



For Rich Dividends— Invest in Adventist Education

By F. R. Stephan

We are living in a rapidly changing world, a society that has shifted from the manufacturing age to the era of communications. What has been and will be the impact on education? While some influences are readily identifiable, others are difficult to predict.

However, some things do not change—our God, the human need for love, faith, and hope, and the reality that Jesus will return soon.

While we stand on the threshold of a new era in learning, seeking a broader vision of a world that has become smaller and smaller, cer-

tain specifics and objectives must never be lost sight of.

What about the future of Adventist education? "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." The future of education, we might say, is in the hands of the church—in our hands—to grow, develop, and progress in harmony with the will of God. Believing this makes the future bright and full of promise. Christian education truly faces its finest hour for it will prepare, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, those who will help finish the work of God.

Investing in Christian education will pay great dividends. The

church cannot afford to abort the future by viewing Christian education as an expense. We "invest" in human resources that are more durable and flexible than capital plans and physical equipment. When making this investment we should not be asking, "Is it too much?" Instead we should ask, "Is it enough?"

The recent barrage of education reports and research has exhorted us to restore excellence in education. Opportunities for academic pursuits, we have been counseled, must be provided for more individuals. Teachers, administrators, parents, and students must unite in their effort to shape a common destiny. The church must be reminded that education is not just

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an important item on the agenda of nations—it is also a significant concern facing the denomination that will continue to challenge us in years to come. Whatever problems are identified or changes must be made, they can be faced and accomplished with the help of God.

Many of the recommendations of the national studies are valid. To include additional math or science, improve instructional methodology, expand goals and objectives, or raise the level of expectancy requires only application and time. These “mechanics” of education are readily accessible and attainable. Other suggestions, such as lengthening the school day or year, unless accompanied by significant improvement of instruction, offer only window dressing.

Christian education should not become overly interested in or concerned about fads in the secular educational world. Our society has seen schools without walls, open classrooms, continuous progress, back-to-the-basics, and other concepts. While each has probably made some contribution, none has touched the heart of basic education.

To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized,—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life.²

Success in education depends on fidelity in carrying out the Creator’s plan.¹

These words challenge the Seventh-day Adventist Church as it looks to the future. Consider the following as it relates to the mission of the church and the impact education might make.

1. Seventh-day Adventist education is to be distinctive and unique. It should be Bible-centered
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Para altos dividendos —invirtamos en la educación adventista

VIVIMOS EN UNA era cambiante. ¿Cuál ha sido y será el impacto de esto en el área de la educación? Mientras podemos identificar fácilmente algunas influencias, otras son más difíciles de predecir.

Sin embargo, algunas cosas no cambian—nuestro Dios, la necesidad humana de amor, fe y esperanza, y la realidad de que Jesús pronto vendrá.

¿Qué decir del futuro de la educación adventista? “Nada tenemos que temer, a menos que olvidemos la manera en que el Señor nos ha guiado, y sus enseñanzas en el pasado”.¹ El futuro de la educación está en nuestras manos—para crecer, desarrollar y progresar en armonía con los designios de Dios. El creer que así es, hace que el futuro sea lleno de promesas.

La educación cristiana no debe interesarse o preocuparse mucho con las tendencias del mundo educativo secular. Mientras muchas de esas tendencias tal vez hayan hecho alguna contribución, ninguna ha tocado el corazón de la educación.

La obra de la redención debía restaurar en el hombre la imagen de su Hacedor, hacerlo volver a la perfección con que había sido creado, promover el desarrollo del cuerpo, la mente y el alma, a fin de que se llevase a cabo el propósito divino de su creación. Este es el objeto de la educación, el gran objeto de la vida.²

“El éxito de la educación depende de la fidelidad con que se lleva a cabo el plan del Creador”.³

Esas palabras desafían a la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día al mirar hacia el futuro. Consideremos lo siguiente:

1. La educación adventista debe
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Pour de riches dividendes, investissez dans l'éducation adventiste

NOUS AVONS passé rapidement de l'âge industriel à l'ère des communications. Suivant les cas, il est facile ou difficile d'en prévoir l'influence sur l'éducation. Cependant, notre Dieu ne change pas, ni la réalité du retour de Jésus, ni la soif d'amour, de foi, d'espérance. L'avenir de l'éducation adventiste se dessine prometteur si nous continuons à croître en harmonie avec la volonté divine, toujours conscients du but à poursuivre. Cessons de nous demander si nos investissements dans cette éducation nous coûtent trop; interrogeons-nous plutôt ainsi: “Est-ce suffisant?”

L'excellence en éducation, tel est aujourd'hui le mot d'ordre des nations. Certaines recommandations sont valides, mais l'éducation chrétienne, faisant fi du passager et du superficiel, ne perdra pas de vue son objectif ultime:

Restaurer en l'homme l'image de son Créateur, le ramener à la perfection originelle, favoriser le développement du corps, de l'esprit et de l'âme. . . . Le succès de notre éducation dépend de la fidélité avec laquelle nous nous soumettons au plan de Dieu. (*Education*, pp. 10, 47.)

Considérons les principes suivants à la lumière de la mission de l'Eglise et de l'influence possible de l'éducation.

1. L'éducation adventiste doit posséder des caractéristiques distinctives, rester fondée sur la Bible, le service, l'achèvement de l'œuvre divine. Le personnel enseignant se demandera ce qu'il peut *donner* à l'Eglise et non ce qu'il peut *retirer*. Il entraînera les enfants et les jeunes dans les expériences spirituelles. Il leur inculquera la dignité du travail dans toutes les
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and service-oriented with the aim of assisting the church in finishing the work of God. This begins with education personnel who ask, "What can we *give* to the church?" not "What can we *get* out of the church?"

To accomplish this goal of distinctiveness, Adventist education needs to provide guaranteed experiences. Children and youth must experience prayer and understand its meaning and significance in the spiritual experience. Work "experience" should not only be for the purpose of earning money, but also to develop healthy, positive attitudes toward honest labor and ways to improve academic experience. The dignity of labor is not only to be enjoyed by the professional, but also by the merchant, craftsman, and laborer.

Seventh-day Adventist education should perpetuate a culture—a style of life—that does not allow permissiveness but teaches self-worth and self-discipline. The significance of the church, its heritage, and its mission must be clearly understood. Students should learn that salvation is attainable—through Jesus Christ—and that this "good news" is to be shared.

2. Character development is a primary concern and goal of Christian education. Ellen G. White probably has more to say on this topic than any other in respect to education. Character development must be "programmed" into the curriculum. Christian character must be modeled by educators.

Knowledge without values can be found in encyclopedias and almanacs. Information without motivation can be found on the screens of computers. Children and youth do not assimilate values and Christian experience by merely hearing such words as *love, justice,*
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ser distinta. Su enfoque central debe ser la Biblia y el servicio hacia nuestro prójimo, teniendo como su objetivo ayudar a la iglesia a terminar la obra de Dios. Esto empieza con educadores que preguntan, "¿Qué podemos nosotros *dar* a la iglesia?" y no "¿Qué podemos nosotros *sacar* de la iglesia?"

La educación adventista debe perpetuar un estilo de vida no permisivo, pero que enseñe autoestima y autodisciplina. El significado de la iglesia, su historia y su misión deben ser claramente comprendidos. Los alumnos deben aprender que es posible obtener la salvación—a través de Jesucristo—y que esas "buenas nuevas" deben ser compartidas.

2. El desarrollo del carácter es uno de los elementos primordiales, y el objetivo de la educación cristiana. Esto debe ser parte del currículo y ser ejemplificado por los educadores.

Los niños y jóvenes no asimilan valores y la experiencia cristiana, simplemente por oír palabras tales como *amor, justicia y verdad*, o por aprender el significado de éstas. Ellos aprenden actitudes, hábitos y valores a través de las relaciones personales con sus familias y colegas. Incorporarán principios éticos en sus vidas solamente al imitar personas que practican la ética.

La educación adventista debe preparar personas que han desarrollado la habilidad de pensar y actuar.

Semejante educación provee algo más que una disciplina mental; provee algo más que una preparación física. Fortalece el carácter, de modo que no se sacrifiquen la verdad y la justicia al deseo egoísta o a la ambición mundana. Fortalece la mente contra el mal . . . Al espaciarse en la perfección del carácter de Dios, la mente se renueva y el alma vuelve a crearse a su imagen.⁴

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occupations, sa valeur dans le cadre des études. L'éducation adventiste ne peut tolérer une fausse indulgence. Elle enseignera l'estime et la maîtrise de soi, la raison d'être de l'Eglise, le salut par Jésus et la mission du témoin.

2. La formation du caractère est le but majeur de cette éducation. Encyclopédies et ordinateurs regorgent de connaissances, mais on n'assimile pas l'expérience chrétienne en entendant parler d'*amour, de justice, de vérité*. On assimile les attitudes, les habitudes, les valeurs morales grâce aux contacts personnels. Si nos jeunes n'apprennent pas à lutter, à penser, à agir, ils seront submergés. Cette éducation "trempe le caractère, en sorte que la vérité et l'intégrité ne sont jamais sacrifiées à un désir égoïste. . . Elle fortifie l'esprit contre le mal." (*Id.*, p. 12.) Les éducateurs adventistes devraient étudier en profondeur les pages 229 à 276 d'*Education*.

3. Le climat spirituel des écoles, la consécration des éducateurs, l'enseignement de la morale et des bonnes manières sont au premier rang des préoccupations des parents adventistes. Si ces buts sont poursuivis, les élèves communiqueront à l'ensemble des membres une image saine de l'éducation adventiste. Notre plus grand échec est peut-être la tendance à attacher davantage de valeur à ce que fait une personne ou à ce qu'elle possède plutôt qu'à ce qu'elle est. Le respect pour l'individu est la première leçon à apprendre.

4. Il faudrait faire comprendre à l'ensemble des membres que la discipline n'a pas pour but de protéger la réputation de l'institution mais d'enseigner à chaque jeune en particulier à vivre en harmonie avec la volonté de Dieu et avec ses semblables. Le privilège de l'édu-

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apostasy or reorientation. This could occur while we still keep adding members to our rolls and students in our classes.

The challenge to the church's educational centers in the coming quinquennium will be to incarnate in a strong, motivating manner an understanding of our heritage and mission. It must be the kind of understanding that will fire our students and teachers, as well as parents and preachers, to a firmer adoption of those salient Christian values and goals that have propelled us to the place we now occupy in this present world.—V.S.G. □

Invirtamos en la educación adventista

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Todo educador adventista debe leer las páginas 221-264 del libro *La Educación*, que hablan de la educación y el carácter. La relación íntima entre el desarrollo del carácter, la fe y la oración, el guardar el sábado, el desarrollo social, el escoger trabajo, y el estilo de vida está lindamente presentada en esas páginas.

3. Encuestas han indicado que padres adventistas desean que sus hijos sean instruidos con modales y principios morales; tienen mucho interés en el ambiente espiritual en las escuelas adventistas y el grado de compromiso que los maestros y profesores muestran en relación con dichos principios.

4. De alguna manera tenemos que comunicarle a nuestra comunidad adventista, que atender a las necesidades del alumno individualmente es más importante que mantener una imagen institucional perfecta. Los reglamentos y la disciplina no son hechos para mantener la imagen de la escuela, pero sí para enseñar a los niños y

jóvenes cómo vivir en armonía con Dios y con su prójimo.

El amor por todos los niños, la práctica de justicia, honestidad, responsabilidad, reverencia y cortesía son las características del educador cristiano.

5. Finalmente, los educadores cristianos tienen ideales y filosofías que les indican los reglamentos que deben hacer y cómo actuar.

El educador debe preocuparse en proveer las mejores oportunidades educacionales, aún bajo circunstancias menos que ideales, mientras trabaja para encaminar los niños a Cristo.

La Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día ha sido bendecida con una filosofía educacional que está segunda a ninguna otra. El secreto de su éxito está con el personal, no con el material didáctico. El futuro de la educación adventista está en el corazón y en las manos de cada persona que se ha unido a los que practican el ministerio de la educación. □

PIE DE GRABADO

¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1948), vol. 9, p. 10.

² Ellen G. White, *La Educación* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Asociación Casa Editora Sudamericana), p. 13.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

Investissez dans l'éducation adventiste

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cateur chrétien est avant tout d'amener ses élèves à la connaissance de Dieu. Les activités religieuses de l'école ne sont pas destinées à purifier l'institution mais à aiguiller l'enfant vers le salut et le bonheur. L'amour pour le Christ et pour tous les enfants, la justice, l'honnêteté, le sens des responsabilités et la politesse caractériseront l'enseignant chrétien.

5. Le but de l'éducateur chrétien

est de s'efforcer de donner la meilleure formation possible au plus grand nombre possible d'enfants de Dieu. Nous sommes là pour servir. Tout en poursuivant cet idéal, laissons Dieu nous diriger. Même dans les circonstances les plus défavorables, enseignons les enfants tout en les conduisant à Christ.

Sa philosophie de l'éducation est une bénédiction pour l'Eglise adventiste. La clé du succès de cette éducation réside dans les personnes, et non dans les programmes scolaires. Son avenir est entre les mains de ceux qui forment les rangs du service chrétien par l'éducation. □

Invest in Adventist Education

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and truth, or even by learning their definitions. They learn attitudes, habits, and value judgments through personal relationships with their families and associates. They will incorporate ethical principles into their lives only as they emulate ethical people. Students in an Adventist school must be taught to stand for something, lest they fall for everything.

Seventh-day Adventist education is to send forth individuals who have developed the ability to think and act.

Such an education provides more than mental discipline; it provides more than physical training. It strengthens the character, so that truth and uprightness are not sacrificed to selfish desire or worldly ambition. It fortifies the mind against evil. . . . As the perfection of His character is dwelt upon, the mind is renewed, and the soul is re-created in the image of God.⁴

All Adventist educators should study the section in the book *Education* on character building, found on pages 225-271. The close relationship between character development, faith and prayer, Sabbath-keeping, development of

social skills, choice of lifework, and style of one's life is beautifully woven together in these pages.

3. Research and surveys have clearly indicated that Seventh-day Adventist parents want their children to be instructed in morals and manners; they have an overriding interest in the spiritual climate found in Adventist schools and in teacher commitment. A more determined effort must be made to provide this kind of experience. If this is accomplished, then students from these schools will convey to the constituency a wholesome and meaningful image of Adventist education.

A most important consideration in life is the kind of people we are becoming. While one cannot choose the color of one's eyes, the texture of one's hair or skin, or the shape of one's nose, an individual can determine what kind of person he or she will be. Perhaps the greatest failure of education is that greater value has been attached to the things a person does or possesses than on what he or she is. Respect for the individual is the first lesson to be learned.

4. This leads to another concern that deserves greater emphasis in Adventist education. Somehow we must communicate to our constituents that meeting the needs of the individual student is more significant than maintaining a lily-white institutional image. Rules and discipline are not made to protect the school's image, but to teach young people how to live in harmony with God's will and one another.

"Everywhere there is a tendency to substitute the work of organizations for individual effort."⁵ Too many individuals have become self-absorbed and insensitive, having lost their love for God and other human beings. To be a minister in education is a demanding privilege and offers great rewards.

The Christian teacher can help students find God, the treasures of His grace, and the inestimable riches of Christ. This experience does not happen by accident. To accomplish it requires a sanctified life, the fruits of which are manifested in every transaction and all social relationships. Seventh-day Adventist educators should be talking more about "heaven-bound" kids, not just kids that are college-bound.

Administrators and teachers must make it crystal clear that school worships, religious activities, prayer at the beginning of classes and before tests, and intercession for individual requests are not mundane activities to purify the institution. These experiences are vital links in the chain let down by God from heaven to work out our salvation and happiness.

Loving all children, being fair, totally honest, truthful, responsible, reverent, and courteous are marks of the Christian educator. We must not be ashamed of Christ and what He has done and will continue to do for those who love Him and desire to serve Him.

5. Finally, Christian educators have ideals and philosophies that dictate policy and action. What is believed to be the components of an excellent education may not always be attainable. We must remember that constituents pay the bill. It is their children who are being educated, and we are here to serve. The Christian educator should cooperatively strive to provide the best possible education to as many of God's children as can be reached.

These high ideals or personal convictions may not always be met. While we should ever strive and reach for the ideal, God must be permitted to lead and accomplish His will. The concern of the

educator should be to provide optimal educational opportunities, even under formidable circumstances, all the while striving to lead children to Christ.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been blessed with a philosophy of education that is second to none. The key to its successful operation is people, not syllabi. The future of Seventh-day Adventist education lies in the heart and hand of each person who has joined the ranks of the ministry of education. □

FOOTNOTES

¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1948), vol. 9, p. 10.

² _____, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1903), pp. 15, 16.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁵ _____, *Christian Service* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1947), p. 10.

Cinco años de cambios

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cada asociación/misión; y en otros países, la situación política sólo permite que los pastores o capellanes provean instrucción bíblica a los jóvenes en escuelas públicas.

La reorganización del Departamento al nivel de la Asociación General sigue funcionando con satisfacción. Esperamos que en el nuevo quinquenio habrá más variedad en los servicios prestados por los que estarán al servicio de la educación cristiana. □

Five Years of Change

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"a comprehensive long-range world master plan subject to regular updating and revision," as well as more localized planning. It is therefore appropriate for the Board to look ahead toward the next quinquennium, even though