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The Future of the Department of the Bible and Religious Education
at the University of the Pacific
Frank A. Lindhorst, Chairman,
November 28, 1961

There are three personalities that must be recognized when one considers the history of this department of Bible and Religious Education at the University of the Pacific. They are Dr. Tully C. Knoles, Dr. George H. Colliver, for whom this lectureship is named, and Dr. Robert E. Burns.

Dr. Knoles saw very clearly in his experience as president of the former College of the Pacific the need for the training of persons to serve on the church. Not only was it desirable to provide courses in Bible for students in a church related school, but it was necessary to provide, for some insights and skills that fitted them to do commendable work in the churches. He, therefore, when he appointed the young theological graduate from the Boston University School of Theology, to the chair of Bible, gave him free reign to develop whatever his vision led him to do. Dr. Colliver took this assignment seriously. His understanding of the Christian message compelled him to seek ways and means for making religion vibrant on the life of the students and in the community. The result was that even before 1945, there were courses taught and field projects developed and related the department to the community. Near the end of his time with us he reported that 7000 students had registered in his Bible classes. This, in itself, is no small accomplishment.

"The Crusade for Christ of the Church " made possible a gift to the college which enabled the department to expand its program. It was Dr. Robert E. Burns who had the vision to interpret the possibility of that expansion in terms meaningful to others.

Characteristics of the Department:

There are certain characteristics of this department that have been evident from its earliest days. Its purposes have been - 1) to provide students at this school with an insight into the basic sources of the Christian religion, namely, the Hebrew-Christian Heritage; 2)to help students find assistance in working in the church; and 3) to relate the work of this department to the community. A Christianity that was so narrow that it was not concerned with the community as well as the individual could find no place here.

Some developments in the last few years:

It is well to list here some of the developments of the last few years which have grown out of this soil of vital Christianity: 1) A necessity has been the building program. A beautiful chapel, plus the class room, office and laboratory spaces have made it possible to dramatize the work of the department in many ways. These buildings, Morris Chapel, the Religion Education wing and

Sears Hall have become the center for religious training on the campus; 2) A program of training for group work and recreation leaders has developed to the point where it is recognized as producing credible workers on this field. It is no small matter that two of its graduates are now serving full time on the staff of the Stockton YMCA; 3) The development of a major in religious education, with graduate work toward the MA degree; a major in religion and inter-departmental pre-ministerial major; 4) A graduate program that has grown in its strength as well as in the number of candidates for the Master of Arts degree; 5) The opening of Bible courses to freshmen and sophomores, a plan which has received a hearty response from the students and counselors; 6) The development of a laboratory school in the religious education, held in cooperation with the Central Methodist Church across the street, in which majors and teachers in the churches of the community can have training under expert supervision. 7) Some 10-12 pieces of audio-visual materials for use in the churches and public schools have been produced in production classes. They are now on the market and being used, not only in America but in some of the foreign mission schools; 8) And the most recent development in which we have considerable faith and enthusiasm relative to the outcomes, is the Seminar in Church and State, already reported to you, and made possible by a grant of \$15,000 for the purpose. This has also made possible the bringing back to our campus one of our most capable graduates, who following is AB at Pacific, received a theological degree and a Ph.D. in Social Ethics.

At the present time we have an average of 550 students in Bible classes a semester. Counting the Summer Sessions we total 1250 registrations in these classes within one twelve month period. This means we have to provide at the least, eleven sections in Bible each semester. Forty Five are now declaring their majors in this department, ten of whom are doing work beyond their AB degree in Religious Education of Group Work.

Our faculty consists of four full time, one half time, and two lecturers, the last two teaching one section of Bible each. Each of these seven faculty persons have not only excellent training, but practical experience in their special fields as well. This means they see theory in terms of the practical, and are able to so relate it.

The Future:

I have asked you to listen to these facts of the past and present, that you may have a background for which I now wish to convey to you relative to the directions in which I believe this department should grow in the future. We are in a period of growth - rapid growth - in the academic field. It is almost trite to say this now. There is certainly evidence of this growth at Pacific. Now a University, not just a college; now with five liberal arts schools in the planning stages, and some of them off the drawing boards and functioning. If Pacific does not already have the eyes of the nation upon it, it soon will. For here we have the promise if one of the most creative experiments in higher education yet seen in America. It gives every promise of being THE center of church related intensive academic life for the West. The eyes of its leaders are on the future, their feet are in the ground, and the creative spirit is at work.

What does this all mean for the academic program in religion? I believe we can see what some of the directions should be.

First, let us start with this lectureship as a part of the 1961 program in which we are now participating. This lectureship and its possibilities are only in their beginnings. Why not think of this leadership for the future as being the creative spearhead from intensive, penetrating study for the church and its relationship to society. Why not a full one week school, or perhaps a several weeks' school in the summer when some of the best of our Christian education and/or group workers are brought together, not just to learn what national boards have to suggest in curriculum and program, but to do intensive study in Seminars where they wrestle with the challenges of the day, as we have tried in this all too short a time this 1961 session? We have national meetings of our denominations and the interdenominational and inter-faith organizations, but the time at these meetings is consumed in the machinery of the organization. I'm talking about a study situation.

This will take money, of course, for leaders and scholarships. Financially this lectureship now has about \$16,000 in the foundation fund, thanks to some very good gifts, from some very good friends. But this fund should have in it at least \$50,000, if not more, to make possible doing the kind of work we need to do. There isn't any question but what we could become a "power house for Christian Education, - at least in the West, - if not for the church at large. How big is our vision and how deep is our faith at this point?

A second direction lies in the area of finding more youth in our communities who see the challenge in the character building fields. If one wants to really devote his life to the welfare of persons, this is the opportunity. But how few have been led to see it! Are our churches asleep at this point? One of our former Christian educators used to say to groups as he met with them, "unless more people are found, and more training given to persons working in the churches, we will be, twenty-five years from now, just where we are now." The strange and disheartening fact is that at the time I first heard this the twenty-five years had passed, and we were still there! Linked with this, of course, is the question of scholarships. Money is not only the root of all evil, it is the means by which some important things are done for the Christ. Central Methodist Church, having the opportunity, has made a delightful irrevocable gift of \$70,000 available to our scholarship committee for use with persons going into this field of work. Increasingly we can be this center of training, but scholarships are necessary for some, if we are to bring them here.

A third direction is that of research. A director of research in religion at Pacific would be able to unearth basic sources and conditions which do, or do not, make for spiritual growth. When Dr. Richard Meyers was here a few years ago, he revealed situations and conditions in the church life of this conference of The Methodist Church to which reference is still made, and which study is still used as a guide by conference leaders. We hope the Seminar in Church and State now being held will reveal the picture in Northern California with which the church must work relative to this important relationship.

But there needs to be a continuous flow of research findings in Christian Education and group work. For instance, - What are the relative influences of the Neo-Orthodox, or the Social Gospel, or a doctrinal theology upon the spiritual growth of persons? What methods in Christian Education and Group Work do bring the best results in character growth? What is the best social strategy for bringing about change in keeping with the Christian Faith? What are the relative values of "high" liturgical procedures and the more flexible informal types of worship,--about which we have had many opinions on this campus, but little data? Or again, denominations are constantly re-writing their curriculum. But on what data are they now basing their principles?

A friend of mine in the middle west has for years gathered and made statistical comparisons. His last study shows losses in the Methodist Church according to the 1961 General Minutes, in Church School enrollment, "Together" magazine subscriptions, W.S.C.S. members, Baptisms, Men's Club members and accessions to the church on Profession of Faith. Then he asks "why?" And if I ask you "why?" the likelihood is that you would guess or surmise. But why don't we know? Why don't we find out? This is a task of research. If the question was, why do people buy fewer Plymouths, if they do, I'll wager the Plymouth manufacturers would find out. Don't we have people as interested in making money available for research on religious questions, - questions that are vital to man's soul, as we have persons interested in the number of automobiles sold?

A fourth direction is in terms of a program of extension courses. I mean by this, a program in which this school offers courses in different communities for credit, in various religious subjects. Campus faculty and selected qualified persons in the area could give such teaching leadership. This is not a new idea. We have "toyed" with it for several years, but could not put it into action for lack of personnel to organize it and to teach. Two schools in the southern part of the state are now providing such opportunities and have more requests than they can fill. Our laity need to know, and increasingly want to know, the basic elements of our faith and the means of communicating it to others.

One final word on this from me, there is in one sense no final areas for growth for the teaching of religion on this campus. It is this, - in a University of the dimensions of this one, and with the extent of expansion already envisaged, the academic offerings in religion should be in the pattern of a University, namely in the pattern of a School of Religion and Community Service, with its dean in training and status on a par with the deans and provosts of other schools. We have added the words "**and community service**" for that is what religion must continue to provide. After all these years, we must not become an institution confined to our ivy walls.

The proper committee on the campus has already considered this, and asked that further study be given to the matter, especially from the standpoint of some details. This study is already in mind and will be projected very soon with representatives from the conference and the National Board of Education. A School of Religion and Social Service must certainly be one of the new schools on this campus, and that within a comparatively short time.

A recent article from *The Iliff Reporter*, a brochure that is released occasionally by the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, carries a brief article relative to the future training of ministers, by Wm. H. Bernhardt. It calls attention to four types of organized adult education now being carried on in the U.S.:

1. The colleges, universities and professional schools;
2. Adult educational systems, designed for persons beyond college, who seek knowledge and skills rather than degrees;
3. Educational programs designed for industrial workers;
4. Educational programs within the armed services.

Of these, the writer states that there are more persons in the schools set up by the industries than in all the others combined. Then he asks this penetrating questions, "What does this mean for the people who will be in our churches, participants in the worship services, and their children in our church educational programs? In a mechanistic society, with many persons trained primarily in mechanical and business skills, will we know how to communicate with them concerning Spiritual matters?" It is clear, is it not, that the future directions in which such a department as this must move if it is to provide what men need to complete their full life? It is at least partially clear the kind of training church and character building leaders we will need to have.

And so my friends, I have endeavored to point out to you some of the growing edges in Religious Education and group work on this campus. We ask you to help us to see that religious studies in this critical period keep up with engineering, pharmacy, medicine and all other fields of study. And most of all, help us to make the teaching of religion constantly in keeping with the Spirit and mind of Jesus.