

LESSON 6

THE CURRICULUM FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

In Lessons 2, 3, 4, and 5, the teaching, training, and missions aspects of Christian education in the local church were considered. Those lessons limited themselves to a consideration of the needs and responsibilities involved in carrying out these areas of Christian education. The administrative steps necessary to initiate and provide the program organization were considered. Means were suggested by which the church could assure that its objectives would be achieved. In this lesson, the content of the teaching, training, and missions program will be considered. This content is known as "curriculum."

1. Curriculum Defined

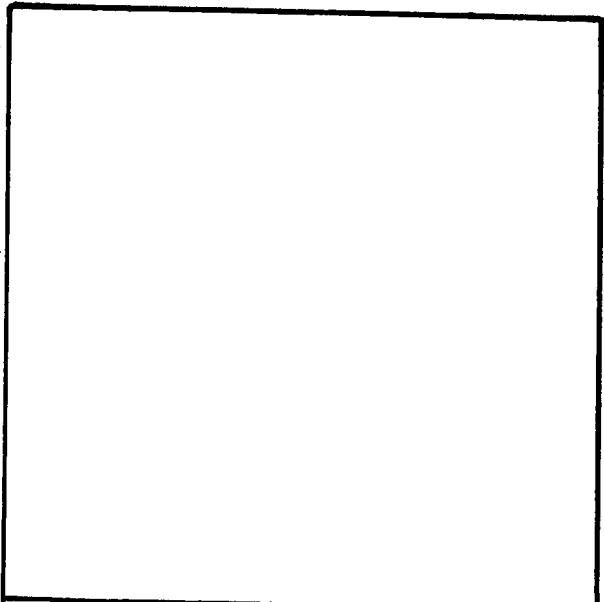
The word curriculum comes from the Latin verb *Currere* which means to run. Literally, it refers to a running or a race course.

Many persons think of curriculum as books or magazines. However, the term comes near to involving the total program of teaching and training. A sound concept, and the one by which this manual will be guided, is the following: Curriculum is "the sum of all learning experiences resulting from a curriculum plan used under church guidance and directed toward the attaining of church objectives."¹ It is what happens to the learner in the local situation, the sum total of learning experiences in the learning situation.

Thus, curriculum involves more than printed materials. It involves the experiences which the leaders of the program of Christian education intentionally provide for the pupils. These would include activities, projects, discussions, and other elements of the educational process. Curriculum functions within the life and work of the church as the congregation worships, witnesses, teaches, ministers, and applies the Gospel to every area of life. Curriculum might be said to include the Christian home.

Thus, the quality of the Christian home and the life of the church itself affect positively or negatively the total quality of the curriculum. Therefore, if a

¹Colson and Rigdon, Understanding Your Church Curriculum, p. 38.



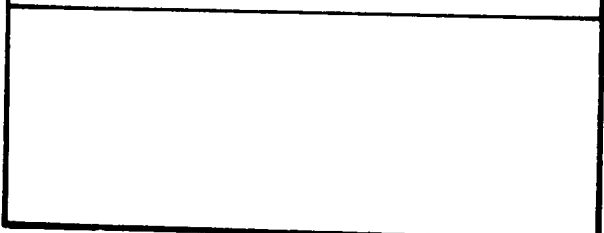
UNDERLINE THE CORRECT WORD.

Curriculum (is, includes) the printed materials in a training program.

(includes)

Besides printed materials, curriculum includes a _____, p _____, d _____, and other elements of the educational process.

(activities, projects, discussions)



church does not effectively demonstrate the reality and power of the faith it seeks to communicate, its effort to teach will be contradicted by its own failure to be a church.²

2. Designing the Curriculum

Ideally, the individual congregation will have help from the union or other denominational organization to which it belongs in designing the curriculum necessary for achieving its goals. Actually, however, the availability of this help does not eliminate the responsibility on the part of each congregation to assure that each of its programs has the proper content.

Curriculum is like a tree. Part of the tree, including the trunk, limbs, twigs, and foliage, is above the ground and visible. Another part of the tree, the root system, is invisible, being below the ground, but is totally necessary to the existence of the tree. The roots of curriculum are the theological insights, the educational philosophy, and the design or plan for the curriculum. All of these support and maintain the visible part of the curriculum, that is, the teaching-learning situations in the church, the experiences of the learners under church guidance, and the printed resource material along with other helps and teaching aids.³

Objectives

The objectives to be achieved in curriculum grow out of the church objective. The church objective suggested in Lesson 1 was:

The objective of a church, composed of baptized believers who share a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, is to be a redemptive body in Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, growing toward Christian maturity through worship, witness, education, and ministry, proclaiming the gospel to the whole world, and applying Christian principles to man and society that God's purposes may be achieved.⁴

In line with this church objective, the church might set an educational objective for its curriculum as follows:

²Ibid., p. 50.

³Ibid., p. 37.

⁴Howse and Thomason, A Dynamic Church, p. 22.

Who is responsible for the curriculum which a church needs to achieve its goals?

(the congregation itself)

Compare curriculum to a tree by matching the following:

- ___ 1. Trunk, limbs, foliage
(visible part)
- ___ 2. Root system
(invisible part)

- a. *theological insights, educational philosophy, design of curriculum*
- b. *teaching-learning situations, experiences of learners, printed material and other aids*

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The church's objective should be to be a _____ body in Christ.

(redemptive)

The body of baptized believers should grow toward Christian maturity through w _____, p _____ and w _____, n _____ and e _____, and m _____.

(worship, proclamation and witness, nurture and education, ministry)

To help persons become aware of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, respond to Him in a personal commitment of faith, strive to follow Him in the full meaning of discipleship, relate effectively to His church and its mission in the world, live in conscious recognition of the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, and grow toward Christian maturity.⁵

An example of specific objectives within definite age groups under a limited portion of the total curriculum will be presented in a following section.

The scope of curriculum

The scope of Christian education curriculum has been defined as the whole field of relationships in the light of the Gospel. Elements within this scope would be:

1. The Christian experience of man under God—the divine dimension of reality in the light of the Gospel.
2. The Christian experience of man's relation to man—the human dimension of reality in the light of the Gospel.
3. The Christian experience of man within the world—the natural dimension of reality in the light of the Gospel.⁶

Obviously, this curriculum scope is quite extensive. From within it, each church will select the curriculum content which it wants to use in a given period.

The previous statement about the scope and content of Christian education curriculum takes into account the curriculum to be used with all age groups. The church is responsible to teach the whole range of this material to each age level. Of course, the manner, the detail, and the depth of the instruction will vary greatly. Furthermore, and this is important, the whole Gospel—the whole scope of the Christian experience—must be taught at each of these age levels almost as if it had never been taught before. The manner in which the scope of the curriculum is treated depends upon the learning ability and life experience of the age group.⁷

This application of the total scope of curriculum to all age groups can best be understood with a limited

⁵Colson and Rigdon, Understanding Your Church Curriculum, pp. 45-46.

⁶Ibid., p. 47.

⁷Ibid., pp. 61-62.

REARRANGE THE SCRAMBLED LETTERS OF THE WORDS IN THE FOLLOWING EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE FOR A CHURCH'S CURRICULUM:

1. To _____ persons become _____ of God in Christ.
(peth) (ewara)
2. To _____ in a personal commitment of _____.
(donersp) (tifah)
3. To _____ Christ in discipleship.
(llofow)
4. To _____ toward Christian maturity.
(wrog)

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Three relationships within the scope of Christian education curriculum are:

1. Man's relation to _____
2. Man's relation to his _____
3. Man's relation to the _____

(1. God, 2. fellow-man, 3. world)

illustration.⁸ Assuming, for instance, that in the Bible teaching program the content of the curriculum for a particular period is God's redeeming love for men, the statement of this theme might be as follows:

Through God's changeless and seeking love for man, supremely manifested in Jesus Christ (His life, death, resurrection, and ascension), redemption is made possible whereby man's alienation from God is overcome and the way is open for him to be reconciled with God. Thus, man's persistent need for reconciliation, meaning, acceptance, integrity, security, and freedom is adequately met.

Within this area of God's redeeming love for man, the teaching program would attempt to teach certain truths to each age level. A statement of some of these truths will illustrate the varying depth of instruction.

Pre-school. God loves us and wants us to obey Him. Jesus shows us what God's love is like.

Children. God who created us loves us and intends that we should love and obey Him. God has shown His love for us in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Youth. God's redeeming love for man, manifest from the creation on, is supremely manifested in Jesus Christ—in His incarnation, life, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension. In incarnation, God identified Himself with man and offered Himself that man might be redeemed. God holds man responsible for his choice to accept or reject His redeeming love.

Adult. God's love and forgiveness do not wipe out the inevitable results of sin and evil but enable man to redirect his life in spite of these results. In His seeking love, God enables man to recognize his need for redemption and to express it through repentance and confession.

The learning readiness of each age level will vary, of course. Learning readiness involves the inherent capabilities of the learners, their general readiness for maturing experiences, and their specific readiness to become meaningfully involved in exploring a particular curriculum area. Specific age group readiness related to the scope statement on "God's redeeming love for man" can be illustrated by the following general statements:

⁸Ibid., pp. 62-68.

List the age groups to be considered in curriculum:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Choose from the four age groups you have listed the two groups to which the following truths could be taught appropriately.

- _____ 1. God created us, loves us, and intends that we should love and obey Him.
- _____ 2. God's love and forgiveness enable man to redirect his life in spite of sin and evil.

(1. children, 2. adults)

Pre-school. The young child needs to be wanted, approved, and accepted. The young child is able to perceive something of the love of God through parents and parent figures who themselves are committed to God.

Children. The elementary child has a growing capacity to understand that God loves us and intends that we should love and obey Him. He has a capacity for the beginning comprehension of the love of God as shown in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Youth. Youth frequently have a sense of inadequacy, failure, and insecurity. The young person is looking for the meaning and purpose of life. Youth is at the stage of life where he has the intellectual capacity to recognize that God through His redemptive love manifested in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has made forgiveness available to every person.

Adult. A major drive in the adult years is for security which will reach into the future. The responsibility for others, which comes with adulthood, makes the adult open to appreciation for what God has done and is doing for him.

Taking into account the age level readiness indicated above, the persons responsible for planning the teaching program at the church and for designing the curriculum for the denomination will seek to establish the best age at which to introduce the various concepts. They will try to determine the methods and activities to be used at each age level. They will, to the best of their ability, determine the proper sequence for presenting the content of the curriculum through the life span. They will keep all educational organizations in the church consistent as to the concepts and approaches used with each age level.

As a final step in this illustration, some of the expected learner outcomes in the area of "God's redeeming love for man" are presented here:

Pre-school. The young child may achieve a beginning awareness that God loves everyone. The young child may achieve a beginning awareness that Jesus shows us what God is like.

Children. The elementary child may achieve an awareness of the significance of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension. The elementary child may achieve a desire for a personal relationship with God who expressed His love for him in Christ.

List some needs of pre-school children and youth. Note the differences.

Pre-school children

Youth

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Consider the theme "God's redeeming love for man." State a desired learner outcome for each of the following age groups.

Pre-school-- _____

Children-- _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Youth. Youth may achieve an understanding of forgiving love making possible the forgiveness of sin. Youth may achieve a confidence that God's redemptive love can make life whole and an acceptance of the fact that God's love brings true meaning and purpose to life.

Adult. The adult may achieve realization of the meaning of redemption and a deeper loyalty to God in gratitude for His redemption in Christ. The adult may achieve a realization that God's love enables persons to maintain a proper balance between the facts and struggles of daily life in the demands of Christian commitment.

3. The Bible in Christian Education

Whatever else in the way of printed materials or experiences might be included in the content of Christian education curriculum in teaching, training, and developing the church members in missions, the Bible holds the central place. It provides the basis for the purpose of the church itself. The Bible not only indicates the demands upon the church to teach and train and develop its members in missions, it also provides the content of these programs. The Bible with its content provides the unwavering, authoritative foundation for Christian living and the life and work of the church.

Dealing with the Bible as curriculum⁹

In considering the Bible as the central part of the curriculum for Christian education, one must take into account the nature of the Bible. In this record of God's self-revelation, the teacher and student find a gradual and progressive unfolding of God's persistent purpose to communicate to men a knowledge of Himself and of His will for them. This progressive, self-revelation is the indispensable foundation for all Christian teaching. It is the repository of God's redemptive message for the world, inspired by Himself, and providentially gathered and preserved. Almost all Baptist churches accept the Bible as the only authoritative guide for Christian living and work and the effective instrument through which the Father continually calls men and women into fellowship with Himself as God and with Christ as Saviour.

⁹Ibid., pp. 112-125; Howard P. Colson, Preparing to Teach the Bible (Nashville: Convention Press, 1970), pp. 29-43; pp. 65-79.

State a desired learner outcome for each of the following age groups for the theme "God's redeeming love for man."

Youth-- _____

Adult-- _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

What holds the central place in Christian education curriculum? _____

(the Bible)

The Bible is--

*a record of God's _____
the repository of God's _____
message.*

*the authoritative guide for Christian
_____ and _____.*

(self-revelation, redemptive, living, work)

Because of its nature, the Bible must be regarded as the basic source of Christian teaching, and its content must be presented as God's Word so that the pupil will know that God so intended to speak to him. Not only must the pupil be taught the content of the Bible, but all Christian teaching must be judged in the light of the Scriptures.

The Bible is relevant. It is relevant because it is the eternal God who speaks to men through His Word. The same Holy Spirit that spoke to faithful men of old, instructing them to write the words that today constitute the Bible, speaks to the reader of the Bible today in that reader's search for truth. The Bible deals vitally and authentically with man's persistent life's needs. In this way, God's changeless and seeking love supremely manifested in Jesus Christ intersects with today's man and his persistent need for reconciliation, meaning, acceptance, integrity, security, and freedom.

The Bible is authoritative. Since it comes from God, the content of the Bible is true and hence speaks authoritatively to any situation in which man might find himself. Also, since it comes from God, the Bible has power today. When persons respond to its message they become changed individuals. God's power is manifested in the life and work of churches which are made up of these changed individuals. Likewise, God's power, revealed in the Bible, is adequate when applied to great social problems. When the church uses the Bible as curriculum material, it must recognize the divine inspiration of this instrument even though it was written by human beings. It must recognize the progressive nature of its revelation, rightly using that revelation as it expresses itself through the variety of literary forms in the Bible. The church is obliged to take advantage of the results of sound scholarship in seeking to know the true meaning of the Bible. It must exercise care to use the biblical revelation in keeping with its spiritual purpose.

In order to so use the Bible, the church and its teachers are obligated to interpret properly this instrument of God's love. These teachers should not disregard the spiritual, scholarly efforts of others to discover God's meaning. But they have a personal responsibility of exercising their own divinely-given competence, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to explore the Bible in order to discover its meaning and to appropriate that meaning to their own lives and to the lives of their pupils. This criteria applies to the use of every passage. Should the passage be taken literally or figuratively? Does the passage present a permanent and universal truth, or is it only local and temporary? If the passage is a narrative, the interpreter must recognize that the description of the event includes the belief of the witness concerning the meaning of the event. What is the central message of the passage? What bearing do other portions of the

The Bible is relevant because--

God who speaks through His Word is

_____.

Readers of the Bible are aided in their search for truth by the same _____

_____ as were those who wrote it.

The Bible deals with men's persistent life _____.

(eternal, Holy Spirit, needs)

The fact that the Bible comes from God the Creator makes it _____.

Persons who respond to the Bible's message become _____ individuals.

God's power, as revealed in the Bible, is adequate when applied to effect _____ change.

(authoritative, changed, social)

Bible teachers have the responsibility of exploring the Bible under the Holy Spirit's leadership in order to _____ its meaning and _____ that meaning to their own _____ and the _____ of their pupils.

(discover, apply, lives, lives)

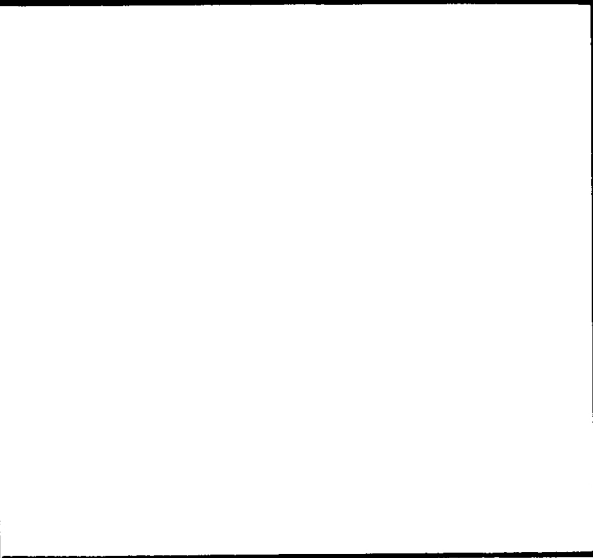
Scripture have on the interpretation of this particular passage? In this process, the Holy Spirit plays an active role, particularly when teacher and student are ready to recognize that Jesus Christ Himself is the Lord of the whole Bible.

In dealing with the Bible as curriculum, particular questions arise insofar as its use with children. The Bible was not written for children; it was written for adults. They must be prepared. However, in adapting biblical teachings to the capacity of children, the teacher must very carefully avoid teaching them anything from or about the Bible that they will later have to unlearn. Even with their early stage of development, the great themes of the Bible can be communicated to them. Children find it easier to learn the truths related to individual persons in the Bible or to situations when they can be led to identify themselves with that person or situation.

All age groups need to begin early learning to grasp the Bible as an entire book. They need to know the history and the geography related to the Bible. They must know the people of the Bible: who they were, where they lived, what were the most important events in their careers, what religious truth was especially revealed through particular persons, what each person accomplished for God, and what we can learn from their lives. Furthermore, the Bible needs to be mastered book by book and idea by idea.

Preparing the teacher to use the Bible as curriculum

Apart from the particular preparation of individual lesson units, Bible teachers have a real responsibility for independent Bible study. This study should include reading the Bible through as frequently as possible. It should also include the progressive provision by the teacher of his own tools for Bible study. His selection of a study Bible should take into account the size of print most convenient to him, the system of references and maps, and the concordance. In addition to his regular study Bible, the teacher should have other translations, including at least the King James Version, the New English Bible, Today's English Version, and the Revised Standard Version. Other helps which he should have either in his own personal library or available to him in the church library are: a Bible dictionary, a good concordance, basic commentaries which do not require a knowledge of the original languages, a Bible atlas, a reputable study guide such as Halley's Pocket Bible Handbook, and a harmony of the Gospels such as that prepared by A. T. Robertson. This list could be extended considerably, but it does include the basic elements necessary to help the teacher know his Bible.



Each age group needs to learn the h _____, g _____, and p _____ of the Bible.

(history, geography, people)

Is this statement true or false?
Reading the Bible through as frequently as possible should be included in a teacher's independent study. _____

(true)

Some indispensable helps in Bible study are:
other t _____, a Bible d _____, and basic c _____.

(translations, dictionary, commentaries)

4. Curriculum Content

The Bible itself is the principal curriculum content material in the teaching program of the church. It also forms an important part of the training program of the church. In fact, a great part of the training curriculum content is directly or indirectly related to the Bible. In this part of the study of curriculum, some idea will be given of the curriculum content in the different aspects of the church training program.

New member training

Some aspects of new member training are particularly designed for new converts. Counseling sessions on the meaning of conversion and the meaning of church membership are a part of curriculum and should be conducted prior to the baptism of new members and their reception as church members. Some topics recommended for all new members, including those who have been received by recommendation from other congregations, would be:¹⁰

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Your new life in Christ | Your church working together |
| Your growth as a Christian | Your church working with others |
| Your Bible and its use | Your church and its history |
| The church and its covenant | Your church and your home |
| Your church and its beliefs | Sharing your faith |

Some churches find even the presentation of new members to the church for approval to be a valuable part of new member training curriculum.

General church membership training¹¹

The four principal areas of curriculum content for general church membership training are: Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, and church polity and organization. The training experiences provided for each age group will vary, but the total curriculum is so related as to provide a life-time of meaningful training opportunities. Certainly training for effective Christian discipleship can never be completed. Constant changes bring about new problems which church members must face and which call for further training or re-training.

¹⁰Harris and Staff, Administering Church Training, p. 7.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 8-9; Howse and Thomason, A Dynamic Church, pp. 105-106.

Five basic things a new Christian needs to know are:

1. The meaning of _____ in Christ,
2. How to _____ as a Christian,
3. How to use the _____,
4. The nature of the _____ and its _____,
5. How to share his _____.

(1. new life; 2. grow; 3. Bible; 3. church, covenant; 5. faith)

General church membership training includes four main areas. Name them.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Christian theology is concerned with the great realities of the Christian faith such as God, man, sin, Satan, salvation, the church, the Bible, and last things. Training in Christian theology must give emphasis to experiencing these doctrines as dynamic realities. Learning to express one's beliefs effectively through living daily by these spiritual realities and developing a valid system of Christian beliefs about God and His relationship to man are life-time tasks. They are also part of church membership training curriculum.

Christian ethics is concerned with God's ideals for living. These ideals are set forth in the Scriptures and provide the "oughtness" of the Christian life. Christian ethics includes exploration of basic principles and norms for Christian living, personal conduct, inter-personal relationships, relationships between groups, inter-group relations, family living, Christian citizenship, daily work, and the economic life. While some of these areas of curriculum content can be dealt with over a relatively brief period, the necessity to lead church members to grow in Christian character and in their ability to express their ideas about Christian ethics in every relationship of daily living extends this training task over the total life of the church member.

Christian history seeks to teach the facts of history. Its more important task is the search for historical insights which help the church member deal more constructively with the problems of current daily living. The development of current history throughout the life-span of the church member places upon the church the task of discovering and appropriating the meaning and values in Christian history as it unfolds today.

Christian polity and organization are the study of how the members of the church work together to do the church's work. This study seeks to answer the question, why should they work together. Informed church members are more likely to be motivated as good stewards of their time, talents, and money in fulfilling the church's mission. Here again, the task of constantly exploring ways in which church members might work together to achieve Christ's objectives for the church is a life-long one. This study of church polity and organization should include a knowledge of the particular group of churches to which this congregation belongs and a knowledge of other Christian groups including other Baptist groups.

Curriculum content for church leadership training (See Lesson 4, Part 3: "Areas of Training.")

The basic doctrines in Christian theology are:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. <u>G</u> _____ | 5. <u>s</u> _____ |
| 2. <u>m</u> _____ | 6. <u>c</u> _____ |
| 3. <u>s</u> _____ | 7. <u>B</u> _____ |
| 4. <u>S</u> _____ | 8. <u>L</u> _____ <u>t</u> _____ |

(Compare your answers with the text.)

God's ideals for living are called

C _____ e _____.

Included in Christian ethics are: personal

_____, inter-personal _____,
family _____, Christian _____,
and daily _____.

(Christian ethics, conduct, relationships,
living, citizenship, work)

History is important because it gives insight
into _____ problems.

(current)

Curriculum content in the program of developing missions

Reference has already been made in Lesson 5 to the fact that teaching missions is one of the missions tasks of the church. Mention was made at that point of the study of contemporary missions and the emphasis on the church support of missions through prayer, finance, and personnel. Mention was also made of the task of teaching the missionary message of the Bible.

The picture of a seeking God is current throughout the entire Scriptures, beginning with His work in creation and His seeking out of sinful man. This thread carries the reader through evidences of God's continuing concern for man and His provision for a witness to unredeemed man. Even in Old Testament times, examples of God's seeking are found in the lives of witnesses such as Abraham, Noah, Jonah, and the prophets. The New Testament shows how God sent His Son to call the whole world to repentance and salvation and to die that this might be possible. The New Testament also makes clear the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding and strengthening those who respond to God's seeking.

The role of the church in missions, beginning in Matthew and Acts with the statement of the Great Commission and following through with the actual response of the New Testament churches to the Great Commission, provides curriculum content material for development of the churches in missions. The mission involvement of a particular local Baptist church is also a part of the curriculum content as is the plan this church has for supporting its own missions program and the missions program of the denomination. Nowhere in the program of Christian education is the importance of planned experiences as a part of curriculum so clear as in missionary education.

5. Maintaining Adequate Curriculum in the Christian Education Program

Assuring that the Christian education program of the local church is carried on with adequate curriculum involves dealing with constant problems. The following rather familiar complaints on the part of teachers and trainers illustrate some of the problems:

The curriculum materials do not deal with subjects of greatest interest to my class members at the times when they are most interested in studying them.

I can't get my class members interested in serious study and discussion.

What is the thread, related to missions, through the entire Bible?

_____ seeking _____

(God, man)

Find Matthew 28:19-10 in your Bible and write the Great Commission here.

Some of my class members monopolize the discussion.

My class members do not find the curriculum materials to be interesting and challenging.

How can I meet the real needs of my class members?¹²

Part of the answer to the typical problems above is constant vigilance in provision of good curriculum. Good curriculum for the Christian education program of the church will have the following basic characteristics:

- Biblical and theological soundness
- Relevancy (suited to the nature and needs of the learners)
- Comprehensiveness
- Balance
- Sequence
- Flexibility
- Correlation (proper relationship between its parts)¹³

Administering to maintain adequate curriculum

Those responsible for the Christian education program of the church are responsible for maintaining adequate curriculum. Its group leaders and teachers in the program may not have the training necessary to determine and maintain adequate curriculum. So a rather heavy load of responsibility falls upon those responsible to the church for this program. A curriculum plan should be presented to the church and adopted by formal action of the church. Although materials might come from denominational publishing houses, selection within the materials offered is usually necessary. Decisions involved in this selection are affected by the nature of the church and its needs, goals, size, location, constituency, and special educational problems. All teachers and leaders need to be made aware that no unauthorized curriculum materials which are at variance with their local church's adopted curriculum plan are to be introduced or used. Constant supervision is necessary at this point.

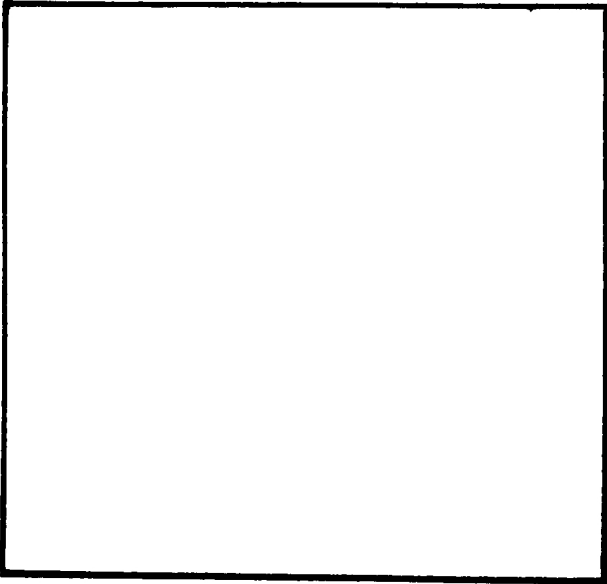
Furthermore, curriculum supplements and alternate units need to be provided. These supplements will include teaching aids such as maps, pictures, charts, chalk boards, and audio visual aids. Alternate units

Now that you have read about problems which arise concerning curriculum, list some complaints you have heard in your own church. Are any the same as those listed in the text?

¹²Colson and Rigdon, Understanding Your Church Curriculum, pp. 77-82.

¹³Ibid., p. 51.

include material for "out of class" time. Their use should not be indiscriminately encouraged, but their availability is highly recommended. Also, alternate units might include preview studies which are very effective for leadership preparation. The church library is a most important resource center and place for storing and making available curriculum materials.



6. Conclusion

Some ideas come through quite clearly as curriculum is studied. The organization of Christian education in the local church is most important, but without adequate curriculum content this organization is of little use. Furthermore, the provision and use of adequate curriculum materials is a most demanding task, and one to which the church must give attention.

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. What is meant by curriculum? _____

2. How is a tree an analogy of curriculum? _____

3. What is the objective of the church? _____

4. What is the educational objective of a church? _____

5. Name three relationships to be considered in the scope of curriculum. _____

6. What age groups should be considered in the scope of curriculum? _____

7. Illustrate the difference in depth of instruction regarding God's redeeming love for children and adults. _____

8. Briefly state the difference in needs between preschool children and young people. _____

9. With regard to the theme of God's redeeming love, what should be the goals for each age group? _____

10. Give three statements concerning the nature of the Bible. _____

11. Why is the Bible relevant? _____

12. Why is the Bible authoritative? _____

13. What personal responsibility do teachers as interpreters have? _____

14. What does each age group need to know in understanding the Bible as a whole? _____

15. Name three indispensable books for studying the Bible. _____
16. List five things a new Christian needs to know. _____

17. What are four areas of curriculum content for general church membership? _____

18. Name six basic doctrines Christians need to study. _____

19. What is Christian ethics? _____

20. Why is history important? _____
21. What should be included in the curriculum for developing missions? _____

22. Name three problems which arise in maintaining adequate curriculum. _____

23. Name seven characteristics of good curriculum. _____

24. Who is responsible for maintaining adequate curriculum? _____

Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3).

Analyze the church objective and educational objective stated in this lesson and name the subjects which will need to be taught in achieving these objectives. These subjects should form the outline of your Bible study program. Be prepared to share this information with the seminar.

Advanced activity (Level 3).

In addition to analyzing the church and educational objectives to determine curriculum, evaluate the needs of different groups of people in your church and suggest a program of teaching which will guide each group to the achievement of the church and educational objectives. Be prepared to share your plans with the seminar.

Seminar Discussion

1. What is meant by curriculum?
2. Invite Levels 2 and 3 students to share their curriculum plans or designs for their churches.
3. Why must specific objectives or subjects being taught vary with each age group?
4. Why is the Bible the basic source of curriculum in Christian education?
5. What should be the curriculum content for new member training and for general church membership training?
6. What should be the curriculum content for church leadership training?
7. What should be the curriculum content in a program for developing missions?