

A Christian Philosophy Of Education

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For long periods of time human history moves placidly along, troubled only by minor disturbances. Then in a short span of years, everything seems to happen at once. A storm overtakes the race, breaking up all the fountains of the great deep; and when the waters subside, the course of history has been set for the next epoch. The sixteenth century was such an age of storm. Henry VIII, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Francis I, Ignatius Loyola, Caraffa, and-a little later-Philip II, Queen Elizabeth, Henry IV, the Duke of Alva, and John Knox all lived in the fifteen hundreds. During this period it was settled that Germany should be Lutheran, Scotland Presbyterian, England Episcopal; the Inquisition determined by murder that Italy and Spain should remain Romish; the mass murder of some 75,000 Calvinists on St. Bartholomew's Eve in 1572 made France half Romish and half infidel. These results have endured for four hundred years.

Not only did the sixteenth century witness the Reformation, it also saw in the Renaissance the birth of the modern scientific mind. While inventions and detailed scientific applications have been multiplied in more recent years, the general scientific world-view-based on the application of mathematics to problems of physics-was fixed for the coming centuries, even before Descartes was born.

The twentieth century bids fair to rival the sixteenth. Two world wars have already occurred and with a third a constant threat, this century will truly be one of upheaval. Hitler wished to set the direction of history for the next thousand years. He may well have done so-aided, of course, by Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin. The twentieth century, so far, lacks indications of impending religious cataclysms. Its changes, therefore, may parallel more closely the social and educational revolution of the Renaissance, or, more likely, the breakdown of the Roman Empire, than the spiritual quickening of the Reformation. From all that can be seen now, humanism and Communist hatred of Christianity will be the prevailing philosophy of the coming age.

While the political situation that makes newspaper headlines occupies popular attention, the use which dictators have made of the means of education shows clearly that the role of schools and universities is of more profound significance. Educational policy in the new society, whether for good or evil, will be a basic factor.

The Need for a World View

It is true that our best-trained men can invent radios and radar; it is true that they can reduce typhoid and infant mortality-more power to them; it is true that they can produce bigger

submarines and better explosives; **but it ought to be as clear as a flare and as emphatic as a bomb that who uses these for what is a tremendously more important matter than their invention.** In fact, the impact of Pearl Harbor, Korea, and Vietnam ought to have focused educational attention on this basic question. Telephones will multiply, but their wires may carry commands to massacre Jews and Christians; radio and television will be greatly developed, but it may be used for totalitarian propaganda; and young men who have not died of typhoid may make excellent KGB agents. Every mechanical aid, by which some judge that a society is good, can be used by bureaucrat or dictator to make his society bad.

How can the people of the United States become competent to judge and therefore withstand the barrage of propaganda? The barrage has come. *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the news programs on television are supposed to be news media. They are actually propaganda outlets. For example, on Friday, August 15, 1969, Chet Huntley ended his news program with a vicious denunciation of Protestants. There was no news at all. It was unadulterated invective. He stopped just short of saying that the Roman Catholics of Eire should invade Ulster and massacre the Protestants. And of course the news is slanted, too. How slanted must the populace already be that such interpretation should be allowed on television? If some form of education prepares people to detect slanted news and thereby prevent a social climate where hate propaganda is accepted, it is not the present form of American education. Least of all is it a narrow technical training that produces expert ignoramuses. This is not to deprecate engineering, much less to oppose physics and chemistry. But something additional, some thing more important is needed. What is it?

There is only one philosophy that can really unify education and life. That philosophy is the philosophy of Christian theism. **What is needed is an educational system based on the sovereignty of God, for in such a system man as well as chemistry will be given his proper place, neither too high nor too low. In such a system there will be a chief end of man to unify, and to serve as a criterion for, all his activities.** What is needed therefore is a philosophy consonant with the greatest creed of Christendom, the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. In such a system, God, as well as man, will have his proper place. This alone will make education successful; for the social, moral, political, and economic disintegration of a civilization is nothing other than the symptom and result of a religious breakdown. The abominations of war, pestilence, and economic collapse are punishment for the crime, better, the *sin*, of forgetting God.

The Myth of Neutrality

There is no neutral ground between the proposition that God created the world out of nothing and the proposition that the universe is an eternal self-existing entity. But though objectors may admit that there is here a philosophic incompatibility, they may at the same time hold that philosophy is so remote from the practical business of teaching children that any concern over anti-religious influence is purely academic. Even the optimism or the pessimism of the teacher does not affect the contents of arithmetic. Philosophically, neutrality is impossible, they grant; but educationally neutrality is a fact.

This seems to be the commonly held opinion about the decisions of the United States Supreme Court banning prayer and Bible reading from public education. Prayer is definitely a religious

activity, and the State must not support any kind of religion. Let arithmetic be taught and religion ignored. Now, there is one good point at least in the Court's decision. The case originated in a school system whose officials had written out a prayer and had required the teachers to pray that prayer. The school officials had supposed their prayer to be innocuous and satisfactory to all religions that prayed at all. It was a "nonsectarian" prayer. Since the decision, various amendments to the Constitution have been proposed that would permit nonsectarian prayer. Presumably this would mean a prayer composed by the school board and imposed by them on the teachers. Insofar as this was and is the case, a Christian must view the Court's decision with favor. For, in the first place, it forces the teacher to make a prayer with which she disagrees, either because she is irreligious and does not want to pray at all-and compliance makes her a hypocrite, or because she is religious and sees that this nonsectarian prayer is not neutral, but anti-Christian.

The reason these nonsectarian prayers are anti-Christian can very clearly be stated. The Bible teaches that all prayer to God must be based on the merits of Jesus Christ. No one can come to the Father but by Christ. There is no other name by which we can be saved. Hence to pray without including Christ in the prayer is an offense against God. It is far better to have no prayer at all in school than such a nonsectarian prayer. The use of the word *sectarian* or *nonsectarian* is itself an offense and insult. *Sect* has always had a pejorative sense, and to stigmatize a Christian prayer as *sectarian* is not an exercise in neutrality.

It might seem then that the Supreme Court has maintained neutrality by its prohibition of prayer in the schools, and that only those who want prayer are anti-Christian. Of course, also, any who do not want prayer are anti-Christian; and it was quite a feat for the Court to satisfy devout Christians and loudmouthed atheists by the same decision. But whether the decision and its results can satisfy the Christian, and whether the schools are neutral-now that the school board theologians can no longer impose their prayers-still requires a little more discussion.

That neutrality is impossible becomes clearer and clearer as the system of Christian theism is further understood. Mention has already been made of the fact that Christianity is not to be identified with and restricted to a bare belief in God. For example, Christianity has a theory of evil; it differs from the humanistic theory; and therefore a secular school cannot adopt the same policies a Christian school adopts in dealing with recalcitrant pupils.

That there are recalcitrant pupils hardly needs to be said. But perhaps it does need to be said to those who conveniently forget what is going on. In addition to the material recounted in chapter one, there was the case of subversive, obscene, Black Panther literature sold to high school students in Indianapolis in 1969 with the approval of at least some of the teachers. But it is illegal for the Gideons to distribute New Testaments on school property. In the first two weeks of the 1969-70 school session, fifty robberies and beatings, including stabbings, were reported to the Indianapolis police. The police believed that they were less than half the crimes committed because children who are victimized are often afraid to report the attack for fear of reprisals. Some parents refuse to send their children to school in order to save them from violence at school. In one of the affluent Indianapolis high schools it is estimated that fifty percent of the pupils are drug addicts. Not all heroin addicts, to be sure; but on their way by means of glue, goofballs, LSD, and similar drugs.

These evil conditions have been encouraged by the liberal, humanistic policy of dealing with lesser forms of student misconduct. Liberalism has ridiculed the Christian notion of punishment. From babyhood children must be spoiled, not spanked, or in any way repressed. As early as 1922, John Dewey in *Human Nature and Conduct* (Part II, Section 2) encouraged youth to rebel against parental discipline. Parents have tamed “the delightful originality of the child”; they instill in him moral habits; and the result is a mass of “irrationalities” and “infantilisms.” When Dewey’s philosophy is translated into the penal code, with its emphasis on rehabilitation (for the criminal is sick, not wicked; and the community is guilty, not the criminal), twenty thousand people commit murder in a single year in the United States, and not one of them is executed. The following year, naturally, more people commit murder.

Neither John Dewey, nor the liberal penologists, nor the public schools are to be blamed for the origin of these crimes. Liberal theologians and liberal educators are to be blamed for failing to repress evil. The public schools deserve ridicule when they claim to be the saviors of democracy. By their permissiveness they have encouraged arson, drug addiction, and sexual immorality. Even in strictly curricular affairs their permissiveness and their extension of the concept of democracy beyond its proper political meaning often have resulted in the attempt to make all pupils equal by reducing requirements to the minimum so every-body can pass. In such schools, more often in metropolitan areas, a student must not flunk; he must be promoted. In high schools that have come under the present writer’s observation, some juniors (no doubt seniors, too, but the following examples are restricted to personal knowledge) can not read fourth-grade material; in a botany lab a student could not read the instruction sheet, and a twenty-year-old boy “graduated” without being able to read-well, without being able to read two paragraphs of anything. This sort of democracy, this permissiveness, these liberal policies encourage and augment evil; but they do not initiate evil. Evil is initiated in what John Dewey calls the delightful originality of the child.

The present argument aims to show that a school system cannot operate as a neutral between the liberal and the Christian position. A school system must have some policy for delinquent children, or for those who begin to cause trouble, and this policy cannot be both left and right. It cannot be both Christian and humanistic; and there is no middle, neutral ground. The two philosophies and their educational implications differ on what to do, on what evil is, and on how it originates. Something has been said of the prevailing views of public educators; now it is required to show that Christianity has a totally different view of evil and totally different policies for combating it.

The Government Schools

The early American colleges were distinctly Christian institutions. But the public school system, unlike the colleges, was not so inspired. On the other hand, the public schools were not intended to be irreligious. In the readers of our grandparents’ time, God and Jesus Christ were mentioned. Today no such references can be found in the books of the public schools. The reason is not hard to find. The public schools were founded with the idea of not favoring one religion above another, and the result is that they now favor no religion at all. They are completely secularized.

Originally the public schools, while not supposed to favor one Christian denomination above another, were not intended to attack Christianity. The idea was that they should be neutral. And because the majority of Protestants believed the promises of the schoolmen that they would not attack religion, the Protestants did not found primary schools as the Romanists did. Now it is clear that the Romanists adopted the wiser course of action because the promises of the schoolmen were soon to be broken.

Today Christianity is attacked all through the public school system. Reports from parents say that the evolutionary denial of the creation of the world by God is taught to the children of the second grade. How can a child of seven or eight stand up against an organized attack of the theistic worldview? How can parents protect their children? The public school makes no pretense of being neutral in religious matters, and when a parent here or there protests, he is promptly ridiculed and squelched. The notion of religious liberty, or even of the toleration of Christianity—that is, the original claim to neutrality—is not a part of the schoolmen’s mental equipment.

Mention has already been made of the exclusion of Bible reading from the public schools. The result has been a generation of children who are handicapped in the English language and literature. It is an incontrovertible fact that the English Bible has had a greater influence on our language, our literature, our civilization, our morals, than any other book. The children who are deprived of the Bible are culturally deprived, as well as religiously deprived. Someone has well said that knowledge of the Bible without a college education is of more value than a college education without knowledge of the Bible. In view of this fact, the prohibition of Bible reading is acutely significant of the hatred the public schools, and a large section of our society, have for Christianity. Books attacking Christianity are not illegal. Teachers can deny God, creation, and providence; but the law forbids them to recommend Christianity.

Since the cultural deprivation of this policy is so obvious, some of the educators want to teach the Bible as literature. This reintroduction of the Bible into the schools might also allay some of the criticism. It may turn out, however, that the Bible as literature will be worse than no Bible at all. Will the Bible be taught as divine literature or as human literature—mere literature, and not revelation? In one school where this was tried, the teacher required the pupils to write a paper. She was very flexible in her requirement: Each student could choose any part of the Bible for his subject. One little girl asked if she might write on Isaiah. The teacher asked, Do you mean first Isaiah or second Isaiah? Thus the teaching of the Bible as literature becomes an attack on its veracity. It will be used; it is being used, to undermine Christianity.

When public schools first became popular, the Protestants generally were deceived by the specious promises of the public school people. They thought that if they maintained Christian colleges, the primary schools could be entrusted to the state. But not all the Protestants were deceived by these false promises not to attack Christianity. The Lutheran Church and the Christian Reformed people early established primary schools for their children. They believed that the influence of the Christian home and the preaching of the Christian church should be strengthened by a Christian school system. But both the Lutherans and the Christian Reformed, with their European background, have remained somewhat closed societies as it were; and unfortunately they have exercised little influence, in this respect at least, on the rest of American Protestantism. There was one man, however, among the English-speaking American churches

who saw the implication of the public school system; he warned of what was to follow, but his warning went unheeded. It is interesting, sadly interesting, to read his warning today, now that ninety years have proved him to be right. For it was in lectures given prior to 1890 that A. A. Hodge made the predictions now to be quoted.

In his *Popular Lectures on Theological Themes*, page 283, he wrote:

A comprehensive and centralized system of national education, separated from religion, as is now commonly proposed, will prove the most appalling engineery for the propagation of anti-Christian and atheistic unbelief, and of anti-social nihilistic ethics, individual, social, and political, which this sin-rent world has ever seen.

Two pages before, he had written:

It is capable of exact demonstration that if every party in the State has the right of excluding from the public schools whatever he does not believe to be true, then he that believes most must give way to him that believes least, and then he that believes least must give way to him that believes absolutely nothing, no matter in how small a minority the atheists or agnostics may be. It is self-evident that on this scheme, if it is consistently and persistently carried out in all parts of the country, the United States system of national popular education will be the most efficient and wide instrument for the propagation of Atheism which the world has ever seen.

What A. A. Hodge did not see, at least what he did not explicitly say, is that although the irreligious have seized the right to exclude Christianity, the Christians are denied the right to exclude attacks on Christianity. There is no neutrality.

Obviously the schools are not Christian. Just as obviously they are not neutral. The Scriptures say that the fear of the Lord is the chief part of knowledge; but the schools, by omitting all reference to God, give the pupils the notion that knowledge can be had apart from God. They teach in effect that God has no control of history, that there is no plan of events that God is working out, that God does not foreordain whatsoever comes to pass. Aside from definite anti-Christian instruction to be discussed later, the public schools are not, never were, can never be, neutral. Neutrality is impossible. Let one ask what neutrality can possibly mean when God is involved. How does God judge the school system, which says to him, "O God, we neither deny nor assert thy existence; and O God, we neither obey nor disobey thy commandments; we are strictly neutral." Let no one fail to see the point: The school system that ignores God teaches its pupils to ignore God; and this is not neutrality. It is the worst form of antagonism, for it judges God to be unimportant and irrelevant in human affairs. This is atheism.

Christian Education

The curriculum and the administration of Christian education must be controlled by the Christian view of man. Like the plant, man is a living being, he needs food, he reproduces; but the nature

of peculiarity of man is not found in so wide a genus. Like the animals, he has sensations and visual images; but if this were all, he would be merely another animal. Education supposedly deals with man as man; so-called physical education deals with man as a brute. What man is and what education is are questions to be answered by appraising the different levels of human activity. Keen sensation does not mark an educated man, for savages often have keener sensation than the well educated. Carpentry and plumbing are distinctly human activities beyond all animal possibility, and factually beyond the savage; and yet these two useful and honorable trades are not an education. Music and art rank higher than carpentry and plumbing; colloquially we speak of a musical education, but strictly music and art require training. All these are different levels of activity-all honorable but not all equal. Some men are born capable of one but not of the other. The Lord did not berate the man to whom he gave one talent for not being able to earn five; he condemned him for not using the one he had. However there is no denying the fact that it is better to have five. God does not require the unskilled laborer to write the critique of all future metaphysics nor to finish Schubert's symphony; but I. Q. 150 contains greater possibilities than I. Q. 85.

All phases of life should glorify God, and if a man is a carpenter or a plumber, he should and can glorify God by his trade as well as a student or professor. To serve God acceptably, one does not need to be a monk; neither does he need to be a scholar. God has given some men five talents, some two, and some one. He has given scholastic aptitude to some and to others mechanical ability. What is required is that each should use faithfully what he has received.

In view of this it cannot be said that education is in all respects democratic. In politics, representative democratic government amenable to the will of the people is decidedly preferable to irresponsible totalitarianism and arrogant bureaucracy. All men are created equal-in the sense that political justice should be impartially administered. But economic and mental equality never have existed and never will. The economic handicaps can be equalized to a degree by private aid through scholarships. But there is no cure for mental inequalities. Education, like art, can never be democratic; both are inherently aristocratic. Some students simply cannot learn. Try as they may, they cannot grasp the significance of the material. And instead of benefiting by a college education, their spirit and self-respect may be ruined. As plumbers they could serve a useful purpose, and if they recognize that God is glorified in honest plumbing, they can walk among men with Christian dignity.

A word about art too. Surely a great artist is superior to a great coal miner. Rembrandt's *Night Watch* is indescribably impressive. Rembrandt *knew how* to paint. But I am not aware that he *knew* art. Beethoven *knew how* to write music, but I doubt that he understood music. Artistic ability is one thing-a precious gift from God. The intellectual understanding of art, of its function in society, of its relation to religion and morality, is another thing-a still more precious gift from God. The latter is a subject of education. The former is skill.

Christianity, however, is intellectualistic. God is truth, and truth is immutable. The humanists, of course, oppose any theistic conception of truth. Immersed in the flux of pragmatism, guided by Nietzsche, James, and Dewey, they hold that truth changes, moral values change, and the only fixed truth is that there is no fixed truth. What works is "true." Skill and success make "truth." Because there is no final truth in humanism, the humanist cannot consistently give adequate

recognition to the intellect. If he praises intellectual endowments, he means only the vocational skill to get what you want.

Yet secular humanism is not the only, nor even the most vociferous opponent of intellectualism. If Nietzsche, James, and Dewey have their disciples, including the existentialists, Kierkegaard, with Schleiermacher's emphasis on emotion, is an even worse enemy of truth. So it happens that large numbers of religious people despise the intellect and exalt the emotions. Brunner says that God speaks falsehoods, that man should believe contradictions, and that God and the intellect are mutually exclusive.

Man the Image of God

We note for one thing that Christ is the image of God (*Hebrews* 1:3), and that he is the *Logos* and Wisdom of God. We note too that Adam was given dominion over nature. These two points, seemingly unrelated, suggest that the image of God is Logic or rationality. Adam was superior to the animals because he was a rational and not merely a sensory creation. The image of God therefore is reason.

The image must be reason because God is truth, and fellowship with him—a most important purpose in creation—requires thinking and understanding. Without reason man would doubtless glorify God, as do the stars, stones, and animals, but he could not enjoy him forever. Even if in God's providence animals survive death and adorn the future world, they cannot have what the Scripture calls eternal life because eternal life is to know the only true God, and knowledge is an exercise of the mind or reason. Without reason there can be no morality or righteousness: These too require thought. Lacking these, animals are neither righteous nor sinful.

The identification of the image as reason explains or is supported by a puzzling remark in *John* 1:9, "It was the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." How can Christ, in whom is the life that is the light of men, be the light of every man, when the Scriptures teach that some men are lost in eternal darkness? This puzzle arises from interpreting light in exclusively redemptive terms. If one thinks also in terms of creation, the *Logos* or Rationality of God, who just above was said to have created all things without a single exception, can be seen as having created man with the light of logic as his distinctive human characteristic.

For such reasons as these, the fall and its effects, which have so puzzled some theologians as they studied the doctrine of the image, are most easily understood by identifying the image with man's mind.

Since moral judgments are a species of judgment, subsumed under general intellectual activity, one result of the fall is the occurrence of incorrect evaluations by means of erroneous thinking. Adam thought, incorrectly, that it would be better to join Eve in her sin than to obey God and be separated from her. So he ate the forbidden fruit. The external act followed upon the thought. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." Note that in the Bible the term *heart* usually designates the intellect, and only once in ten times the emotions: It is the heart that thinks. Sin thus interferes with our thinking. It does not, however, prevent us from thinking. Sin does not eradicate or annihilate the image. It causes a malfunction, but man still remains man.

The Bible stresses the malfunctioning of the mind in obviously moral affairs because of their importance. But sin extends its depraving influence into affairs not usually regarded as matters of morality. Arithmetic, for example. One need not suppose that Adam and Eve understood calculus, but they surely counted to ten. Whatever arithmetic they did, they did correctly. But sin causes a failure in thinking, with the result that we now make mistakes in simple addition. Such mistakes are pedantically called the “noetic” effects of sin. But moral errors are equally noetic. When men became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were darkened; when they professed to be wise, but became fools; when God gave them over to a reprobate mind-their sin was first of all a noetic, intellectual, mental malfunction.

Regeneration and the process of sanctification reverse the sinful direction of the malfunctioning: The person is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. First the more obvious, the grosser sins, are suppressed because the new man begins to think and evaluate in conformity with God’s precepts. Second and third, the new man advances to restrain the more subtle, the more secret, the more pervasive sins that have made his heart deceitful above measure. Errors in arithmetic may seem trivial in comparison, but these, too, are effects of sin; and salvation will improve a man’s thinking in all matters.

The identification of the image as reason or intellect thus preserves the unity of man’s person and saves theologians from splitting the image into schizophrenic parts. It also accords with all that the Scripture says about sin and salvation.

Secular opposition to the image of God in man can be based only on a general nontheistic philosophy. Evolution views man as a natural development from the neutron and proton, through atoms, to plants, to the lower animals, until perhaps a number of human beings emerged in Africa, Asia, and the East Indies. Evolution can hardly assert the unity of the human race, for several individuals of subhuman species may have more or less simultaneously produced the same variation.

This nontheistic, naturalistic view is difficult to accept because it implies that the mind, too (as well as the body) is an evolutionary product rather than a divine image. Instead of using eternal principles of logic, the mind operates with the practical results of biological adaptation. Concepts and propositions neither reach the truth nor even aim at it. Our equipment has evolved through a struggle to survive. Reason is simply the human method of handling things. It is a simplifying and therefore falsifying device. There is no evidence that our categories correspond to reality. Even if they did, a most unlikely accident, no one could know it; for to know that the laws of logic are adequate to the existent real, it is requisite to observe the real prior to using the laws. But if this ever happened with subhuman organisms, it never happens with the present species man. If now the intellect is naturally produced, different types of intellect could equally well be produced by slightly different evolutionary processes. Maybe such minds have been produced, but are now extinct like the dinosaurs and dodos. This means, however, that the concepts or intuitions of space and time-the law of contradiction, the rules of inference-are not fixed and universal criteria of truth, but that other races thought in other terms. Perhaps future races will also think in different terms. John Dewey insisted that logic has already changed and will continue to change. If now this be the case, our traditional logic is but a passing evolutionary moment; our theories-dependent on this logic-are temporary reactions, parochial social habits,

and Freudian rationalizations; and therefore the evolutionary theory, produced by these biological urges, cannot be true.

The difference between naturalism and theism-between the latest scientific opinions on evolution and creation; between the Freudian animal and the image of God; between belief in God and atheism-is based on their two different epistemologies. Naturalism professes to learn by observation and analysis of experience; the theistic view depends on Biblical revelation. No amount of observation and analysis can prove the theistic position. Of course, no amount of observation and analysis can prove evolution or any other theory. The secular philosophies all result in total skepticism. In contrast, theism bases its knowledge on divinely revealed propositions. They may not give us all truth; they may even give us very little truth; but there is no truth at all otherwise. So much for the secular alternative.

Therefore the Christian evaluation of subjects in the curriculum and of pupils or students in school is rational and intellectualistic, in opposition to the emotionalism and anti-intellectualism of the present age.

The object of education is truth; the transmission of truth to the younger pupils and the discovery of new truth by more advanced students. The aim of education, at least the aim of the purest and best education, is intellectual understanding.

The Subversion of Christianity

Editor's note: Some people cannot or will not admit that the government schools are anti-Christian. Unless the schools vociferously oppose Christianity (as they usually do), they are regarded as harmless. But frontal attacks on Christianity are not the only way of destroying it. Subtle subversion is used as well, as Clark illustrates in this essay.

Scott, Foresman and Company, publishers of an excellent line of grade school textbooks, has one called *Our World and How We Use It*, by Campbell, Sears, Quillen, Hanna. On page 97, in a chapter explaining the domestication and use of animals, there is a section entitled, *Ideas about God*.

You have seen how many of our ideas about property, about working together, and about war have come from these herdsmen of long ago. The herdsmen had many other ideas, too.

The herdsman knew about the stars, because he had learned to read the sky as we read calendars. The sun was his clock by day, and the moon and stars told him the time at night. The night skies are very clear and the stars are bright in the dry climate of the grasslands and in the desert country.

The herdsman watched the seasons come and go. He knew about times of plenty and about times of famine, too. He saw his animals born, grow, and die. He saw the head of the tribe punish his own children and his animals if they did not obey

him, and reward them if they did right. Herdsmen had time to think about many, many things as they tended their animals.

And so the herdsman came to know that there was a great God that took care of the world and everything in it, just as he himself took care of his own flocks and family. He taught his children to worship this God and to obey Him.

The herdsman also knew that he had to protect his own animals and his family and his servants and workers. Many times he must have thought that the world would be a better place if there were no wild beasts or unfriendly people. And he came to believe that there must be something bad, something evil, which worked against God, just as wolves and bad men and famine worked against him. This evil thing he called Satan.

Many of the thoughts of the herdsmen were made into songs. You can read some of them in the Bible, in the Psalms of David, the shepherd who became a king.

Confessedly the aim of the section is to teach the pupils about God. Therefore it is a matter of religion; and religion, whether preached in a pulpit or taught in a primary grade, cannot be a neutral matter. To discover whether this textbook favors Christianity or opposes it, let us list the five chief points it teaches. It teaches first that the herdsmen discovered God or got ideas about God by thinking as they tended their animals; second, that they discovered God cared for them; third, that they taught their children to worship and obey God; fourth, that they learned, by reflection always, that there is a Devil; and fifth, that the Psalms of David are a result of this process.

Since this is the teaching of a textbook for the fourth grade, it may be deemed unfair to offer profound, philosophical criticism. And yet even pupils in the fourth grade can be told a few simple, though profound, philosophical principles. The section as written produces the impression that learning of God is a purely empirical process. No reference is made to what a philosopher would call the *a priori* equipment of learning. Now, Kant's terminology is not for children, but even children can understand when they are told that all men are born with the idea of God. They may not know the terms *a priori* and *innate*, but they can understand as well as they can understand anything else that men are so made as to think of God spontaneously: They are born that way. However, no particular stress will be laid on the argument that the book teaches a non-Christian empiricism.

But stress, great stress, is to be laid on the omission of all reference to revelation. A true Christian, if asked how he has learned of God, will answer immediately, "through the Bible, God's word." When a person replies, "by experience and reflection," it is instantly clear that that person is not a Christian.

In the second place, the textbook teaches that the herdsmen knew God cared for them because they cared for their flocks. What sort of argument is this? The herdsmen take care of their flocks in order to shear them, and eat them. Does such reflection lead to an ultimate trust in God?

Then third, the herdsmen taught their children to worship and obey God. This raises two questions. First, if there is no revelation, where do the herdsmen find the commands God requires us to obey? The Scripture speaks of the law of God as written on the hearts of men; it teaches that man was made in God's image and has an innate knowledge that right is different from wrong and that God punishes wrong. But the Scripture also teaches that man suppresses this knowledge by his wickedness, that he does not wish to retain God in his knowledge, and that God has given him over to a reprobate mind. Obviously the fourth-grade text book and Christianity do not agree. And the second question is still more to the point: How can the herdsmen teach their children to worship God? The Scripture not only says that no one, apart from the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, seeks after God and that there is none that doeth good, no, not one; the Scripture also teaches that no one comes to the Father except by Jesus Christ. And this is as true of Abraham of old as it is of men today. Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." The textbook gives no hint of this necessary prerequisite of worship. It teaches rather that one can obey and worship God without any reference to Jesus Christ.

The fourth point does not require any additional criticism, but the fifth point is the climax. Here it is stated that the Psalms of David are the products of purely human reflection. In direct antagonism to the Christian view, the textbook reduces the Bible to the level of the philosophically unjustifiable thoughts of a nomad.

David wrote, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Is this a human fancy or a divine promise? David wrote:

The kings of the earth set themselves...against the Lord and against his Anointed.... He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.... Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.... The Lord hath said unto me, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.... Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."

What is this? Nonsense? Or is it the voice of the Mighty God and Terrible?

The textbook from which the quotation was taken is pedagogically and mechanically excellent; it displays all the marks of technical competence. The inclusion of the section quoted therefore cannot be attributed to ignorance. It was deliberately planned. For these reasons the only possible conclusion is that the book and the educators behind it are definitely aiming to destroy the Christian religion.