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LEE GALLMAN, DIRECTOR

P. O. BOX 530

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THE EDUCATED

The accumulation of a few years of schooling beyond high school is the quest of several million young people. This is called "getting an education." Schooling is the surest and safest way toward an education. It is the tried and proved method.

But to say one has schooling is not to say that he has education, or learning; because schooling is only a part of it. Books, teachers, and diplomas will lead toward, but will not guarantee, an education. I am sure that this is true in other areas of study; I know it to be true in the ministry. In fact, I have known men who quit learning upon graduation. I will go a step further to say I have known men who rejected learning after graduation.

All of which is to beg the question, "what is education?" Let me give a layman's answer. It will not fit philosophy or psychology, for my acquaintance with these subjects is too meager. Yet I shall not claim originality for I am sure through the years many have discussed this subject in my hearing. Education is the process of learning tested facts as facts, understanding probable truths in their proper light, acquiring the right tools of thought for sound investigation, developing the best known methods in particular skills so that the individual may realize more fully his own ideas, attitudes, and talents, and assimilating into the fabric of his life these truths properly interpreted.

Education aims to develop persons in a reasonable and reasoned attitude of life. It forbids an uncritical approach to investigation. Yet this aim must be

accomplished without destroying personality or distorting it. It must not result in a loss of the fine elements of the inner man; it should not result in censoriousness. One of the tests of education is one's ability to rethink traditional and emotional facets of truth; another is the ability to discriminate between truth and half-truth. A problem in education is "continuation study." Those who made their schooling develop their thinking have done it after leaving school. What and whom to read is something that must be learned. Libraries are helpful but thinking is also important.

Many of us appear to have read a lot but have not thought very much. We do not tend to think through the significant statements of our age. Too often we turn back to ideas which we held before we attended college and do not give our schooling a chance to make its contribution. For this reason we are developing a generation of schooled illiterates. A man with a Th.D. or Ph.D. gets some attention whether he deserves it or not. When people listen to one with such schooling revert to old, uncritical methods and thoughts, they are impressed and influenced.

A Ph.D. who has not assimilated facts with his preaching is a poor sight indeed. It appears now and then that some actually try to repudiate facts. For example, the often heard idea of Baptist succession will not stand the test of investigation. Any informed teacher challenges this outworn tradition. When a speaker tries to resurrect this dead issue, he is repudiating his learning. When such a one

glibly and oratorically vows that every word of scripture is a settled problem, he repudiates his learning. When tithing is made into a New Testament law by such a one, he repudiates learning. When, in the heat of a speech, one slips we are prone to overlook it. But we should be careful to integrate our learning into the fabric of our speeches, writings, and lives so that we shall not repudiate facts and learning.

What causes this lapse into the traditional frame of mind? Is it a result of reading and studying with a closed mind? Is it the result of an attempt to say what will be popularly received? Is this frame of mind one that seeks recognition as a unique person - one who can, with information to the contrary, believe what he has always believed? If any of the above answers fit, then "educated" is an incorrect term for that individual.

It takes no real courage to oppose one's teachers, for they are rarely present, but it takes courage to oppose an accepted but incorrect tradition. Education pivots on one's capacity to integrate learning so that he knows what and why he accepts or rejects the patterns.

STUDY HABITS PAY

Many read books, but few study. It is helpful to read many books but serious study must accompany this fast perusal if a proper balance is kept. A course in some worthy field forces one to confront issues and solve problems. When we read we tend to by-pass these issues. Take the course on the church by Dr. Dobbins, for example. In lesson twelve, Dr. Dobbins makes the student confront the issue of the church as an integral part of the community. Its function serving Christ on one hand and serving the community on the other hand would be overlooked in a program of reading. But here it becomes a factor to consider, an issue to face. In the course New Testament 112 Dr. Stagg makes the student confront the question of psychological temptations. The text raised the question but in careless reading one would tend to overlook the implications. In New Testament 152 Dr. McDowell focuses attention upon the confession at Caesarea Philippi in such a manner as to cause the student to ask

questions and seek for answers. A pluperfect translation clarifies a problem. This would be overlooked by fast reading. Theology, Religious Education, and Evangelism all contain the same contrasts. In the learning process one finds a place to do something. In doing, learning is better established.

Yet reading develops an enlarged concept of areas of study and should not be overlooked. A good plan is to study in a given area and read through the fields of inquiry involved. Thus one can compare ideas and concepts of many thinkers. This is the process in education.

HOW TO SQUEEZE A TURNIP

Recently a noted "Bible teacher" stated on the radio that the pegs that held the tabernacle to the ground represented the death and resurrection of Jesus; that that part below the ground represented the burial while the part above the ground represented the resurrection. The cords or ropes that secured the tent to the ground represented the love of God (For Hosea says, "I will draw them with cords of love"). These cords, since they are tied to that part of the peg above the ground, represent a great truth. Christ's love is grounded and secured in the resurrection (that part above the ground). This means that our souls are secured by the love of Christ to his own resurrection. Later he stated that the handles on the ark also represent the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Now the above is an example of an obnoxious approach to interpretation. Why not say that the peg represents Israel. The part below the ground represents the lost tribes while the part above the ground represents the remnant. Or why not say that it represents Communism and Christianity, or Thursday and Friday, or peanuts and pop corn, a tasty meal? You don't need scripture for such fanciful interpretation. Alice in Wonderland, Little Red Riding Hood, or Snowwhite and the Seven Dwarfs would serve the "interpreter" just as well.

Statistical Report: Correspondence students, 1456; extension center students, 2046.