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Aims of Christian Education

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Abstract: This paper considers the aims or purposes of education from Old Testament times through the New Testament, St Augustine, Luther and into the present era. It shows how Christian education functions within and beyond the church, and considers the transmission of the faith and engagement with secular knowledge and wider society. It considers Pentecostalism and the educational institutions it founded and its later diversification, especially in the United States. It briefly touches on the distinctives of Pentecostal doctrine, experience and mission.

Key words: education, Pentecostal, history, Christian

Introduction

Christianity characteristically engages in education, and has done so ever since Christ first chose his disciples. Pentecostal Christianity, for reasons associated with its revivalistic roots, has come to value education more cautiously and slowly, as we shall see. The first part of this paper will review selected historical periods and then, after a consideration of early Pentecostalism, it will draw out implied or stated educational aims before arriving at general conclusions.

Historical Survey

Biblical injunctions on the teaching of children go back as far as the Pentateuch and press upon Israel the requirement to hand on to the next generation both the words and the deeds of their God (e.g. Dt 11.19). In the absence of any formal educational system, children would have learned farming, trading or craft skills from their parents or family members and they would have done so by observation, by copying their parents, and by taking part in communal activities.

Much of what we know of early Jewish education is speculative but it is clear that levels of literacy were high, and this implies some form of instruction in the home or, after the Exile, in the synagogue. By the time we reach the New Testament period, Ferguson states that the synagogue carries schooling among its functions, and that education was subservient to the religious purposes of the nation.¹ A man learned to count not only so he could trade but also so he could work out the religious calendar. Similarly, literacy assisted religious observance because copies of the Scripture, or portions of Scripture, might be individually owned. For our purposes,

¹ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 85, 457.

we can underline the overarching religious aim of education and stress that education was not simply an end in itself but subsumed within the belief that service of God was the highest destiny of human beings.

This is implied in Paul's sermon on Mars Hill (Acts 17.16-34). It is an evangelistic sermon to the intellectually curious pagan Athenians and engages with the culture of their day by quoting from classical poets (Epimenides and Aratus) to substantiate its points. To the church, Paul leans on the precedents of the Old Testament and warns against 'vain philosophy' (probably Gnosticism but possibly Hellenism) while stressing the continuation of parental responsibility for the spiritual well-being of children (Col 2.8). The duty to ensure children are brought up in the 'discipline and nurture of the Lord' remains with parents and is more important than any other kind of learning.

Among adults the teaching of converts was systematized after the earliest period of church history. Catechisms were arranged by grouping Christian doctrines around selected themes. Such catechetical instruction concerned the faith rather than secular knowledge and was often unimaginative in its delivery: new converts were expected to memorize set answers to set questions. In this respect catechisms probably copied the rote-learning educational models of their day.

When we arrive at Augustine (354-430) we find a broader understanding of education that accepts the value of secular knowledge. It was, he says, like the treasure of the Egyptians which the Israelites carried away at the exodus (Ex 12.36; *De Doctrina Christiana*, 40.60)². Or, again,

Usually, even a non-Christian knows something about the earth, the heavens, and the other elements of this world, about the motion and orbit of the stars and even their size and relative positions, about the predictable eclipses of the sun and moon, the cycles of the years and the seasons, ... Now, it is a disgraceful and dangerous thing for an infidel to hear a Christian, presumably giving the meaning of Holy Scripture, talking nonsense on these topics; and we should take all means to prevent such an embarrassing situation, in which people show up vast ignorance in a Christian and laugh it to scorn. (*The Literal Meaning of Genesis [De Genesi ad litteram libri duodecim]*)³

More to the point, without his enormous secular learning, Augustine would have been unable to mount the defense of Christianity that he did in the great *City of God*. Christians had been accused of weakening Roman martial character and causing the collapse of the Empire. Augustine in his prolific writings demonstrates how Roman gods encouraged licentiousness and were responsible for the corruption of public morals. It was this that weakened Rome and led to

2 http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Stealing_Egyptian_Gold.pdf [Accessed 30 May, 2014]

3 <http://www.pibburns.com/augustin.htm> [accessed 30 May, 2014]

its downfall, not Christianity.⁴ Without his education in the highest cultural writing of his day, Augustine would have been unable to make his defense. Nevertheless, by his example, he demonstrates that Christians subordinate secular knowledge for the purpose of revealing God's plan of salvation in human history.

The range and completeness of Augustine's thinking is astonishing. As a relatively young man he developed an understanding of learning by analysis of simple examples.⁵ In an investigation that was ahead of its time he came to believe that learning was catalyzed by divine illumination. He was neither an empiricist who saw all knowledge as resting on an apprehension of the external world nor was he a rationalist who saw knowledge as deriving from the inner workings of reason independent of the world but, rather, he brought these two realms together (even though later intellectual history would separate into the competing philosophical schools of empiricism and rationalism). There is an act of judgment that notes the accord between sense impression and external reality. Like Plato, Augustine understood divine illumination as being analogous to physical illumination of the natural world: we see objects at a distance because of physical light and, in the same way, 'the nature of the soul is so made that by the disposition of its Creator it is naturally united to intelligible things; hence it is that it sees them in a kind of incorporeal light of a special sort' (from *De Trinitate*, IX, 15, 24).⁶

This conviction explains the universality and necessity of our ideas. Although each person possesses a natural capacity for knowledge, the universal truths grasped by the mind are divine ideas – and this is an adaptation of Plato's forms in the timeless realm. Ideas that originally existed in the mind of God have been exemplified and expressed in the creation of the universe. So the physical world is permeated by, and informed by, divine ideas and is not merely a jumble of arbitrary objects.⁷ Our expression of these ideas through words is possible because there is a relationship between the word spoken and the thing to which it refers – although Augustine is careful not to present a simplistic one-to-one connection between words and things. Rather words are signs. And it is the existence of words which assist in the dividing up of the realm of human knowledge into the seven liberal arts that were conventionally taught in the classical curriculum. The first of these arts is grammar dealing with the use of words and this is followed by dialectic which is the activity of reasoning. Rhetoric is the means of moving hearts and minds in the exposition of truth and the other arts stem from the signs which nature itself presents.

All this shows how the pursuit of knowledge, even if it is secular knowledge, and the apprehension of truth ultimately derive from the hand of God so that intellectual activity is, when

4 Augustine, Books 1-4 of the *De Civitate Dei* (Eng. *City of God*).

5 Augustine, *De Magistro* (Eng. *On the Teacher*).

6 Quoted in S. J Curtis and M. E. A. Boulton, *A Short History of Educational Ideas* (London: University Tutorial Press, 1970), 82.

7 Curtis, *Ideas*, 85,

it is a love of wisdom, also a love of God since God is the source of wisdom. In this way, too, Christian education is more than a narrow study of the ordinances or commands mapping the way to our salvation. Later writers would see God as having written two books: the book of nature and the book of scripture, and they perceived concord between the two.

If we were able to ask Augustine what the aims of Christian education were, he would certainly have been able to give an answer. He saw and was aware of the standard schooling within the Roman Empire that promoted classical philosophical knowledge and rhetoric as well as poetry and history. At the same time, through his work as the Bishop of the city of Hippo, he regularly expounded Scripture to his congregation. Christian education was pastoral, formative, doctrinal and church-related. Yet, given his understanding of the purposes of God for the world, he would have viewed Christian education as involving the capacity to engage with and critique and transform secular knowledge in the way that his own writings so ably did.

The gradual changes to European society over the following centuries resulted in the concentration of educational resources within the hands of the church, either in monasteries or cathedral schools. By the time we reach the 12th century the universities of Paris and Oxford were being formed, the first by papal recognition of its teachers and the second in a more organic and spontaneous way. There is a record of a course of lectures on the Psalms of David and the wisdom of Solomon being given in Oxford as early as 1193.⁸ The granting of university degrees provided a means for public certification of the right to teach, which is where the notion of a 'Masters' degree comes from.

To gain degrees young men sharpened their minds by debating theological and intellectual conundrums and arguing for or against particular propositions (they had to be able to argue in both directions) and the university teacher presided at the debates and adjudicated on them. This dialectical form of argumentation depended upon the deployment of legal and theological texts, sometimes with great ingenuity, in favor of one position or another. Where there were definite camps – as between free will and foreknowledge – these were carried forward by particular religious orders. So Franciscans and Dominicans disagreed strongly, especially since Dominicans championed the theology of St Thomas Aquinas in Paris while Franciscans were stronger in Oxford. In a sense, at this time, it was impossible to understand any other form of education than that which was Christian. The church's dominant position in society ensured that theological faculties were senior to law faculties.

During the Reformation the universities were fully involved in the theological struggles within Europe, especially because the knowledge of biblical languages was held by university teachers. John Wycliffe (1320-84), Master of Balliol College, Oxford, translated parts of the Bible into English and so helped to initiate proto-Protestantism that pressed for reform by challenging the landholdings and wealth of the church. Erasmus (1466-1536) was given a teaching position at the University of Cambridge for a while and Luther, despite being a monk early in his career,

8 <http://www.theology.ox.ac.uk/about-the-faculty.html> [accessed 2 June 2014]

was a university lecturer at Wittenberg.

It is to Luther we can turn for a further development of Christian education. Once the Reformation had begun to gather speed and strength, existing institutions loyal to the Pope were depleted of resources and dismantled with the result that Luther, conscious of the decay of German scholarship, wrote a circular letter to the councilman of German cities in 1524 urging them to spend public money founding ordinary schools.⁹ His eloquent plea asked for the schools to teach the languages of Hebrew and Greek since he knew that, by a study of them, proper and accurate attention would be given to the biblical text. Indeed he saw a mastery of Hebrew and Greek as being vital to the success and sustenance of the Reformation because Jerome's old Latin translation of Scripture had long obscured the truth of justification by faith. Only by going back to the original language had it been possible to bring the message of the New Testament to light and to clean away the misleading accretions that had grown up round the gospel.

In addition Luther understood that by providing a first-class education for its citizens, Germany would be blessed by a spate of able rulers, magistrates, soldiers and statesman. He said

a city's best and highest welfare, safety and strength consist in its having many able, learned, wise, honorable and well-bred citizens; ...Thus it was done in ancient Rome. ...As a result, their cause prospered; they had capable and trained men for every position (p. 82, see footnote 8)

Beyond the ordinary school, Luther set out to reform the order of service in Protestant worship and to ensure new catechisms were written for the people of Germany. The catechisms taught basic beliefs in God, the Ten Commandments, daily worship, and so on while the new liturgy (complete with new hymns) reinforced the doctrines of the Reformation. Christian education moved forward both inside the church and in the public domain outside the church. Its composite aims were soteriological, pastoral and social and harmonized with Luther's conception of the church within the state as a separate domain that was, however, subsidiary to civil rulers along the lines spelled out in Romans 13.

We can summarize the historical material as follows:

9 To The Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools [http://media.sabda.org/alkitab-8/LIBRARY/LUT_WRK4.PDF] [Accessed 1 June 2014]

Religious Context	Primary Aim	Method	Result
Old Testament	Obedience to Mosaic Law	Reading of text	Subservience of all knowledge to God
New Testament	Teaching about the kingdom of God	Evangelistic preaching	Evangelising the world
	Teaching the faith to believers	Congregational preaching and discipleship	Preparing the people of God
Augustine	Knowledge of God	Teaching and philosophical reflection	Extension of the kingdom of God
	Refutation of Pagan culture	Engagement and critique	
Reformation	Living as justified by faith in Christ in a Christian society	Catechism Schools Reformed worship	Transforming the individual and society

Pentecostalism Beginnings

Pentecostal beginnings are complex and not attributable to any single person. Pentecostalism begins in the USA out of the revivalistic holiness preaching of the founders of the Church of God in the 1890s, out of the Bible School of Charles Fox Parham in Kansas in 1901 where the connection between speaking in tongues and baptism in the Spirit was vigorously articulated, out of the Azusa Street revival presided over by W. J. Seymour from 1906-1913 where Spirit baptism with tongues was deemed a step beyond sanctification, out of Pandita Ramabai’s centre at Mukti, India, 1906 where baptism in the Spirit was associated with intercession, visions and evangelism and out of the Presbyterian/Methodist revival in Korea between about 1903 and 1910.

Pentecostalism has been aptly analyzed as having a series of characteristics: belief in baptism in the Holy Spirit with charismatic gifts in evidence; an eschatology of both the near return of Christ and a great harvest of converts to be gathered across the earth; divine healing; radical, sudden and complete salvation by faith in Christ - justification by faith that could be traced back to the New Testament. Because of its holiness roots in the USA, Pentecostalism was a child of Methodist parentage while, because of its eschatological orientation, it had affinities with missionary societies all over the world. Equally because of its own revivalistic beginnings, it saw itself as a revival that might be transferred anywhere in the world. Then, because of its stress on the Holy Spirit and healing, it was a message that struck home wherever pre-modern medical practices held sway (e.g. in Africa) and also in segments of the Western world. From its beginnings Pentecostalism therefore saw itself as having a global reach and decisive importance to the time-line of church history. What educational resources did it mobilize to carry forward its God-given task?

The Early Days: Missionary and Ministry Training

In the first few decades of the 20th century it was said ‘one can find almost any practice in the “free” Pentecostal assemblies’.¹⁰ This was put down to non-credentialed itinerant ministers as well as unlicensed missionaries who solicited funds and then seemed to waste much of their time traveling back and forth between one country and another.¹¹ There were also idiosyncratic private Bible schools that appeared to rely upon spiritual gifts like prophecy and interpretation of tongues as a method of teaching students, practices that were bound to lead to doctrinal disaster.

The founding of the long-lasting Bible schools or training centers was associated with the founding of Pentecostal missionary societies and the establishment of denominations. The Pentecostal Missionary Union in Britain was founded in 1909 and established two training schools for missionaries, one for men and the other for women. Already you can see that there is variation. Ministers, so far as British Pentecostals were concerned, did not need training whereas missionaries did. Yet, in United States the earliest Pentecostal missionaries received no training whatever. However, when American Assemblies of God was set up in 1914, it did recognize one institution where ministers (‘Gospel workers’ as they were called) might be well taught.¹²

By July 1909 the Pentecostal Missionary Union training program was carefully worked out. Students rose each day at 6 a.m. and every morning studied the Bible, doctrine and church history with some reference to ‘secular studies’ which may have included bookkeeping, grammar, and other practical matters. The afternoons were devoted to prayer and visitation, presumably in connection with local assemblies. Every evening there was a meeting and on every Sunday afternoon an open-air service was held in Hyde Park in central London.¹³ The women’s home appears to have had a similar pattern though it was noticeably stricter. In both schools there was a strong emphasis upon sexual morality so that, when missionaries went out onto the field, they were not expected to be involved in any romantic relationships and, if they did feel romantically inclined, they had to seek permission from the missions board before they could consider engagement to marry.

When the Pentecostal Missionary Union was absorbed within British Assemblies of God, a new Bible School came to being in 1921 and combined both missionary and ministerial training. The curriculum was largely biblical and the study of the Bible was carried out by seven methods: the comprehensive, analytical, doctrinal, typical, prophetic, geographical and historical.¹⁴ The

10 Edith W. Blumhofer, *Assemblies of God: A Popular History* (Springfield, MO: Radiant Books, 1985), 34.

11 Gary B. McGee, *People of the Spirit* (Springfield, MO: GPH, 2004), 111.

12 William W. Menzies, *Anointed to Serve* (Springfield, MO: GPH, 1971), 354.

13 Donald Gee, *Wind and Flame* (London: Assemblies of God Publishing House, 1967), 61, 62.

14 John Carter, “How to study the Scriptures”, *Redemption Tidings*, 1, 2, (1924): 11. John Carter along with his brother Howard were the only two full-time faculty at the time.

comprehensive method looked at the Bible as a whole while the analytical method focused on the specific message of each biblical book. The doctrinal dealt with systematic theology concerning the attributes of God, creation, fall, redemption, and so on, and also included reference to Pentecostal distinctives like speaking in tongues and healing. The historical method looked especially at the life of Christ. If the teaching method sounds rigidly over simplified, this is probably because it also formed the basis of a correspondence course for home-based students, most of whom were bereft of any tools apart from the Bible and a concordance.¹⁵

Members of the college shared their lives, eating communally, praying together, forming friendships and also taking advantage of the chance to talk with the emerging line of Pentecostal preachers arriving to give lectures additional to those provided by the full-time faculty. Students paid for their accommodation but tuition was free, something that was echoed in the non-payment of faculty who were expected to live, like the students, by faith. It was thought that, unless the faculty lived by faith, students would never learn to do this and Howard Carter, then the Principal, who had been imprisoned for pacifism in World War I, taught them to see every difficulty as an opportunity and every trial as part of God's shaping of character.

It is obvious that the aims of this education were doctrinal and also formational, involving the establishment of a Pentecostal lifestyle. The doctrinal emphasis makes good sense at a time when Pentecostalism was new. It was important that distinctive Pentecostal doctrines should be held and propagated by students passing through Pentecostal training institutions. Had this not been the case, Pentecostalism would have died out in a single generation.

Consolidation: Missionary and Ministry Training

The middle period of Bible College development occurred roughly between the start of World War I when Pentecostal denominations were formed and the end of World War II. This was a period of global economic stagnation and of totalitarian communism. Primary education was established in the Western world and there was limited and often selective secondary education. Tertiary education, beyond the age of 18, was rarer and in Britain amounted to less than 6% of the population. Bible school teaching hovered in the bracket somewhere around the upper end of secondary education – it did not have the characteristics of tertiary education. In the United States, which had the most economically developed economy and the largest Pentecostal population, Bible schools followed the pattern established by the D. L. Moody and A. B. Simpson. This was a three-year programme centred on biblical content and with a strong mixture of prayer meetings, worship services, and field placements in churches. The emphasis was on the practical ministerial training rather than on academic excellence.¹⁶

In 1949 American Assemblies of God found by survey that 36% of all its ordained ministers and

15 *Redemption Tidings* (October, 1925): 11. By 1929, the course has over 1,700 students, *Redemption Tidings* (November, 1929): 14.

16 Menzies, *Anointed*, 354.

74% of all of its missionaries had been trained the Bible schools. These figures show that between about 1920 and 1945 missionary training was almost always carried out in Bible colleges but that the path into the ministry could avoid formal training. By 1966 another survey showed that 49% of Assemblies of God ministers were graduates of Bible schools but by then another 21% had also obtained college or seminary degrees.¹⁷ Nearly all these early Bible schools in United States were not accredited by any external agency. They were recognized by their denominations and served a purpose in the credentialing of ministers but, so far as the wider educational world was concerned, these colleges lacked credibility. Only a few of their graduates had been accepted as military chaplains, and it was this that encouraged the push for accreditation in the post-war period.¹⁸ A new association specifically for accrediting Bible colleges was set up in 1947 although some of the ministers objected to the idea that their own colleges should be inspected by the non-Pentecostals. This, of course, was the problem with public recognition: it was necessary to conform to public, often secular, standards.

The actual curriculum within these colleges has been well analyzed by Douglas Jacobsen.¹⁹ Taking Meyer Pearlman and Ernest Williams as examples of the period he is able to show that they constructed systematic theologies of Pentecostalism that were ‘scholastic’ i.e. rooted in an analysis of the relation of parts to the whole.²⁰ In both cases these texts provided a comprehensive outline of the doctrines believed by Pentecostals together with an attempt to interrelate them to each other through the Bible. Pearlman in his 1937 publication states that ‘the material in this book is a combination of biblical and systematic theology’ and he used biblical texts and sometimes expounded biblical passages to support his views. It is a compendium of beliefs that avoids other contrary opinions and is intended as a ‘backbone’ to Christian faith. There is no reference to the Azusa Street revival or to miracles or to any other aspect of Pentecostalism. Nor is there an attempt to refute, demonize or attack other believers or social groups. The attitude behind the book is one that shows Pentecostalism belongs within the mainstream of the church historically conceived.

Ernest Williams, in a three volume work published in 1953, presents his account as ‘that form of doctrine which is surely believed among us’. There is ecumenical charity behind his attitude and, like Pearlman, he quotes eclectically from his wide reading using sources that belonged to the 19th century, often modern liberals and progressive evangelicals. There is a broad orthodoxy here that was intended to help Pentecostals in the second generation understand the completeness

17 Menzies, *Anointed*, 355.

18 Menzies, *Anointed*, 357.

19 D. Jacobsen, “Knowing the Doctrines of the Pentecostals: The Scholastic Theology of the Assemblies of God, 1930-55”, in *Pentecostal Currents in North American Pentecostalism*, ed. E. Blumhofer, R. P. Spittler, G. A. Wacker (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1999) 90-107.

20 Meyer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible* (Springfield, MO: GPH, 1937); Ernest Swing Williams, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols, (Springfield, MO: GPH, 1953).

of Christian doctrine. This is theology that does not hammer home Pentecostal distinctives or attempt to use Pentecostal experiences of the Spirit as the basis for constructing a theological edifice.

At this point in the cycle it is obvious that the aims of Pentecostal education were being widened beyond those originally held. Pentecostal ministers were expected to take part in the mainstream of society and needed an education that would give them credibility in recognized social roles like those of military chaplaincy.

Pentecostal Liberal Arts Colleges

The next institutional stage produced Christian Liberal Arts colleges. Many have a two faculty structure. They began as Bible colleges and expanded to include a second faculty. Sometimes this faculty might be concerned with social work, or journalism, or might be a language school or possibly a unit concerned with the training of schoolteachers. In many instances this expansion from a Bible college to a two faculty Liberal Arts college was a device for increasing student enrollment without being underpinned by conceptual or visionary motivation. Difficulties arose because the second faculty was always less well valued by the denomination or the churches than the theological faculty. In any case members of the second faculty might well have different theological commitments from the Bible teachers. It is difficult to find educators who are journalists, or social workers or linguists with exactly the same outlook or faith position as theologians.

Yet there were other subtler pressures on these institutions because the second faculty, whatever it might be, was driven by the autonomous professional bodies that validated the qualifications students were working for. If students wanted a qualification in social work or counseling or journalism, the college was forced to take account of the demands of secular professionals in the designing of courses and this inevitably created tension inside the institution. There could be a tug-of-war between the theological aims and ethos and the secularized professional aims and ethos of the two branches of the curriculum.

The emergence of these Liberal Arts colleges in the Pentecostal context could only take place when high student enrollment for general education was the norm. Such enrollment could only take place in countries with a high gross national product where middle class families could afford to delay the entrance of their children to the labor market beyond the age of 20. In poorer countries there was pressure for young people to begin earning wages well before they had secured professional qualifications. With an economic downturn the Christian Liberal Arts college was in danger of collapsing back into a Bible college. There *were* notable successes and it was perfectly possible for such colleges to become universities but, to make this jump, they needed strong financial backing and high academic reputations.

Pentecostal Universities

In an ideal world, a Pentecostal university would be invented from scratch. It would be built on a fresh site and designed on a blank piece of paper. This rarely happens but it is certainly worth asking what an ideal Pentecostal university would look like. There have been various answers to

this question. For now let us look at three separate models that might help us think about a Pentecostal university.

First, we would expect a Pentecostal university to involve Pentecostal distinctives, that is say, an emphasis on the Holy Spirit. We might expect this emphasis to be given to the curriculum, especially the theology curriculum, but we might also expect this emphasis upon the Holy Spirit to be seen in the methods of teaching that staff used and in the moral and spiritual characteristics of the teachers. So we might expect an emphasis upon the Holy Spirit to be implicit within the curriculum and therefore within the epistemology, the theory of knowledge, that underpinned the entire curriculum of the university. We might expect a Pentecostal university to see all knowledge as coming ultimately from the hand of God and all knowledge as reflecting the glory of God and the vastness of creation. We might expect there to be an integration between the different fields of knowledge as a consequence of this emphasis upon the work of the Spirit within of the story of the human race. Equally we might see the work of the Holy Spirit as being fundamental to the lives of Pentecostal teachers. We might expect them to be those who manifest the fruits of the Spirit as well as the gifts of the Spirit; those who show the capacity to be inventive as the Spirit inspires their minds; those who believe in and manifest the grace of God and show this in their lives to their students.²¹

Second, we might see a Pentecostal university formed on a different model. Here we might imagine that of the many different faculties that make up the university each would be seen as having their own independent values, methods and concepts and that these individual disciplines or fields within the curriculum of the university would, in many respects, be similar to those disciplines outside a Pentecostal university. This might be called the ‘hotel model’ of a university whereby each faculty, each lecturer, lives in his or her department and observes rules about courtesy to other guests but, in the main, only interacts with those guests infrequently and casually in the restaurant.²² Here what holds the university together is the basic legal framework and the pre-eminence given to theology -- it might have the finest suite of rooms -- but in other ways theology has no privileges. It must give respect to the other academic disciplines. When Oral Roberts first conceived of his university he used a further unifying concept. He modeled his enterprise upon what he perceived to be the tri-partite nature of human beings with body, soul and spirit. He brought the traditional intellectual disciplines together in harmony and put a prayer tower at the center of his campus to show the importance of the spiritual. In the fully formed concept of the City of Faith, Roberts built a hospital adjacent to the university. Each aspect of human beings was catered for by the totality of the institution: the mind through learning, the body through medicine and sport and the spirit through attention to the divine.

21 William K. Kay “Pentecostal Education”, *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 25, 2, (2004): 229-239.

22 The phrase is used by Ian S. Markham “The idea of a Christian university,” in *The Idea of a Christian University*, ed. J. Astley, L.J. Francis, J. Sullivan and A. Walker, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004), 5.

Third, we might see a Pentecostal university founded around the notion of truth. This notion can accommodate both the arts and sciences and is fundamental to our belief in God: we believe in a God who is truth. When Newman wrote his famous book on *The Idea of a University* he made truth the central binding concept and his discussion of the nature of truth shaped the university he envisaged.²³ There were four central component to his insights about truth.²⁴ First, truth is complex. For Newman truth must be worked for, pondered, and eventually grasped in all its interrelated complexity. The converse of this was, as far as he was concerned, that there were no sudden moments of illumination or insight but that the truth had to be put together from reason and evidence and eventually grasped by the whole being of a person. Second, the pursuit of truth is always infused with a moral aspect because knowledge has consequences and can generate action. Third truth is the product of a vigorous community and not of an individual. Within the constant crisscrossing of argumentation within the community of the university, truth is collectively reached. In this way Newman, a Roman Catholic, set himself against individuals with sudden fresh revelations. We may later ask whether and to what extent truth is an individual matter or truth is a collective matter in the life of the church. Finally, truth is Christian truth, the inexhaustible divine reality that the Christian knows and yet never fully knows. There are aspects of Newman’s model that would dissatisfy the Pentecostal scholar but, for now, let us leave it on the table to see if we can work with it.

These three conceptions of a university may be labeled the ‘permeating Holy Spirit model’, the ‘hotel model’ and the ‘truth model’. The table below summarizes these developments:

	Early Bible School	Later Bible School	Liberal Arts	University
Aims	Training ministers and missionaries	Training ministers	Training ministers and training Christians for secular careers	Professional and theoretical knowledge in a unified framework
Curriculum	Bible and character formation	Bible and systematic theology	Theology and one (or more) subjects	All subjects
Teachers/ Teaching	Preachers	Preachers with college level education	Qualified theologians and other professionally trained staff	Wide variety of well qualified staff

23 Newman’s book was first published in 1852. The book was the outcome of his being appointed as Rector of the Catholic University of Ireland.

24 I am dependent here on D. Robinson “Sedes Sapientiae: Newman, Truth and the Christian,” in *The Idea of a Christian University*, ed. J. Astley, L.J. Francis, J. Sullivan and A. Walker (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004), 75-97.

Conclusion

In relation to Christian education as a whole, we may say that its aims were, in the first instance, to develop and transmit Christian doctrine either in the church or in ordinary schools or by encouraging devotional life within the home (e.g. in Luther's Little Catechism).

In the second instance Christian education began to expand its borders into the realm of secular knowledge and beyond into society as a whole. Once secular knowledge was acceptable as the content of study for Christians, it might be turned around and used in defense of Christianity or, if it was seen as a manifestation of divine truth, as an aid to the acquisition of a knowledge of God (Augustine).

Conventional understandings of the aims of education – which have not been considered in this paper – include the notion of the transmission of culture from one generation to the next and of induction into culture.²⁵ Both of these two aims may be seen as exemplified in Pentecostal institutions although not explicitly articulated in this way.

There is a final aim of Pentecostal education which has not been mentioned so far because it seems too lowly, too simple, too obvious to discuss but it is the aim of producing children who grow into adults who can care for themselves and other people, who relate to friends and family and neighbours, who are neither self-destructive nor perverse, who love God with their hearts and minds. Christian education, and Pentecostal education which draws specifically upon the role and power of the Holy Spirit, should ensure that those who pass through its hands are balanced, happy and fulfilled individuals, neither blighted by self-condemnation nor frightened to take their place within the church and wider society.

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