

How the Pastor Can Develop His Young People.

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All development implies an ideal and a movement toward that ideal. As a religious teacher, the minister of Jesus Christ represents the religious ideal. None other is so lofty. It has its perfect expression in the character of Jesus. Paul indicates the goal of all effort: "To me, to live is Christ." To develop the Endeavorer means to set him in the path, and help him on the way, toward the Christ-life and Christ-life service.

The pastor must bear the brunt of this holy task. He has good material with which to work. The young man in the midst of our modern life is "the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time." His are all the conquests and traditions of the past. His are the appliances, the methods, the skill of all the elder generations, in the long upward struggle of civilization. He begins life with an immense equipment. Ten thousand years have toiled and sacrificed in his service. The Christian youth is yet more highly favored. Besides material and intellectual legacies, he has a spiritual inheritance. He enters a church which has been enfranchised by the heroism of the fathers. No false union of church and State hinders the play of his free energies. No priest or ruling or confessional stands between his soul and God. Today no bitter war of sect, no spirit of devilish persecution, palsies his hand or petrifies his zeal, or adenitates him from his brother workers of the world's great field. He may seek truth with unfettered mind. He may declare the truth without let or hindrance. He may live the truth unfeigningly. He may lead other men from the wilderness of error to the fountains of truth.

This heritage, then, opens into a royal opportunity, boundless is his vision. Measureless is his privilege. Splendid in its appeal to the vigor of youth are the responsibilities which wait upon his manhood. Sure as the promises of God is the victory which his strength may win. Notwithstanding this, many a Christian youth fails to become a staunch and effective personal force amid the intensities of our modern life. His religious nature is undeveloped, or it is ill-developed, and out of proportion. How may the minister of the gospel aid him in fostering a healthy, harmonious and productive life?

The pastor must be something of a psychologist. This is fundamental. To develop his Young People he must know them, to know them he must study them. He must understand their gifts, their accomplishments, their peculiarities. A young man said to me the other evening: "I had been in the church in which I belong for six years before my pastor knew me. I met him many times, but he never knew me the next time, until after I had become a deacon." I quote his exact words. Training is impossible on such a basis.

In school or college the tasks which he must constantly assign, and the discipline which he must as constantly enforce, often interpose obstacles to a true fellowship of the teacher with his pupil. In the relation of the Pastor to his Young People no such barriers exist. There is a hearty freedom in all intercourse. Let the Pastor beware that he himself build no false barriers. If he be too stiff or formal, too jealous of his position, or beyond all else, too dictatorial, he will surely alienate those whom he wishes to win. He must be a student of men or he can never become a helper of men. Now the mind and life are reached most readily through the heart. Jesus knew the wisdom and character of the open-hearted loving John better than he knew any other disciple, so he committed to his care his most precious treasure, his own dear mother. The Pastor has exceptional facilities for knowing his Young People in this same way. He is meeting them all the time in public and private, both formally and informally. He has every chance for gauging their fervent devotion. And how beautiful and wonderful is that devotion. It is in some ways the most sacred experience in the life of many a hard worked Pastor. Yet how few of us fully win it.

Having found their hearts the Pastor can study, under the most favorable inspirations, the personal qualities which distinguish each young life, and differentiate it from its fellows. Thus he learns to know thoroughly the resources, in talent, character, and aptitudes, of his youthful comrades, and having this precious knowledge he can strengthen and develop these resources. Like the carpenter, he first seeks to know his tools, then he uses them. We must confess, however, that our training too often fails just here, in its vital beginnings. Almost every Pastor is on terms of friendliness, perhaps of real good fellowship, with his Young People. He is interested in their welfare. He prays for their success. He attends their meetings. But there the matter ends. He has not "gripped" them, he has not "got" them; he is not training them. Why? Because he regards them in the mass. He has not studied them, as the physician studies each patient, as the lawyer studies the intricacies of every new case. The problem of the person is the profoundest of problems. Each Endeavorer, being a person, is unique. He has no duplicate on earth. He is a microcosm, a world in miniature. To know and know

thoroughly each of these persons, who together make up a society, is no light or easy task. Yet the wise Pastor will not hesitate. He will make it his most important business to study the drift and bearing of each life. He will remember that he deals with those who are in a period of transition both intellectually and religiously. It is his high privilege to train them for spiritual independence, for spiritual maturity. They are not dumb forces, but human lives, eager, capable, impressionable. Every society is a collection of related personalities, each of whom has his distinct and tremendous value, his distinct and magnificent outlook for service.

Our Master "knew what was in man," knowing this, he dealt with each according to his need. To the simple-hearted fisherman he said directly, "Follow me" and that was enough. The questions of the dialectical pharisees he met with deeper questions, answering their casuistry with puzzles which quite baffled their small logic. To the despised tax-gatherer he said, "I'll dine with you to-day," and won his whole heart in an instant. Some one has recently proposed that a chair of tact be established in every theological seminary. Tact can hardly be taught, but it can be learned; it is not always a natural gift. And tact rests upon the deeper endowment of insight. Is it wrong to speak of Christ as possessed of a divine shrewdness? I do not much like the word. It has come to be associated with methods of sharp-dealing. Yet no other word expresses my ideal. Every Pastor needs to have a large measure of consecrated shrewdness in his study and care of his Young People.

Besides being a wise psychologist the Pastor must be a strong administrator. To develop his Young People rightly he must add to his power of insight the power of executive control. There is plenty of work to be done that is not done in connection with every local church. On the other hand, there are always Young People who are anxious to work. Too often there is lack of adjustment, however. Some of the Young People are mis-applying their energies. Others are allowing their ability for spiritual service to become atrophied through lack of proper knowledge or wise leadership. The Pastor should know just what needs to be done, just how it should be undertaken, and just who should undertake it.

There are two qualities of youth which he should learn to develop. They are the thirst for achievement and the passion for helpfulness. Youth laughs at obstacles. Bayard Taylor, in Sicily, alone, without money, without friends, writes to a former fellow-traveller that he has no idea where his next meal is coming from, but he adds: "I glory in these privations and trials, for I know full well that in the spirit of youth I will overcome them." Youth worships ideals. Youth is full of dreams and visions. Youth welcomes difficulties. Youth scorns the placid and uneventful life. Youth is armed with intense energy. Youth is ever ready to "lend a hand." Whatever the faults of youth, weakness and meanness are not of their number. The Pastor will always find the restless passion for achievement a powerful factor in the lives of his Young People. It is newly awakened. It partakes of the nature of a self-revelation. It is in fellowship with the strong desire to be of real service in the world, to influence others toward noble ends. It is interwoven with the high hopes and splendid enthusiasms of an enlarging life. Here is the great opportunity, for the leader and for those whom he leads. They have intense ambition; he has wisdom and experience—or he ought to have. This makes an ideal combination. By thought and prayer, with the knowledge he already has of them as persons, he should help them one by one into some form of self-activity. He should show them, by example, precept, and persuasion, that the highest achievement is the achievement of character, and that character is only achieved by a self-forgetful service. He should prove to them that the true spirit of helpfulness reaches out beyond the narrow boundaries of home and church and personal friendships, into the great world-field. He should inspire them to work for the needy, the discouraged, the lonely. They are at the period when practical effort is essential to the solidifying of the religious life. They have not emerged from the years which the psychologist calls "the storm and stress period." The inner life is confused. They need to grow strong by exercise. But a wise head and a firm hand must direct this exercise, or it will become churchly rather than evangelistic. Our motto, "For Christ and the Church," is magnificent. Yet the first two words are all-inclusive. For Christ first, last and always must we work. If we introduce the idea of the church, we should also, in thought at least, add the idea of human need, which we are to meet in Christ's name. We labor "For Christ and the Church and the Man." Our ultimate aim should not be to win members for the church, but to win men for God. Men are more than institutions. Institutions exist for men, not men for them. Train your Endeavorers after this fashion!

You will have many rivals. If the Young People are studying, the scholastic demand is very heavy in these days of over-crowded curricula. If they are in business, the demand of the daily task is severe. If they are in factories they must toil early and late for a livelihood. Society makes its important claims. But it is the place and duty of the spiritual leader to make a resolute and constant demand in the name of religion. He has one

great advantage: he appeals to that which is deepest and best. If his appeal is vigorous, insistent, inspiring, he will be abundantly rewarded. To supply a field for aggressive service, he must be constantly broadening the sphere of the church's activities. Sometimes we are warned against the evils of over-organization. The danger exists chiefly in the mind of the zealous critic. The churches in North America that are over-organized can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. But it would take a thousand men to count those that are unorganized or ill-organized. Thoroughness of organization is the watchword to-day in factory, railway, and bank; with teacher and politician; in matters commercial, social and philanthropic. In the work of the church, nothing, nothing, save the presence of the Holy Spirit, is so important as the careful and complete organization of forces.

The modern minister must be not only a preacher and a pastor but also a skilful executive officer. Oh the sad failures just here! Yet this is vital. The Pastor must always be the master mind in the formation and control of all organizations. Let him organize the boys and the girls of different ages, the young men, the young women, the young married people. Let him organize for open-air work, for mission work, for philanthropic effort, for personal work. Let him organize for social, physical, aesthetic, and intellectual ends. Let him insist upon conscientious committee work. That word "committee" is a priceless talisman. Faithful committee work is a dynamo of tremendous power. The Pastor who knows how to use it holds the key to the future. His success is certain. Let him have committees and committees and committees, provided they are alive and on fire. And their life and fire will depend largely on the spirit and energy of the Pastor himself.

Last in logical order, but not least in importance, the Pastor must manifest, in all his relations with his Young People, an heroic sympathy with all men in every condition of life. He must have something of an heroic strain in his own life and in his way of doing things. And he must make an unceasing appeal to the heroic in others. He must be a hard worker and he must incite others to hard work. Nothing will take such hold of the heart of a youth as to see in his Pastor not only a saint, not merely a scholar, but a man who works furiously and who makes other people work the same way. The Pastor should be "never idle a moment, but thrifty and thoughtful of others." I just spoke of thrift: it must be joined to a noble thoughtfulness. And so we come once more to the question of heart-fellowship.

Let the Pastor banish the word authority, let him lead in chains the word dignity, let him enthroned and crown the divine word sympathy. Sympathy means more than popularity. The eyes of the Young People may brighten and sparkle when the minister appears. They may laugh at his wit and cluster about him to hear his stories. They may wonder at his brilliancy and feel proud of his friendship. But the test question is: Will they come to him with their doubts, their trials, their heart-troubles? Do they merely admire, or do they truly love and trust him? Changing a little the thought of the Abbe Roux, we may say that the minister must be "a shower to the heart burned up with grief, a sun to the face deluged with tears." His training of his Young People should spring from the pure passions of a heart aflame with love and tenderness. If he enter affectionately into their deepest feelings and aspirations, they will enter grandly and loyally into co-operation with his plans and work.

Again, the spirit of sympathy must have no limits. The Pastor must develop his Young People by insisting on Christ's principle of universal brotherhood. He must live it himself. He must demand it in others. The caste system paralyzes effort. Every Christian Endeavor Society should be a miniature republic. If there are cliques, they must be destroyed utterly. The loudest and gravest complaint against the church to-day is that she is alienated from the masses. Churches in cities move steadily up-town, away from the very people who need them most, whom Jesus came to save. Churches in the smaller towns run in a narrow circle, failing to reach the working classes and the factory populations. How many churches delight to be known as wealthy, exclusive, fashionable, and nothing more, as though this were the beginning and the end of Christian service. The Young People must change this and change it speedily. It is their supreme business. Through their energy, with definite democratic principles of action, the church must win the people to whose needs she has been all too apathetic. Through them the down-town churches must be kept where they are. Through them the rural churches must make their way out into the great fringe of the unchurched multitudes. My church is what is called "a family church." Yet I am proud to say that my Young People are not ashamed to sing on the streets, to teach in mission schools, to do effective personal work; and one of our men is chairman of the Endeavor Open-Air Work for the city of Chicago.

Through these three qualities of insight, executive force and heroic sympathy, the Pastor may mould mightily the lives of his Endeavorers. But the ideal of all training, the development of Christlike character, must ever be within the sweep of his vision. We are not earth's progeny, but children of Heaven's King. We work not for the meat which perisheth, but for the life which endureth. We are