the church are intimately bound together, for the Christian school is very naturally the place where our children are most clearly and practically taught to bring their lives wholly in bondage to the sovereign God in Christ Jesus. This deeper bond between church and society school is evident in the close working harmony that exists between the Christian Reformed churches and the schools supported by parents in these churches.

A Real Education

We could possibly end this discussion at this point, having made clear we believe that the Christian school is the only answer to God's high requirement in the matter of the nurture of our covenant children. However, we can hardly feel satisfied with a bare statement of our duty without taking note of the blessed results that follow upon a faithful response to this call of duty. Let us see that in answering to our high calling as Christian parents we are giving our children an education in which they and we can glory, an education that equips them for real service to God, to church, to nation, to home, to self.

For God

Obviously the highest end for human service is God and His glory. This the true Christian school stresses constantly. Yes, this is the primary objective in the Christian school program. This above all stamps the school as Christian.

As already pointed out, the objective of our modern public school educational program is that of greater service to society. "Social efficiency" was Dewey's avowed aim in education. This aim substitutes man for God. To put it differently and accurately, this aim substitutes sinful man for God as the end-point in education. What does that mean? It simply means that an education geared to the character of sinful man will not lift man above that level. Small wonder that in many quarters more and more voices are being raised in real concern over serious flaws in our public school education.

An education that aims no higher than man and his social improvement is not powered by a real or an adequate dynamic. A purely humanitarian or democratic ideal in education must be suited to the level at which the masses of mankind live and think. And statistical studies clearly show that the average intelligence of man is not high. The ethics of the average man is similarly low. What one would expect of such an education is actually happening. Popular education has become increasingly practical, utilitarian, vocational, mundane. That is the inevitable result of an educational program geared to purely human needs and purposes. There is only one relief from this ever descending spiral. It is that the objective in education be aimed above and beyond man, be aimed at none less than God and His glory. This alone will give the dynamic to an education that will ennoble and enrich the poverty-stricken soul of the social being we call man.

Perhaps the most striking weakness in our whole social structure today is the spiritual hollowness and the ideological confusion of the people. Thinking straight seems to have become a lost art and a lost discipline -- even among the college and university bred. Why? Why is it that the products of our public schools are by and large not militantly vigilant on matters of liberty and truth, but are inclined to rely more and more on the prejudices of social pressure groups or on the strong arm of a centralized government? This vagueness of opinion and this spiritual instability are due to the fact that our secularistic, non-religious education has not given to the young a central point around which all their opinions and purposes can be united. There is no "center of unity" which gives meaning to life and education. What "center of unity" can serve to tie all of life and experience together into one meaningful whole? Only God, Who is greater than all, can serve as such a "center of unity," for only of Him can it be said that "of Him and through Him and unto Him are all things, to Whom be glory forever." The following statement gives the keynote to true education: "Religion, that is, a true knowledge of God . . . is the Queen of the Sciences This is its rightful position, not because the Churches say so, or because superstition or tradition has so imposed it upon human credulity, or because it was so recognized in one great age of learning, but because of the nature of Reality -- because . . . He must be the ultimate and controlling Reality through which all else derives its being; and the truth concerning Him, as man can best apprehend it, must be the keystone of the ever-incomplete arch of human

knowledge."¹⁵ An education without God at its center is an education that leads to a dismal reflection on human life like the following: "Mentally and spiritually most persons today are displaced persons ."¹⁶

There is but one road by which we can avoid this ideological confusion and spiritual poverty. It is the road of an education that really educates. Such an education is one that forcefully and practically instills in the growing child a deep-seated allegiance to God as central and supreme in his life with all of its interests. Such a child will grow up to sail his ship resolutely through the storms of opinion that may buffet him, at his masthead a banner bearing these valiant words: "Who is a rock save our God? It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect" (Ps. 18: 31-32). Certainly this is the education which our great covenant God must delight in, for the lambs of His fold are precious in His sight.

For Church

In a provocative article Charles Clayton Morrison, able editor for many years of the liberal journal *The Christian Century*, has made a plea for a deeper and a keener religious intelligence in the church. "It is no exaggeration to say," wrote Mr. Morrison, "that, since the invention of printing gave the Bible to the common people, thus preparing the way for the Protestant Reformation, there has been no generation of Christians so religiously illiterate as our own." In that judgment we must sadly concur. Mr. Morrison went on to study the reasons for this lamentable condition. Said he, "The factors which have conspired to produce this condition are too numerous to list. The major and decisive factor, however, is plain. It is the virtual withdrawal of the church from its educational responsibility, and the delivery of successive generations of the church's youth to the public school for their total education."¹⁷

Our argument so far should make clear why we quote Mr. Morrison on this score. But now we ask: what is there about the Christian school that aids and supports the program of the church in its effort to indoctrinate its young? We answer: the Christian school puts into actual practice the cardinal teachings of the church. In Christian education we seek to extend the kingship of God in Christ Jesus over all of man's life so that it shall truly leaven all the interests and activities of men. In Christian education we are putting into real practice the first law of life, namely, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." Every brick in the temple of Christian learning and nurture is stamped with the words "*Unto the Lord.*" That is putting theology to work. That is making God central and not peripheral. That is fortifying the church in its efforts to build a true and robust spirituality in its members, and a real Christian intelligence. No wonder the church is generally in decay. No wonder Morrison pleads earnestly for greater intelligence among Christians. People untrained in the working conviction that God must rule all will inevitably lose the luster and the vigor of a dynamic faith.

¹⁵ Henry P. Van Dusen, *God in Education*, pp. 82-83.

¹⁶ Sir Wm. Moberly, *The Crisis in the University*; quoted by Van Dusen.

¹⁷ *The Christian Century*, December 1, 1943, p. 1390.

Christianity is effective and potent only when its sweeping claims over our lives are realized and accepted. It is in Christian education and in Christian education alone that a child can be molded to appreciate and accept the over-all claims of Christ in his life. Let us listen to Dr. Machen again. Says he, "It is this profound Christian permeation of every human activity, no matter how secular the world may regard it as being, which is brought about by the Christian school and the Christian school alone."¹⁸ Is not this just exactly what the Christian church is seeking to develop in its members? The Christian school effectively supports the church in this endeavor to leaven the whole lump.

At the same time the Christian school is an effective, perhaps the only effective, counter-agent to the separatistic tendency that marks much of evangelical Christianity today. This tendency, concentrating almost exclusively upon a more narrowly evangelistic effort, virtually amounts to a disregard of the claims of God upon the whole of life. The product of the Christian school will not lightly gloat over his personal salvation, for his whole training lays upon his soul the sobering weight of a great responsibility, namely, that he must make the principles of his Christianity effective in every sphere of his life to the glory of his God. The salvation of human souls may easily become a man-centered objective. The product of the Christian school has been trained to look beyond man in all things and to look unto God.

For Nation

As already noted, one of the principles established by the important Massachusetts laws of 1642 and 1647 was that "the universal education of youth is essential to the well-being of the state." With that principle we cannot but agree.

However, is the secular, non-moral and non-religious public school education of our time such that it will mold a people unto fitness to maintain a strong and free government? We have already pointed out a number of serious faults in this educational program on account of which this education fails to equip the citizens of our country for performing the high duties of citizenship in a land of the free. Especially pertinent is the criticism that an education in which the deep undergirding principles of life have no place is an education that will not stamp its products with a jealous zeal for these principles. Take the precious principle of liberty, for example. Christianity says it is rooted in the God of the Bible. The philosophy basic to our public school system says it is rooted in man. How John Dewey detested the notion of a divine basis of truth! Therefore, modern educational theory and practice have worked on the principle of self-expression as the avenue of training. What is the result? There has been no real place for an effective self-discipline in this educational theory and program. And liberty without self-discipline is not liberty at all. It is rather license that will in the end destroy itself. A people reared in the notion that liberty lies in the free expression of a sinful self are not a people who can maintain a free government. As it does with regard to all the important issues of life, so in the matter of liberty the Christian school trains our children to take God seriously. When we take

¹⁸ Machen, "The Necessity of the Christian School," *Christian School Yearbook*, 1933, p. 19.

God seriously we believe all men are created in the image of God and are therefore equal. At the same time we realize that we are sinners before God, and must learn by His grace to control and discipline ourselves if we are to exercise this liberty properly.

It would seemingly be quite proper to reply to this line of argument by saying that many serious minded people are beginning to wake up to the folly of the notion of unqualified self-expression, and therefore we can look for improvement in the public school system. Yes, the flaws in this notion have become apparent to many. As a matter of fact we are quite out of date in speaking of the notion of unbridled self-expression in modern education. Today education is thought of not so much in terms of the self-expression of the child as it is in terms of the expression of the child for the welfare of society. But actually this makes very little real difference. Education is still only a purely human affair with purely human ends in view. God is still not the unifying principle and His glory not the end of the program. And when God is not the Master, but rather man is, then what is good for society or for men in general actually turns out to be what each man thinks is best for himself. Thus we still come to that position where man demands more and more for self and shows less and less concern for others. Education thought of as a purely human or social process is a blind alley where God is not supreme. Where God is not supreme the best that men can do is to patch up their blind alley here and there; they cannot move onward and upward to the City of God where real liberty and happiness abide and the true abundant life flourishes.

This discussion of liberty illustrates; the grave weakness of an education that cuts us loose from the divine moorings of life and truth and therefore builds up no devotion to great principles. And where people lose their devotion to truth, they lose their spiritual vitality and stability. Then, when people lose their spiritual stability they look increasingly for support to the strongest source of power that this earth affords, namely, human government, or some other political or social concentration of power. Therefore I dare make the charge, startling though it may sound, that the public school, once looked upon as the greatest boon to our free democracy, has become one of the forces that is undermining it at its very foundations. Just how does the Christian school, on the other hand, build up our democracy? It makes a real contribution in a number of ways. In the first place the Christian school not only stands for but carries out its whole program of teaching in accordance with the principle that God is supremely sovereign over all. The products of the Christian school have been consistently tutored in an allegiance that goes above and beyond the state, that is directed to God alone. In its faithful insistence on this basic Principle the Christian school makes its greatest contribution to our democracy. A person so trained from childhood will not soon permit an all-powerful state or an all-powerful society to snatch an allegiance that belongs to God alone. To be sure, as we have already pointed out, the very existence of the Christian school is a standing admonition to the state that there are certain areas of God-ordained rights and duties upon which it may not trespass.

A common fiction of our time is the altogether too prevalent notion that sharp and real differences of opinion in matters of religion are harmful to the social and political life of our country. Those who think thus seem to assume that to be strong as a nation we must all think pretty much alike on basic questions, that we must seek to strike a common denominator of opinion to which we can all agree. To that opinion I take vigorous exception. American

democracy has become what it is, not because all men thought alike, but rather because certain men thought as they believed God would have them think. The citizen who thinks with delightful vagueness and who holds shallow opinions about everything under the sun does not make a real contribution to our democracy. He is one of the multitude who quickly succumb in the tempests of opinion. On the other hand, he who thinks deeply on the issues of religion and life and who holds certain clear-cut convictions on these matters, he it is who makes a real contribution to our government of the people. This is true not only because he stands in a position to guide the destinies of the people, but also because he will most likely represent a minority. And it is minorities that stand as a constant challenge to a democracy that would be truly democratic. It is just such a minority, fervently zealous for God and His truth, that is built up by the Christian school. Such a minority, retaining a firm grip on the principle that God shall rule all in Christ Jesus, makes a real contribution to America. They stand sentinel over our precious liberties, for men and women who have been constantly and actually reared in the solid conviction that God is supreme will never, by the grace of God, allow any human power to take to itself prerogatives that belong to God alone.

A third contribution of the Christian school to our nation is that of a law-abiding citizenry. It should by now be perfectly clear that the product of the Christian school is reared to respect authority, yes, to bow before the highest and final authority, namely, God and His Word. Only that person who has been taught consistently to have regard unto the laws of God as the unvarying standard for his life and thought can have any real regard for the laws of the nation. This and the other matters mentioned above form some of the vital contributions that the Christian school and the Christian school alone can make to our nation.

For Home

The Christian school is a particularly praiseworthy institution because the link between the home and the school is very close. Since the Christian school as we have described it is controlled by a society of Christian parents, there is bound to exist a real uniformity between the teaching and spiritual atmosphere of the home and that of the school. Yes, the school is then a virtual extension or continuation of the home, the home being that blessed institution that God established, from the very beginning as the basic, inviolable unit of society.

It should by now be clear that there is much in the teaching and spiritual atmosphere of the non-religious, pagan public school that works contrary to what the Christian home stands for and is trying to do in the children's nurture. Furthermore, we should also note this fact, namely, that the public school gives parents a lot of practice in the neglect of their primary duty toward their children. If the nurture of the child is the parent's solemn obligation and not that of the state, then the parent that virtually turns his child over to the public schools is really being trained in the neglect of a great responsibility. This vacating of a solemn responsibility on the part of America's parents in the nurture of their children may have more than an indirect bearing on the decline of the home and the growing evil of juvenile delinquency.

For Self

There is no single factor that makes for a stable, strong personality that is more important than the great undergirding reality of the sovereignty of God. An education that consistently trains a soul from tenderest years onward in the tremendous truth that God is truly God, personal God, in absolute control of all things, is an education which builds personalities that generally will stand firm and strong in trying hours and raging storms. Always the ever-present reality of God, to whom all of the interests and concerns of their lives have been made subject, will be their spiritual fortress. Indeed, as we in conclusion contemplate the blessed benefits that a truly Christian education works in a human soul, we can do no better than to quote the pungent words of Professor R. B. Kuiper. For modern man, says he, “nothing is certain save uncertainty. He asks questions innumerable but finds no answer. He is ever seeking but never finding. He hungers and has no food. He thirsts and finds no water. His soul is a great void. And the world is in turmoil. ‘Whirl is king’ The Christian school offers the troubled world certainty for bewildering doubt, rest for unspeakable weariness, peace for terrifying turmoil, order for maddening confusion, liberty for abject slavery, hope for black despair, -- *God for utter chaos.*”¹⁹

What Shall We Do?

Our duty is clear. We must have Christian schools. But the establishment of a Christian school is no small undertaking. Let no one expect to start one tomorrow. How then can we start? The first step toward the founding of a Christian school is the establishment of a Christian School Society, or a Society for Christian Education. Let such a society meet at regular intervals, study the problem thoroughly, seek to gain more adherents, generate deepening convictions on the necessity of the Christian school and greater zeal for this answer to God’s covenant mandate. Such a cause demands that we build slowly and well. Gradually and certainly the mind and will of the Society will crystallize and a school will be founded. In this process from seed to school the National Union of Christian Schools will be glad to give its help. Such help comes in the form of literature, propaganda and counsel. With God’s blessing let us build well -- for God, for Church, for America, for Home, for a spiritually virile Humanity.

¹⁹ R. B. Kuiper, “The Christian School a Necessary Witness in the Modern World,” *Christian School Yearbook*, 1935, p. 22.