



## Transcriptions

### Agenda for the Future of Christian Education: Part 1

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**Annotation:** *North American Professors/Directors of Christian Education* (NAPCE/NADCE), Vail, Colorado, 1988. Beginning with his personal hope that there would be greater communication among faculty of Christian education, Ted Ward offers seven lessons from the field of public education. (NAPCE is now SPCE, the Society for Professionals in Christian Education. See <http://spceonline.org>. See <http://www.nadce.com> for information about NADCE.)



There is a sense in which our field has been—and I don't confine that criticism simply to the evangelical sector—basically and at heart a kind of me-too field. We do reflect our own culture, as Ed said last night, in our societal norms, but that isn't always good. In fact, if we are to take some kind of role in a prophetic vision of the work of God in his church through people, we have to be far more than me-too and we have to be far more than simply a reflection of the culture within evangelicalism.

Some of you recall about 10 years ago a little writing that first brought me a certain amount of critical review, not that I hadn't had critical review before, but I hadn't had it quite so nastily when in a publication of the *Scripture Press Foundation* I made an anecdote in which I suggested that Christian education was neither and that has, I suspect, been come to represent something of my nasty bias. But in the original context, and as I would persist in that context today, the notion that

Christian education is neither is a barbed challenge that we reconsider together the essence of what it is to be educative and what are the rudiments of what we mean Christian. Because I do believe that, when all is said and done and we put the focus on a truly educative process that is at heart and soul and in its very tactics as Christian as it can be in its commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the values thereof, that we will emerge with a strong field. And to the extent we do not make those two matters continuing issues of discussion and research, and reflection and critical self-review, we will become self-satisfied because the name of our field itself tends to make us passive.

Let me suggest, however, that I would rather be carrying a little different motto in the eyes of my colleagues. I am not arguing that Christian education cannot be, but that in fact, Christian education is possible; Christian education is possible. Now that I'm an insider I resent just as much as any of the rest of you those who, even within the theological establishment, refer to our field in terms of Mickey Mouse. But once inside the establishment, I find that some of the walls that have been created within the theological higher education communities are higher walls than I had even imagined, even within institutions. The degree to which departmental barriers of territorialism; the whole notion of that's your job, this is my job; you do yours, I'll do mine, you know, don't talk to me about that, I'll have to leave that one with you. I'm, frankly, surprised that there is a field that has as much obvious reasons for centrality and communication that has done so little to try to create within institutions a real substantial depth to that communication. Now I am not speaking critically of Trinity. Trinity is the one exception.

Offsetting this, and I'm again finding surprises having observed from the outside and having come in periodically as a kind of a short-termer now finding my continuing responsibility in such an institution, I am delighted to find that the collegiality within Christian education is a good bit more energizing than I had thought that it would be. And quite often when asked how it feels to move from Michigan State to a place like Trinity—and I'm not sure there are any other places like Trinity—but, at any rate, that kind of a move does [cause people to ask the question], "How does that feel?" I'm thinking in terms of positives at the moment. There are moments when it isn't always as exciting but, frankly, I have found it a great deal more energizing than I had thought it to be.

I think this is partly because what is the ferment within the field of Christian education is shared within a common discipline of truth that we really do subscribe to at a high level and, therefore, if you push issues far enough you'll find not that which ultimately disintegrates a unity, but that which builds our unity. And I think this is one of the exciting things because in the fields of public education in almost any discipline, you push issues far enough you find that there are ashes and sometimes you have to know just how far to push things before the whole thing begins to crumble. But the beautiful thing in Christian higher education and the field of Christian education, specifically, is that I think we can afford tough-minded dialogue. We can afford to deal with tough issues because at the bottom of it all there is a shared community of faith that binds us together and gives us solid rock.

In fact, I may be thinking optimistically about moments in time as if God in his providence at this moment has invited us into this establishment and feeling good about *that*, but I couldn't help but be reinforced in that interpretation by what Ed was saying last night when he described as, it seemed to me, that this is a rather important moment in Christian education and in the disciplinary formation of the field. And it's really a neat time to be involved and I think all of us have that sense of destiny in our lives when we know we're into something that is really going someplace and it feels good. In fact, I think one of the reasons that ultimately God shook our long-term commitment to

his work at Michigan State and began to alert us to other things that he had in mind for us was a feeling that, in some respects, what was happening in the field of teacher education and educational research was beginning to go back around on itself again. And it looked like we were going to be again caught in a building phase where for about twenty years we'd ridden a high crest and when you get along in life to the point where you realize you don't have forever to go, you really wonder if you want to spend 25 to 75 to 80% of your remaining years simply rebuilding that which you've already built in the past. And it's kind of nice to move in with people that are, themselves, in an up-phase and winning, and I think that that's one of the reassurances. And especially for a person who is now a card-carrying member of the AARP that can be really significant. I also get a discount at Denny's and several other places.

I want to share with you, then, seven lessons; seven lessons learned from exposures in the field of public education. I'm going to run through these fairly fast and hopefully after break have some time to open some of them up, at least those that are of the most curiosity to you. [First lesson] But among the seven lessons that I've learned is that within the field of education, at large, there has been a predominant preoccupation with technology. Now we talk about content versus process of material and method and all the rest of this but, when all is said and done, and a lot more time is spent on the technology than is spent on the content or on the structure of ideas. And, certainly, a lot more time is spent on the technology than on the analysis of the effects of that technology on the relationships. I think one of the consequences of this preoccupation with technology has been a very serious de-emphasis on human transactional skills. The de-emphasis on human transactional skills in the field of education I think has permeated our society to the point where it has made us ripe for what television has finished off. If you stop and reflect on it, we see ourselves as passive learners today, but can't blame it all on television.

The inadequate attention to interpersonal relationships that results from a highly technology preoccupied instructional plan is certainly at odds with the relationships created by our Lord Jesus Christ in his ministries. We have to be observant of the fact that although it's fun to say that Jesus began the audio-visual fad with a finger in the dust. As a matter of fact, that was a rather rare moment. Furthermore, whatever the finger in the dust was doing wasn't even important enough *per se* to be described. There is something about the interpersonal nature of learning that reflects the social reality of learning. Learning is a social process. And as I will point out in another lesson that I have learned, we are in danger of losing that when we preoccupy ourselves with technology.

Now you're already beginning to get the drift, here. I'm trying to say: Look, 33 years in public education has convinced me that I've learned something. And most of the things I'm going to say I've learned, as we go along, are things that I have learned either not to do or to be careful of or to try to find an alternative for. In other words, things to avoid, things to be concerned about. And you'll notice that most of these have some kind of implication for a field that is dangerously prone to being a me-too field. In other words, what is true in education, at large, sooner or later becomes true of Christian education, unfortunately. And one of the things that I would hope is that, as we become a more assertive field, we would not presume that the best we can do is to copy what else is being done in the fields of education. I've always said this. I have never come into the field of Christian education and say you ought to do it the way we're doing it over there in public education. I've always come in, first of all, with warnings and I'm still at it. Now the problem is I'm losing my context so this may be the last time I can do the warning bit with any credibility, so I don't want to lose it.

The net result of this preoccupation I think has been a series of fads that move from one thing to another and we're always advocating methodologies, technologies, procedures, strategies. And it is no wonder that our people in the theological circles look over our shoulders and say, what are you pushing this year. Because if it isn't flannel boards—God bless flannel boards. As a matter of fact, I think flannel boards are a far more interactive medium than video. Think about it. And we may be making a serious mistake with all the investment we're making today in high technology when we're not even teaching people how to effectively relate to young people through flannel boards.

Now when people stand up in front of people and make flannel board speeches that, to me, is a fundamental misuse of flannel boards. Flannel boards were created by the good Lord on the seventh or eighth, nine, ninth day in order that in order that kids could be involved in putting them together and taking them apart and thinking through the alternatives. That isn't always the way they're used, but there again is part of the problem: our preoccupation with the technology quite often is not accompanied by an appropriate asking of the question, exactly how does that technology fit within the values that we're trying to accumulate in terms of interpersonal relationships and learning for young people?

What's the cure? Quite clearly, to me, the cure or the antidote, however you want to look at it, is a re-centering of humane values. Now when I say "humane values" some of the folks that are still threatened about Jerry Falwell's preoccupations are apt to say: Oh, boy. No, indeed. I'm talking about the social effects of a spirit-filled life. How about that? The social effects of a spirit-filled life are what I think to be humane values. There are things our good Lord would not violate in his relationships with people. That's what I'm talking about. If we re-center those interpersonal, relational functions in the educational process, we can handle technology and keep it in its place.

If any of you have never read E.F. Schumacher's, *Small is Beautiful*, let me suggest that you read it. It's kind of a fun book. It deals with one of the sources that God has used to enrich my life: an awareness of the developing world. Schumacher's major thesis is, technology should not be any more elegant than it needs to be. Technology should not be any more elegant, esoteric, than it needs to be because, ultimately, when it gets that way it becomes elitist and it brings power to those who know how to use it and it takes power away from those who don't know how to use it.

And I think one of the things we've got to recognize is we're concerned about the broad development of the people of God. We have got to be dealing with technologies that are available to all. I will not go into a Third World lecture with an overhead transparency. Brothers and sisters, I will not come into a lecture with you with a pre-printed. I make jokes about it, but to me there's a principle involved. I don't want to be doing anything that you can't do. I don't want to be using any resources that reflect that I have a more powerful system behind me than you've got behind you. Think about it. That's, again, back to the whole question of the flannel board. If the teacher uses the flannel board to say look, I'm the teacher and I know how to make this thing work, then what's happening is technology's being used to elevate power. You ought to think about that because that's part of what's involved with great gains; that's a loss of justice.

Second lesson: the narrow concept of education, itself. I think that the whole world is blighted both by Hellenism in the West and by Confucianism in the East that presuppose that schooling is education. The whole notion that when we think "education" we tend to think in the schooling model. And we tend to put things together in terms of the ladders and the successions and

the and the rights and the privileges and the climbing and the lengthening of tassels and the expanding of the phylacteries and the rest of the stuff that our Lord explicitly warned us about in Matthew chapter 23, the first 12 verses. A narrow concept of education gets us into much trouble. It creates an alliance of our educational efforts with the unchallenged traditions and habits of our society. Much of this is what Ivan Illich was talking about and I think Ivan Illich, on this particular point, was right: that there is much in our society that needs to be deschooled. Many people read Ivan Illich as if he were simply criticizing schools. But there's a metaphysical level of meaning in Illich's writing that has to do much more with the nature of what our presumptions about schooling have done to the society. And I think we have to ask the question: What has the schooling imagery done to the church? It presupposes, for example, that everybody has to be faced the same way on Sunday morning. It further presupposes that whoever stands up in front of them has to be looking in the opposite direction. And therein lies quite a tale.

It also takes us, as teachers, into a kind of a *de novo* and *tabula rasa* presupposition about what our task is. Our task is to provide that which isn't there and, therefore, our role becomes ultimately that of simply passing along information. You say oh, come on, Ted. We shouldn't have to go back over that again. We've gotten beyond. I know we've gotten beyond that. But our society hasn't gotten beyond that, and our churches haven't gotten beyond that. And we haven't really come to grips with how in the world we get them beyond that. Our churches are still trapped as surely as ever in the values, the mores, the perspective of a society that is decadent. It also reduces instructional process itself to the very demeaning business of simply carrying messages. And, worse yet, every instructional device is grasped because it's going to be the best solution for poor teaching. And we never really address the failure of people to learn to effectively communicate with other human beings. Instead, we give them things to use.

This is what a narrow concept of education does for us. What's the cure? I tell you what the cure was at Michigan State and it was partly out of our research work in reference to the developing nations, themselves. There's quite a story about this. But I'd like to show you something that, in the quick glance, may or may not make sense. Any of you who want to see more about this, we have a short paper about this that I can pass along to you. I didn't bring them because I'm not peddling it, but a three-faceted view of education looks a little more like this. And for some of you that are aware of the fact that, even in some of the press releases that says that I have a specialization in nonformal education, what is that? Well, actually, as a matter of fact, in 1970 the term nonformal education was first entered into the literature by one of the people, Philip Coombs. in the area of development education to try to identify a sector of education that had never been named. It's a little one of the specters of history that has never really been brought to consciousness. Most of educational thinking, up to that point, was divided along this axis: education is either informal or formal, and the notion is, of course, that socialization is informal education and formal education is whatever you do in schooling-type models.

Now the problem in that is that there are a lot of things that are not one or the other there including, so help me, Sunday schools; including most of what we do in the religious education realm except in our formal education institutions. Moody Bible Institute is clearly formal education. Right? Wheaton College is formal education. Trinity Seminary is formal education. What you're doing in local parishes is almost always this. Now these are not methodological distinctions. These are distinctions in terms of the way educational modes fit within a society. There's always been this as long as history; there's always been this, but it was never named until 1970. It was called all kinds of other things, but usually called "other."

But there's an interesting thing that has happened about this out of the analysis of a three-sectoral view of education and I think one of the reasons that so many people in the field of Christian education and Christian ministries did come to Michigan State is because we were really researching the nature of nonformal education. And a number of people in this room know very well that, in their dissertations and in their trajectory of research in Christian education, they bring that perspective that says, we are not dealing in this framework, we're not dealing in *this* framework; we're dealing in this framework.

There's an interesting set of observations that come out of that and I just want to share them with you to show you that I think one of the keys may lie in how we conceptualize education in society. One thing we noticed was that if you compare, in this triadic image, you'll see that there are similarities: pairs share common features. Informal education and formal education share the common traits of being tradition-maintaining and societally structured. Formal education and nonformal education share the phenomenon of being scheduled, planned, and staffed because one of the ways in which nonformal education differs from informal is that it is planned. For example, the majority of Americans who learn to swim in some kind of a deliberate situation learn in the "Y" or through an American Red Cross program. Now is the "Y" part of the formal education establishment? No. But neither is it simply informal socialization. Now where did most of us learn our first language? At home. In the socialization, who was hired to teach you? Nobody, nobody. And the most complex skill you ever learned in your whole life is your first language learned altogether without benefit of school. School comes along and then spent 12 years trying to clean up some of the errors, but the language, itself, is already laid down.

Now in the nonformal sector, everything from church education right on down through YMCA, union education, in-plant education, the whole gamut; it's neither in the formal education realm nor is it in the socialization realm. It's deliberate, scheduled, planned, staffed just like formal ed. is, but it is functionally interactive in the same way that informal education is.

Now I'm not going to belabor this but show you that there's a power that comes out of this about asking the question: What are these modes good for? What each of these modes is good for comes out of this kind of reasoning. If you look at the overlay here you can see that there is an image of oppositeness to the commonality across the chart. [Not available.] For example, if you are interested in the consequences of informal education, you think in terms of auto-control, self-control. And, apart from deliberation, what is learned, then, in the socialization process is really apart from deliberation and it is part of the auto- or self-direct and self-control mechanism.

Now what is learned in the formal education, by and large, tends to be arbitrary and ladder-like, and tends to create the images of education which are arbitrary and ladder-like. Now you understand a ladder to be a series of rungs held together by a spanner and the function of each rung is a justification to reach the next rung. Why are you standing on the third level of that ladder is a little bit like saying to a kid why are you going to third grade. He looks at you and he quizzically wonders where *you* came from and he says how else do you get to fourth grade. There is a self-justifying-ness in a ladder structure and much of formal education has that capacity to communicate to people that that's really what learning's all about. Every step creates a justification in terms of its opening up a next step.

Now the problem here is that this sort of education generally becomes coercive because it is a function of tradition-maintaining. And one of the reasons why I think the church has not been

terribly well served by its educational institutions is that institutions of the formal education sort generally are tradition-maintaining institutions, not change-oriented. We have found in work in the developing nations that if you're really concerned about things that'll change a society, you go the nonformal direction because it takes its energy from the opposite of this tradition-maintaining sort of a thing.

Now I maintain that, if we took seriously the nonformal education functions of the church, we could put ourselves much more into the evangelization, into the society-affecting, into the people reshaping, into, in effect, the whole of the redemptive process much more than if we simply use institutional approaches which tend, really, to replicate and perpetuate societies and cultures the way they are. So for some of us, at any rate, there is this kind of a solution and it has a theoretic root and I thought I'd like to share it with you because otherwise it'd be very empty words this morning.

Now there are some more lessons and I don't want to take forever on any one of them. Here's another three: Limitations of campus-based that is four-wall educational settings. Now you might want to reflect on this in terms of what happens when we design our educational experiences around the notion of what will fit in the classical situation to do learning. If one takes a four-walls, floor and ceiling, cubic view of learning opportunity one tends to do those things, educationally, which fit in that kind of environment. Now I ask you why the Lord Jesus Christ did not choose to do that. And most of us are historically alert enough to know very well that the answer isn't, because they hadn't invented schools yet because if they had of he'd have certainly gone out, raised money, and built some buildings. As a matter of fact, they had invented schools and it's quite probable from historical and archeological evidence that the notion of the Hellenistic academy was fairly well-known, though not common, in the general territory that we call today the Holy Land.

Whatever Jesus decided to do for those three years was decided out of a deeper commitment to another kind of educational process. And when he says the Son of man has not a place to lay his head, he's talking about a choice. He's not talking about an accident. He's talking about a choice because he talks about it in the very frame of reference where people are saying we want to do it your way. We want to follow you. And it's at that point when he reminds people that he's made a choice. And I ask you today to what extent do we allow our four-wall model, which is essentially out of the narrow view of education, the schooling bag, to influence what we think of as Christian education? Now when you jump too far too fast, as certain of our good brothers have found over the years, and you try to make a social group, such as the evangelical community, leap from a four-wall view into some kind of a more biblical view in which you go into homes, into communities, into neighborhoods and you do that without some kind of intermediate process of getting them weaned from that which they've been acculturated to accept, you fall flat on your face with millions of dollars going down the drain. We've got some examples of that, don't we?

Now that's because we haven't really come to grips with what is trapping the church. Instead, we've simply taken a visionary view of what ought to be. People occasionally in my theological relationships now will say to me, yeah, but you bring a sociological perspective on all this. And I say well, now, dear brother that does not necessarily mean that it's false. It simply means that I am alert to some things that another frame of reference would not make me as alert to. And I can be as committed as you are to a theologically responsible end product and a theologically responsible outcome that I have to ask the question, what is the sociological reality in which we're going to have to move toward that sort of an outcome? And I think that's a very important question

in our field today, but I'm not going to deal today nearly as much as tomorrow with what do we need to do about this?

Let me just say in reference to the third problem—the matter of the limitations of a campus-based or a four-wall educational setting—that if we really ever get tired with hierarchical teacher/learner categories, and if we ever get tired of having everything in the religious education realm mimicking formal classrooms, and if we ever decide to take seriously the notion of deschooling religious education it'll probably be necessary for us to rediscover the value of field-based and community learning.

I think the image that is most apt to be productive for us is that of life and learning as a walk and the relationship that we have between and among ourselves as being that of a fellowship in a walk. I'm, as you'll see in some other things, I'm a little bit anxious about the overuse of discipleship today because of its easy slipping over into a notion that my role is to create disciples for myself. And nobody would ever admit that that's what they're trying to do, but that's what quite often, even some of the navigationally excellent efforts, sometimes fall off into.

Four: Overconfidence in scientific valuing. I've seen this up, down, and sideways. In some, it is the testing movement; the testing movement that was characteristic right after World War I of virtually the whole so-called "scientific education movement." The result of this kind of overconfidence in scientific valuing has been a cold and mechanized process in learning basically taking the warmth out of it and putting back technologies; preoccupation with outcomes at the expense of process and participants—all you have to do is spend some time with [Ralph] Tyler and [Robert] Mager and you see what I mean. There is a really serious problem that comes from overconfidence in scientific valuing. You say well, wait a minute. Aren't you a social scientist? Yeah, but that doesn't make me a nut. Adoption of diagnosis treatment paradigms and the power postures that they engender are crucial issues; the notion that we have to know a lot about people before we decide what they ought to do. I'm even distressed with what people do with the Kohlberg material in terms of I've got to know what stage they're at. Good grief. If we spend three-fourths of our time diagnosing, we won't have anything left to warm up the environment. People are not mice. People have to be interacted with, not put in cages so they can be studied. And altogether, through all of this, we'd run the risk of neglecting the complex outcomes of education and settling for minuscule bits of relatively important trivia.

How do you cure this? What's the antidote? I think the antidote is, in many respects, as old as [Robert] Havighurst. You should pay attention to that old brother because again from a sociological perspective as a Christian layman he said hey, wait a minute. There's a danger in going this hyper-psychological way. We've got to see environments. We've got to see the society in terms of the tasks that it confronts people with, and we've got to be more aware of the complexity of desired educational outcomes. More recently, Elliot Eisner's work in paradigms and models from the field of art learning which I think come a lot closer to what we're after in the way of the learnings in the valuing of Christian experience that would require a restoration of the dignity and art of teaching. There's got to be, in all of our work, a real serious dedication to the dignity and the art of the teaching process. We've got to see ourselves in the best possible light, and we've got to see our students and those who are participating in educational processes that way.

The fifth lesson is the failure to emphasize both analytic and synthetic processes. And again, like the roof on many a house, the water hits and goes down one way or the other. It goes into the

front yard or the back yard. Yes, we can talk about the roof as both analytic and synthetic but, by gum, the water's going to go down one side or the other. There are some watersheds. Academicism has largely come down to focus on the analytic and ultimately, then, focus on the quantitative aspects of educational process. This is why the field of education is so shot through with the process of evaluating that which can be evaluated; which really means evaluating that which can be measured and then teaching to that which can be evaluated. And that's a vicious process. That's a vicious process in which, ultimately, you neglect the synthetic processes.

Now what do I mean "synthetic processes?" Even as analysis is concerned with taking things apart so that we can name the parts and talk about how they fit back together again, synthesis is concerned with how we take the parts and make sense out of them; make them work together. It seems to me that the issue should not be either/or but should be some kind of a balance. We have a tendency in education to evaluate our technologies and our methodologies and our approaches in terms of justifying them because of their ends. We've got to get beyond that and we've got to see that you never can justify an unjust methodology: that which cannot be assessed in terms of its particular valuing.

Consider Peter Drucker's comparison between effectiveness and efficiency: a standard starting introduction for most people to Peter Drucker, the great management scientist. Let me just tell you where Peter Drucker's distinction falls short. He argues that efficiency is the art of doing *things right* and, of course, he makes that particular statement so he can play on it in his definition of effectiveness: effectiveness is the art of doing the *right things*. Notice *things right* and *right things*. And a lot of Christians go that far with Drucker and say that's it! That's it! As Christians, we're concerned not just about doing things right, but we're doing them about the right things. And I maintain that that's fine as far as it goes, but where we have to go beyond that—and as Christian education people we have to be very quick to help people see beyond that—the issue is defining right righteously. Right does not define itself; right does not define itself. Yes we need to be efficient; more importantly, we need to be effective. But transcendently important we need to be about the business of defining right righteously.

And I think if we do that we'll see that we've got to put together an analytic and a synthetic framework in which we're concerned not just about taking things apart and making people smart enough to label pieces. And on the other hand not just able somehow to do in a crafty sort of way, do things so that they're clever, but understand what is going on and grasp the holism and the holistic nature of truth itself and the handling of truth creatively. In effect, we need to cultivate both reason and creativity hand-in-hand. When we see these lessons come to application to Christian education, we can have a lot of fun about where we're going and why.

Two more: psychological imagery and presuppositions. One of my favorite whipping boys over the year has been [number 6] the damage that psychological reasoning has done in the field of education and I'm ready to take on any and all comers on this subject because I think the damage is still being done. Now this is not anti-psychology though, as a matter of fact, most of you are well aware that my biases are more with the social-anthropology sector of social science. I respect psychology but I am afraid that psychology has become an easy way to adopt scientism within education and even within Christian education.

In general, this has resulted in a kind of reductionistic educational reasoning in which, for the most part, what people do is break things down into molecular units and ultimately break things

down into individualism and argue even that all differences are ultimately individual differences and that all major explanations somehow have to focus on variances caused by individual differences, which really produces kind of a go nowhere model of education.

It also has opened the door to research being focused on measurement. And the students in our program at Trinity are well aware that there is a great conflict in the field of education research today because of the tremendous, tremendous transitions that occurred in just the last ten years as, finally, the experimentalists have come to grips with the fact that you can't pull hypotheses out of the air. They've got to be grounded. And we don't have enough good descriptive work, ethnographically developed, in order to build good hypotheses. And I see my brother, Glenn Heck [National Louis University, Chicago], back here nodding for all he's worth because those of us in the professional field of education know that the frontier in research is ethnographic research. Am I right? That's sometimes hard for me to convince my students because many of them have come up through a psychological tradition and they're dead sure that if you can't make a hypothesis it isn't a dissertation.

We've got to get somehow beyond the psychological imagery in these presuppositions because they take us to a neglect of social and group dimensions of learning. Learning is essentially a social process and when we focus simply on individualistic, self-centered images, we miss the whole of it. And I think this is a result of historical accidents which, because of the influence of biology at the turn of the century in the natural sciences, psychologists spinning off from biology—because that's where they did come from, you know—brought the paradigms of biological inquiry over and, at the time of World War I, dumped them into education in the form of testing strategies. And we're still laboring under that notion that when you're doing *real* research in education you're breaking things down and looking at them in bit pieces like psychologists do, and you're ultimately making psychological presuppositions. Now, there, that's nasty and I suspect some of you are ready to wrestle me on that one. That's alright. I like to wrestle.

Seven, and last: atrophy of philosophy of education. If there is any one thing that I can document clearly among these seven lessons, it's this one. In the 33 years of career in the public education sector, I have seen the virtual demise of philosophy of education. It is now an old man's field. There aren't any even any old women in it, to the best of my knowledge. It's an old man's field. It's a crotchety old field. Unfortunately, it is a field that does very little now except nurture a few graduate students who will perpetuate the old man syndrome. It has lost its touch in the field of teacher preparation. It has lost its touch in the field of educational administration. And you cannot raise a philosophical question in the typical school of America or even higher education establishment because people don't know how to wrestle with it.

Now we could come to that. We could come to that if we are not keeping central the reasoning of theological and philosophical propositions and rudiments into the context of educational decision-making. If there's any one question that I push as a predictable question with my grad students is, what is the interface between that proposition and then I'll name a theological construct. I say how do you interface that? How does it relate? Or asking it more openly what is the theological rudiment at stake in that particular proposition? That, to me, is important because I think we could lead our society, as a whole, back to a philosophically valuing view of education.

I have no small goals for the field of Christian education. I am far more interested in the issue how does this field affect the world, than I am in, how do we affect the church in North

America. Do you follow that? I think, to some extent, Ed is right when he said last night, we have such a huge agenda. We try to build an expertise in so many rudimentary disciplines that it's overwhelming. Well, brothers and sisters, there's no way to strip that down. That is our purview. I think when we're warned in the Scripture against becoming a teacher, it was a warning for our own sense of well-being. But if you have accepted that as your call and as your ministry, then your zone of responsibility is huge and it is at least huge in terms of a disciplinary involvement. But it is even more huge in terms of the ultimate role of Christian education being to affect the world. Our ministry is a ministry of redemptive process in the whole of society. And when we simply argue in narrow terms whether we're concerned with nurture or evangelism and whether our commitment is to local churches or to higher education institutions, I say, "Fie on thee," which is about as nasty as you can get and still be Olde English.

Our goals must be larger. The bottom line is we must build a knowledge-based profession dedicated to the service of the church worldwide through specialized understanding and skills in the central matter of spiritual development.

And I hope we'll have time after break to talk about some of these things as you're relating to them from your zone. I'd rather, not in the time that we have for discussion, not simply try to answer questions. I'd like to encourage you to share out from what you're perceiving. Disagree with me with whatever you want to, but let's try to focus on where are we going and what have our lessons taught us about what God is doing in the world today.

My vision is large and my commitment is great and my love of you is growing.

Thank you.