

# *A Theology and Philosophy of*

## *Christian Education*

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### **Introduction**

Evangelical Christians have a record of uneasiness with theological education. Sometimes this uneasiness had been expressed in an outright hostility towards theological schools but more frequently, it has taken the form of a caution, even slight nervousness in sponsoring seminary education. Today's colleges are failing in two principle ways:

(i) What they are teaching, (ii) how they are teaching it. Debates over the mission of theological colleges continue to swirl. To inform the future of graduate theological training there is need to study its past.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this essay is to study the historical background of Christian education, theological and secular concepts of education, discover current trend, then give a biblical prescription.

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1. D.G. Hard and R. Albert Mogler, Jr., *Education in Evangelical Tradition*, Baker Books, 1996, See Forward.

## **Historical Background**

The shifts in Christian education, which began in the fifth century, lasted until the beginning of the sixteenth century. Factors that contributed to the languishing of Christian education in the sixteenth century era: the clergy began to dominate more and more, while the responsibility and influence of individual laity diminished. The union of states and church tended to eliminate high moral stands, since it erased any important differences between believers and unbelievers. The “institutional” church continued to exist and even to “christianize” the barbaric tribes, but Christian education suffered enormously. It was during this period in Europe that men like Charles the great Frank Law, and later, Alfred of England attempted educational reforms. Due to a religious diversion from Biblical theology, a sort of popular theology developed that combined Christian doctrines and superstition.<sup>2</sup>

In the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, scholasticism, developed. The basic scholastic thought in the use of reason to determine the truth of the scriptures, and ultimately to give a rational content of faith, its formal beginnings are identified with St. Anselm, who tried to prove the existence of God by purely rational means. Abelard stressed the rational approach in considering the topical question of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the question of universals. The early church fathers notably; Augustine, incorporated Plato’s doctrines and Neo-platonic thought into Christian theology. The 13<sup>th</sup> century was marked out with the works of Aristotle. Thomas Aquinas is regarded as the greatest achievement of the scholastic age and the ultimate triumph of the effort to “christianize Aristotle.” Too much emphasis in reason brought a shipwreck in Christian education.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Eleanor Daniel, John W. Wade, Charles Gresham, *Introduction to Christian Education*, Standard publishing 1970, p.3  
3. *From the Concise Columbia Encyclopaedia*. Copyright © 1991 by Columbia University Press. Sighted at [http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/notests/ilt 4/11/2005](http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/notests/ilt%204/11/2005).

The Renaissance, beginning in the latter part of 13<sup>th</sup> century developed the concept of natural science which brought on the decline of scholastic metaphysics; although its approach continued to be followed in politics and laws yet in 1879 when Pope Leo XIII proclaimed the system of Aquinas to be the official catholic philosophy. Renaissance laid the foundation for humanistic tradition in education. It exalted the individual, and recovered the ancient languages and the classical literature of Greece and Rome. It was a secular movement in the main stressing the delights of living, the ideal of liberty and among those who found Christian morality too binding a freedom from moral restraints.<sup>4</sup>

In early 19<sup>th</sup> century faith in scripture as an authoritative sense, revelation of God was discredited according to Louise Berkhof, human insight became the standard of religious “thought”. Men ceased to recognize the knowledge of God as something that was given in scriptures.<sup>5</sup> Reason is not infallible and it must be used in line with scriptures.<sup>6</sup> This drifting gave birth to what is known today as “postmodernism.” The ideal that there is no absolute truth is dependent on the individual. This is a clear shift from the Bible.<sup>7</sup> John Dewey (1859 - 1952). Secular educational theory and practice began to launch out the independent of theology, a trend best seen in John Dewey who reduced philosophy to education theory and dismissed all theology as an obstructive influence in education.<sup>8</sup> The trends in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that greatly affected the Christian education movement are liberal and Neo-orthodox theologian. Their negative influences can be noted in seminaries, public colleges, sadly enough in the church.<sup>9</sup>

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4. Eleanor Daniel, John W. Wade, Charles Gresham, op cit., p.39.
  5. Louis Berhof, *Systematic Theology*, the banner of Truth Trust, 2000, pp. 19,20
  6. Michael S.B. Reid, *Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare: A Modern Mythology?* Xulon press, 2002, p. 34.
  7. Eleanor Daniel, John W.Wade, Charles Gresham op cit, p.45.
  8. *Shifts in curricular theory for Christian education* by Peter Deboer Professor of Calvin College. <http://www.edu/academic/education/news/publications/mono...> 10/10/2005.
  9. *What is Liberation Theology?* <http://www.got.questions.org/liberation.theology.html> 2/11/2005.

### **Liberal/Neo orthodox Education:**

Neo-orthodox emphasise more on methods than preaching or teaching the word. Their method has to do with social gospel of feeding or clothing the poor, these methods can never bring salvation to the souls of men. Many churches borrow these ideal because they are “marketable” or attract crowds but have no knowledge of the saving grace of God. The major challenge in Christian education is one’s theological foundation. As a matter of fact, one’s theological belief has a bearing on the person’s concept of education, especially Christian education. The liberal position is what has exposed people to biblical criticism, and the social gospel, leading some general positions, namely, God was seen as an impersonal or social concept. The Bible was looked upon as a source book of religious inspiration, containing legend, myth. Christ was seen as a great man, a wonderful moral teacher, but not deity. His death was not seen as sacrificial or substitutionary. This is share humanism.<sup>10</sup> According to Eleanor et al; many of leaders of the religious educational movement accepted the liberal position in part or totally. This affected both philosophy and procedure of religious education. Eleanor et al further explained in their book, how methods were borrowed from the progressive education movement, associated with John Dewey, with its interest in child centeredness and the “social project”. Liberalism is what had led to the decline of the Sunday school education movement. Today, churches are substituting Christian education program, (Sunday school) with entertainment.<sup>11</sup> It is liberalism that has led the Christian educationalist into secularism, where humanism became the content of curriculum. Simply put, liberation theology is an attempt to interpret scriptures through the plight of the poor largely with humanistic doctrines<sup>12</sup>

10. Eleanor, John W. Wade, Charles Gresham, op cit., p. 46.

11. What is Liberation theology? <http://www.gotquestion.org/liberation.theology.html>

12. What is Neo-orthodoxy? <http://www.gotquestions.org/necorthodoxy.html> 2/11/2005.

Neo-orthodoxy fundamentally differs from “orthodoxy” with its approach to the doctrine of the “word”. The writer holds that the Bible is the revealed word of God; that it was given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20,21). Neo-orthodox denies this approach of inerrancy of inspiration. In orthodox circles, the Bible is regarded as the complete, closed and sufficient revelation of God. Neo-orthodoxy believes that the Bible is a medium of revelation. (While orthodox believes it is revelation) revelation is therefore dependent on experience; making truth a mystical and not a concrete fact. Truth is therefore defined as that which is relevant to people’s experience, compared to the orthodox approach, which states that truth is concretely stated in the word of God. Truth therefore becomes relevant and not a concrete fact by which Christianity can be measured.<sup>13</sup> Neo-orthodoxy further teaches that scripture is not the only form of revelation, but that revelation can be directly obtained from God; according to them, God is speaking (revealing) at the present. This error had swept into most of what is called “prophetic ministry.” If the church or Bible schools etc. come to a point where they believe that truth is relevant to the interpretation of each individuals or ministers and that God is still declaring new revelation then it is sure to loose the truth.<sup>4</sup>

### **Evangelical/Reformed Education**

The evangelicals are known by their steadfastness to the infallibility of the Holy scriptures; an evangelical is one with the unwavering believe that canonical scriptures are the words of God. Albert et al, in their book explained that an Evangelical is one who believes that God acts and has acted in history, Evangelicals affirms the Lordship of Christ and the centrality of His salvation work.

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13. *What is Neo-orthodoxy?* <http://www.gotquestions.org/neoorthodoxy.html> 2/11/2005.

14. D.G. Hart & R. Albert Mohler, Jr. op cit.,p 12.

The evangelical stand against human methods that are contrary to the Bible. Their emphases are on Bible theology no just methods, which are borrowed from philosophy and psychology. This method can never make a man of God. Only the word of God can build up people for God. An evangelical is one who believes in the necessity of personal experience of grace.<sup>15</sup>

The hallmark of evangelical education can be grouped into four namely: Conversionism:- believing that new birth is necessary for salvation. The second is Biblicalism:- stressing that the Bible is the infallible word of God. Thirdly, Activism:- teaches that believers must share their faith or what they have learnt with others.<sup>16</sup> The fought which I reformation, stresses, that the Bible alone is the source of authority not only in Christian education but also in all-doctrinal matters. The reformation set forth three basic principles that have far reaching consequences in Christian education. The first was the replacement of papal authority with scriptures, the second was the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers” which stressed the individual responsibility to God and one another. And the third, education for all. The reformers further emphasize three distinct theological tenets that can guide their views of education: The covenant of creation, the fall, and the covenant of redemption. The reformers also emphasize the providence of God in education.<sup>17</sup>

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15. Ibid. p. 12.

16. Vital Christianity, Warner Press, Anderson, An Assemblies of God Publication, India 46011, vol. 100. 1980,p. 12

17. Robert W. Pazimino, Christian Education, Baker Books, 2001,p.7.

## **Theological Education**

The apostles had only the word of God, Holy Spirit and prayer as resources for Christian education. They engaged in teaching and in prayers not just methods of considering salvation is of the Lord. Biblical theology is the bedrock of Christian education. The Bible is the standard for the approach taken in education and the content of Christian education. Theological education does not narrow on God's word only but it puts other fields of discipline into consideration as revealed from the Scriptures. In other words, whatever people will study about God shall be that which He revealed about Himself in the Scriptures. (Deuteronomy 28:28).<sup>18</sup> Theological education is not setting out to search for God but setting out to search for that which God had revealed in His word. Theological education may thus be conceived as a program that is designed to transform and train those called by God for ministry. Theological education is not designed to disengage theologians from the society but to contribute spiritually to the society. The goal of theological education is to lead men to Biblical concept of God as a creator, Lord, and redeemer. The aim of theological education is to reveal the Biblical concept of man as created in the image and likeness of God, but sinned and is in need of salvation. Theological education should lead persons to the Biblical concept of salvation which can only be obtained by grace.<sup>19</sup>

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18. D.G. Hart & R. Albert Mohler, Jr. op cit., p.282.

19. Eleanor Daniel, John W. Wade, Charles Gresham, op cit. p. 30, 31.

## **True Christian Education:**

Christian education is a Christ centered or God centered education carried out in homes, churches, or schools. Christian education, as Sara Little asserts, “is a servant and not a master of revelation.” Biblical revelation determines the educational tasks and guides the educational process since the Bible functions as the primary source and the only inerrant criterion for the truth, all presumed facts and opinions must be tested by the word of God. An understanding of the nature of Biblical revelation has tremendous implication for Christian education.<sup>20</sup> According to John Wade et al, in his book: “Introduction to Christian Education”, Biblical revelation sets standards and provides basis for all Christian education, including both the contents that are taught and the method by which they are taught. All educational factors must be in keeping with the reality of the Bible.<sup>21</sup> Since Christian education has to do with what we teach and how we teach it. This essay will like to quote the Bible essential to learning sited from Kent Hodge’s book: An Exegetical understanding of scriptures, exposure to the teaching ministry, personal study, application to daily life, mentoring and the Holy Spirit.<sup>22</sup>

The biggest challenge to Christian education is secularism. The recent trend is you must own a circular degree before you can be qualified to be a pastor, namely by reading psychology to become a Christian counselor. Only the word of God can prepare a minister. Christian education that is suppose to be a channel of transmitting divine truth that was once handed down experienced a drastic shift with the advent of science on the idea of discovering new truths. Science is progressive.<sup>23</sup> The scientist approach human problems from a wrong presuppositional basis.<sup>24</sup>

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20. John W. Wade and Charles Gresham, op cit., pp. 27 – 28.

21. Ibid. p. 29.

22. Kent Hodge, *The Philosophy of Christian Education*, All Nation for Christ Bible Institute International (ANFBII) Benin City, Nigeria, 2005, p.175.

23. R.K. Campbell, *Our wonderful Bible*, Believers bookshelf, inc. summary, Pennsylvania, 1982, p. 222.

24. Paul Cho, *More than Numbers*, Maranatha Foundation, 1994, 9. 135.

Jaarma's concept of Christian education is of vital importance according to him; education must now be redemptive. It must cultivate the individual in all his resource in keeping with the awful reality of sin and all its tragic consequences and the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus.<sup>25</sup> Jaarsma saw no need to limit the narrow redemptive trust of education to home and church. Jaarsma explained thus, "to lead (covenant youth) to a decision for Christ is the goal of Christian education... in the school as well as in the home and the church. He said to underestimate the magnitude of this great task (redemption) by excluding it from the school as a major objective is to undermine the very foundation of Christian education."<sup>26</sup> Van Der Kooy noted that "the purpose of Christian education is the whole of man's life. education is concerned with more than mere knowledge; the heart, too has its rights... the heart above all must be won for God and His service; the ultimate purpose in all education must be true worship (piety)."<sup>27</sup>

### **Charles Haddon Spurgeon**

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a preacher of great importance Who was mightily used of God both in theological and ministerial terms. One of his most significant works was the pastor's college he set up for the purpose of training ministers. As regard to the entrance of students into theological college, Spurgeon was convinced that no man should be accepted for training unless actually called by God to preach.

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25. Shifts in Curricular Theory in Christian Education, by Peter De Boer professor of Calvin college. <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/education/news/publications/mono...> 10/10/2005.

26. Shifts in Curricular Theory in Christian Education, by Peter De Boer professor of Calvin college. <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/education/news/publications/mono...> 10/10/2005.

27. Shifts in Curricular Theory in Christian Education, by Peter De Boer professor of Calvin college. <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/education/news/publications/mono...> 10/10/2005.

That is to say ministerial education is more of calling and election. Curriculum of theological training, Spurgeon asserted the place of prime importance should be given to “Biblical Theology”. Contrary to the modern day trend on education of allowing students decide for themselves that which is right or wrong, Spurgeon differed from so many of his contemporaries (and or) with regard to manners in which students should be trained. Instruction, he maintained, should be given in definite, dogmatic form. Tutors should not teach their students in broad liberal manner which presents number of “view points” and leaves the ultimate choice to the student; rather they should forcibly and unmistakably declare the mind of God...<sup>28</sup> Though he stood practically alone in this conviction, Spurgeon was ready to declare it in no uncertain terms: “that men seek no collegiate degrees or classical honours though many of them could readily attain them; but to preach efficiently, to get at the heart of the masses, to evangelise the poor. This is the aim of pastor’s college.” Spurgeon further explained, “let the world educate their men for its own purposes, and let the church instruct men for its special service.” The basis of his Christian education was to help men set forth the truth of God, expound the scriptures, win sinners, and edify the saints.<sup>29</sup>

### **E.W. Kenyon:**

E.W. Kenyon was an evangelist and a teacher who established a bible school in 1900. His Bible school grew out of a desire to see many who are called into the ministry trained to bring in the harvest of lost souls at home and broad into God’s kingdom.

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28. C.H. Spurgeon, *An All Round Ministry*, Banner of Trust, 2000, see introduction.

29. C.H. Spurgeon, op cit., introduction.

Nothing explains Kenyon's Basis like in the following statements; "Bethel is not a place for those who put worldly knowledge..., before daily living the word of God." Great enthusiasm and joy comes at the new birth, Kenyon wrote, "but unless that is cared for and fed by the mind being renewed through feeding on the word and practicing it, that joy will die out. To Kenyon, education is for a living not mere feeding the brain."<sup>30</sup>

### **Traditional Model**

This model shows how educational theories can be described as addressing one of the major domain of human nature and how their domain interface. The domains are physical, mental, social – emotional, and spiritual.<sup>31</sup> The physical domain theorists primarily address the aspect of one's physical existence, aging, growth, development, and result behaviour. The social-emotional domain theorists primarily address the interaction with self and others. Its major focus is on id, ego and super ego. The integrative domain theorists addresses a combination of aspects from the four domains that reflect the human existence. Example of this theory is Maslow theory hierarchy of needs which includes: cognitive, psychological, and spiritual.<sup>32</sup> The author, in his view, states that a careful look at the fundamental theories that form the basis for secular education is nothing but a sort of philosophy and psychology which should bit be used in training ministers of God. A.N. Triton speaks on the problems of human philosophy: philosophical "lust" for intellectual tidiness and do not always realize that it is not a theological virtue."<sup>33</sup> The major weakness of these theories is not only humanism but their neglect of spiritual theory, which has to do with divine truths rooted in the word of God.<sup>34</sup>

30. Joe McIntyre, *E.W. Kenyon: The True Story*, Evangel Publication, Nigeria, 1982, pp.118,199

31. Education Theory Handbook: <http://www.theshop.net/abotman/edtheory.htm> 23/8/2005

32. Education Theory Handbook: <http://www.theshop.net/abotman/edtheory.htm> 23/8/2005.

33. A.N. Triton, *Whose World?* Inter-varsity press, 1972,p.30

34 Education Theory Handbook:<http://www.theshop.net/abotman/edtheory.htm> 23/8/2005.

## **Traditional Paradigm**

Traditional paradigm developed its concept of innate knowledge, this was propagated by Plato saying; “Knowledge originate from the inside of a man’s mind.” Those who are swept with this idea live their students with the concept that you need no one to teach you. All you need is “think” and know. In contradiction to this theory, Aristotle who argued that knowledge is acquired from outside. Although both theories present some iota of truth, Norman Dejong emphasizes that “such a perspective is a shallow kind of endeavour with no room allowed for discernment between truth and falsehood, no room for character development and spiritual nourishment. People who propagate that knowledge are acquired only from outside to hinder their student from being committed in searching to know the truth. This will limit their God given gifts. Norman says, “The truth lies somewhere in between the two views.”<sup>35</sup>

## **Current Trend**

Brad Macdonald comments on the ailing state of... universities, “today’s universities educate tomorrow’s leaders. By looking at the present state of ... higher education, we can glimpse the nation’s fortune.”<sup>36</sup> College campuses have become the virulent breeding ground for destructive thoughts. The corridors of today’s universities are thick with an atmosphere of immorality, moral ambiguity and rabid secularism. Unless radical changes occur soon, this facet of modern education will thrust greater troubles upon mankind, ...<sup>37</sup> Today’s Colleges are failing in two primary ways (1) What they are teaching and (2) How they are teaching it.<sup>38</sup>

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35. Norman Dejong, *Teaching for a Change: A transformational approach to education*, p & R, 2002, p. 54.5.

36. *The Philadelphia Trumpet Magazine*, Teen Spirit, the Main Streaming of Youth Counter Culture, 2005, p.28.

37. *The Philadelphia Trumpet Magazine*, op cit., p. 28.

38. *Ibid*, p. 28.

Across America, liberal professors outnumber conservatives five to one (liberal professors 72% while conservatives 15%). A collection of some of the strange classes you can take at America's most prestigious colleges and Universities: Philosophy and Star Trek Georgetown University. How to be gay: male homosexuality and Initiation University of Michigan. Witchcraft and Politics Bucknell University. Taking Marx seriously: Amherst College. Black Marxism U.C – Santa Barbara. Interpreting the Queer past UC – Berkeley. The media and Aggression against Women UCLA. Practicing Feminism: A Study of Political Activism: William College. Feminist Biblical Interpretation: Harvard. Backgrounds of Homoerotic Literature: Rutgers.<sup>39</sup>

### **Relativism**

This has to do with the concept that nothing can be understood in isolation. Everything exist in some kind of context, which necessitated seeing things in relationship to something else in order to understand them.<sup>40</sup> To a Relativist, everything is relative, nothing is absolute. According to Norman Dejong, “For the relativists to insist absolutely that there are no absolutes is for them to put an absolute, thus, contradicting their own claim.”<sup>41</sup> Russ Wise in his write up, Education and New Age Humanism explained the idea of relativism: the basis for developing morals is what the child himself wants to think and/or what the peer group decides is right, strong conviction of right and wrongs are looked upon as evidence of poor social adjustment and need for the teachers’ therapy. The bottom line is this; the major consensus determines what is right or wrong at any point in our culture. There are no absolutes.<sup>42</sup>

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39. Ibid, p. 30.

40. Norman, op cit., p. 34.

41. Ibid, p. 34

42. Russ wise, Education and New Age Humanism. <http://www.leader.u.com/orgs/probe/does/nwageed.html> 10/3/2005.

It is this concept that had given birth to what is known today as moral relativism.<sup>43</sup> Moral relativism is the belief that defining right and wrong is an individual and personal choice. Denying the presence of absolute law, this ideology teaches that every decision is a matter of personal feeling.<sup>44</sup> Modern day education is driven by culture. Nduka (1964) sees education as culture. He says, “education is our way of life and the process of transmitting, advancing and consolidating culture.”<sup>45</sup> The further purpose for educationalist is to “instill traditional values in young people” this is a clearer shift from Biblical theology which is meant to be the foundation for education.<sup>46</sup> Christian education had missed the ultimate goal of education as they had borrowed principles of education from sources such as reason (and) experience; secular principles. These secular educational principles are built on unscriptural philosophical bases such as pragmatism, empiricism, and naturalism.<sup>47</sup> The early missionary who brought schools to Africa, Nigeria in particular saw education (schools) as a tool for evangelism (soul winning) training for godliness and the betterment of the society.<sup>48</sup> Today, the reverse is the case. The society determines what education should be.<sup>49</sup> No wonder there is an alarming cry by experts that educational standards have fallen. The schools are only producing half baked graduates.<sup>50</sup>

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43. *The Philadelphia Trumpet Magazine*, op cit., p. 21.

44. *Ibid*, p.31.

45. A.D. Nzemeke and E.O. Erhagbe, *Nigerian Peoples and Culture*, (Second Edition), Mindex Publishing Department of History, University of Benin, Nigeria, 2002, p.760.

46. Nzemeke and E.O. Erhagbe. *Op cit.*, p. 76.

47. *Ibid*, p. 124.

48. James S. Coleman, *Nigeria Background to Nationalism*, Broburg and Wistrom Benin City, Kathrineholm, 1986, pp. 173, 114.

49. A.D. Nzemeke and E.O. Erhagbe, *op cit.*, pp. 77 & 88.

50. Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) news, 2005.

### **Biblical prescriptions:**

There is need for educational reforms so as to check out for all the secularism, humanism, which had crept into the modern day Christian education. There is need to go back to the Bible as the only source of authority in Christian education. It is good for churches to influence secular education in the world. Christians should be involved with colleges and universities and influence the content of curriculum and impact society. Christians should be careful not to baptize secular teachings and use them in Bible institutes to training pastors. <sup>51</sup> for the betterment of education, there is need to have an important linkage between church and schools. Penile academy is closely linked with Penile church and many church attenders had also attended the academy. Many of the children and young people are currently attending. The re-enforcement of teaching between church and schools enable yet a firm belief system to develop. <sup>52</sup> Church of God Mission International had added fellowship in their school curriculum as a means of teaching God's word, and training her student for godliness. <sup>53</sup>

Post Modernism, the idea that each person's view is as good as others, "education" by discussion and democracy is preferred in the class. The teacher serves as a guide to the "student" discovering himself, rather than an instructor in a body of knowledge. <sup>54</sup> However, the author concurred with the methods of C.H. Spurgeon who "... differed from so many of his contemporaries (and ours) with regards to the manner in which students should be trained. Instruction, he maintained should be given in definite, dogmatic form. Tutors should not teach their students in that broad, liberal manner, which presents a number of view-points and leaves the ultimate choice to the student; rather they should forcibly and unmistakably declare the mind of God and show a determined predilection for the Biblical theology. <sup>55</sup>

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51. Kent Hodge, *Pentecostal theology, printed for All Nations for Christ Bible Institute International by Gift. Prints Associates, Benin city, Nigeria. Nd, pp. 237 – 238.*

52. Michael SB Reid. Op cit., p. 26.

53. Benson Idahosa Group of Schools, Benin City, Nigeria (B.I.U).

54. Kent Hodge, op cit., pp. 174 – 175).

55. C.H. Spurgeon, *An All Round Ministry, the Banner of Truth Trust, 2000, Introduction.*

There is need for proper knowledge of the truth. As Wayne Grudem states:

I am convinced that there is an urgent need in the church doctrine, or systematic theology. Not only pastors and teachers need to understand theology in greater depth – the whole church does as well one day by God’s grace we may have churches full of Christians who can discuss, apply and live the doctrine teachings of the Bible as richly as they can discuss the details of their jobs or hobbies ... Once that happens, I think that many Christians will find that understanding (and living) the doctrines of scripture is one of greatest joy.<sup>56</sup>

Contrary to humanism, the author recommends a Christ centered education. Because Christian education is transmission of content which is a major priority in a philosophy of Christian education, the content must be scripture-oriented and central theme of scripture and his redemptive work. A Christ centered education focusing on a Biblical Christ and His finished work, for redemption help prevent theological syncretism with natural sources of epistemology and maintain objectivity in educational content.<sup>57</sup>

### **Calling and Election**

The most common New Testament reference to election is God’s eternal election of certain persons to salvation Jesus Christ. The subject is dealt with comprehensively in Eph. 1:3-11 and Rom. 8:28 – 11:36. John Calvin, who became a major defender of the reformed doctrine, saw the whole doctrine of election summarized in Eph. 1. All the reformed confessions include divine election... Election is part of God’s eternal decree and it has a soteriological role: “that some in time are given faith by God and that others are not given faith proceeds from His eternal decree”.

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56. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, Intervarsity Press, 1994,p.8.  
57. Kent Hodge, op cit., pp. 70 – 71.

Election is then defined as “the unchangeable purpose of God whereby, before the foundation of the world, out of the whole human race, which had fallen by its own fault out of its original integrity into sin and ruin. He has, according to the most free good pleasure of His will, out of mere grace, chosen in Christ to salvation a certain number of specific men, neither better nor more worthy than others, but with them involved in a common misery.” This election is not depending on man’s knowledge but God’s knowledge. It is not depending on man’s strength but God’s own strength. God calls and elects according to His purpose and to His own Glory.<sup>58</sup>

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58. Elect, election: <http://mb-soft.com/beliefwe/txn/ect.htm> 12/12/2005,

## CONCLUSION

Having reviewed most of the theological and secular teaching theories, this essay has attempted to re-emphasise that to teach the Christian faith by a method that rests upon a psychology that is mechanistic and humanistic is to defeat the very purpose of Christian education. Christian education is not so much a matter of technique but a matter of calling and electing. Neither the church nor school calls but God Himself calls whomsoever He chooses to call. The Christian educator should be careful not to borrow secular methods into the Christian education considering all methods and techniques that are borrowed into Christian education which derive their origin from behavioural sciences, anthropology, sociology and psychology. The writer is of the view that a careful scrutiny must be given to all behavioural sciences.

The weakness of these secular theories is that they operate from naturalistic and humanistic assumptions, which undermine the word of God and human responsibility.

Contrary to the liberal and neo-orthodox approaches, emphasis should be more in the word of God. Christian education is a servant not a master of Revelation (Bible). Revelation should determine the educational task and guide the process; since the Bible functions as the primary source and the only inerrant criteria for truth, all presumed facts and opinions must be tested by the Bible. Christian curriculum must derive its foundational hand book for Christian and theological education from the Bible.<sup>59</sup> Simply because of result the Christian educators should be careful not to “baptise” secular teachings and use them in Bible institute to train pastors.

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59. The Theologian, *A publication of the Association of Christian Theologians*, (ACT) Magazine, vol. 1 NO. 3,p.8.

Christian educators should leave the results to God. Only God knows how to save this world. Borrowing methods from circular world into Christian education can help churches make crowd or gather crowd that have no knowledge of salvation. The author believes that emphasis should be made in preaching and teaching because salvation is of the Lord. He further challenged the idea of bringing psychology for pastoral training or Christian counseling for only the word of God can prepare a soul for God. However, he recommends the following biblical methods for pastoral training or Christian education: As exegetical understanding of the scripture, exposure to the teaching ministry, personal study, application to daily life, mentoring, and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, emphasis should be given to the word of God, not mere methods. The early preached and taught the gospel of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. The result was, “and the Lord added to the church daily those that were being saved.” (Acts 2:47)

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